

# IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

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## BACKPACK GIVEAWAY PREPARES PEORIA STUDENTS FOR NEW SCHOOL YEAR

Ameren Illinois is proud to partner with Dream Center Peoria in its mission to positively impact people living in poverty — starting with kids and youth. In July, a \$15,000 grant from Ameren Illinois helped the non-profit provide approximately 2,000 backpacks filled with school supplies to Peoria-area students.



*With smiles behind their masks, Ameren Illinois representatives Brian Brackney, left, and Kenny Blum, center, present the \$15,000 check to Andy King, partnering director of the Dream Center.*



## Are you ready? September is National Preparedness Month

Preparing for the worst helps Ameren Illinois deliver the best in reliable service to our customers. When severe weather threatens, we follow a comprehensive Emergency Response Plan to help us restore natural gas and electric services as quickly and safely as possible.

You can take steps to prepare at home, too. A storm kit is a great place to start. Assemble a kit of essentials, like bottled water, non-perishable food, battery-operated flashlights and emergency phone numbers. Place important documents in a safe box or other waterproof storage space.

If power goes out, turn your refrigerator to its coldest setting and leave the refrigerator closed.

Turn off and unplug any unnecessary electrical equipment to prevent overloading circuits and damaging appliances when power is restored.

The steps you take today could bring peace of mind later. Visit **[AmerenIllinois.com/Outage](https://AmerenIllinois.com/Outage)** or **[SafeElectricity.org](https://SafeElectricity.org)** for more tips to help you prepare.



## YOU CAN HELP BUILD THE FUTURE OF HOUSING IN ILLINOIS

As our world changes, our housing needs change, too. Individuals, organizations, and agencies across Illinois are working together to shape the future of housing in Illinois.

Led by the Illinois Housing Development Authority, the Housing Blueprint is a collaborative planning effort to ensure that the state understands and meets the housing needs of communities across the Land of Lincoln — now and in the future.

Your input will help construct an inclusive plan that is relevant to the many people and communities of Illinois. All Illinois residents are encouraged to visit **ILHousingBlueprint.org** and complete the Resident Survey and attend a Listening Tour meeting in their area to share their experiences, perspectives, needs, and hopes for the future.



Get involved and  
share your story at  
**ILHousingBlueprint.org**.

IL HOUSING BLUEPRINT  
THE FUTURE OF HOUSING IN ILLINOIS



## Natural gas offers advantages over propane

Propane may have been an easy choice — or the only choice — for heating when you first moved into your home. But as Ameren Illinois continually expands its energy delivery system, natural gas is becoming a viable choice in areas where propane was once the only option. Natural gas is clean, convenient, affordable — and worth a fresh look, if you're currently using propane.

### Why Natural Gas?

- **Affordable:** Ameren Illinois natural gas prices are relatively low and stable, while propane prices tend to be volatile. And because natural gas appliances are so efficient, you'll save every month on energy costs.
- **Convenient:** With natural gas, you never have to worry about running low on fuel, scheduling tank refills or maintaining storage tanks.
- **Safe:** When used properly, natural gas is an extremely safe fuel choice. In the rare event of a leak, we respond quickly, day and night — at no charge to the customer.
- **Reliable:** Our pipeline system provides natural gas on demand, so it's always there when you need it.
- **Clean:** Natural gas is the cleanest-burning fossil fuel, so it is less harmful to the environment.

Visit **AmerenIllinois.com/Convert2Gas** to learn more, apply for service, or estimate the savings you could achieve by converting to natural gas.

# Natural gas & electrical co-workers team up on one-of-a-kind project

After the historic flood of 1993 receded into the river banks, Ameren Illinois engineers spent many hours looking for a solution to safeguard the company's natural gas and electric infrastructure near the Mississippi River. For one business customer, the unusual solution was to install its natural gas meter high up on a utility pole to avoid future flood damage.

Twenty-seven years later, Ameren Illinois gas and electrical co-workers were together again at the Alton business site to install a new technologically advanced gas meter. Our natural gas employees had the rare opportunity to work alongside linemen in bucket trucks to safely construct and install the gas meter set so the customer can count on the safe, reliable natural gas service for many years to come.

"Even though Ameren Illinois is a combination natural gas and electric utility, it's rare for the two energy delivery units to share the same infrastructure," says Derek Cliff, Director of Division Operations, Ameren Illinois. "In fact, it's the first time any of us can think of when a natural gas meter set was affixed to a power pole."



*Mike Rebbe, Ameren Illinois career engineer, at right, points to AMI technology on the natural gas meter set, while natural gas mechanic Aaron Fries, at left, and apprentice electric lineman Tyler Rogers discuss how the 600-pound device was attached to the power pole.*



**Ameren Illinois is proud to support our friends at Crisis Nursery in their efforts to strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect. A \$2,500 grant will help Crisis Nursery provide 24-hour emergency care to the children of Champaign County.**





*The energy storage container in Thebes houses 168 battery modules made by S&C Electric in Franklin, Wisconsin. Shown here are final inspections in 2019 prior to the battery system being placed in full operation.*

## Battery system helps keep the lights on in Thebes

Delivering the reliable service our customers count on is more challenging in remote, rural locations or rugged terrain, where it can take crews longer to assess and repair storm-related damage or complete routine maintenance.

Such was the case with the small village of Thebes, located in a rugged, remote area near the Mississippi River. Along with other steps to improve power reliability in the region, in 2017 Ameren Illinois installed a cutting-edge battery system to provide backup power for the village. In late 2019, adjustments were completed that allow this energy storage system to work with other sophisticated controls to automatically restore service almost as soon as a power outage occurs.

Thanks to these changes to the backup battery system, customers in the Thebes area are experiencing fewer and shorter outages in 2020. The system has generated positive feedback from customers and community leaders alike.

The Thebes battery storage system was featured in the latest edition of T&D World magazine.

**Ameren Illinois' proposed Downstate Clean Energy Affordability Act includes plans to install new energy storage systems in other parts of our 43,700-square-mile service territory. As Ameren Illinois Chairman and President Richard Mark told T&D World magazine:**

*"Energy storage systems can improve customer reliability. Moving forward, we'll continue to test these storage systems to ensure that they can handle the variability we experience in customer load. This data will help inform future installations of energy storage systems throughout our service territory."*