



BUSY LINE

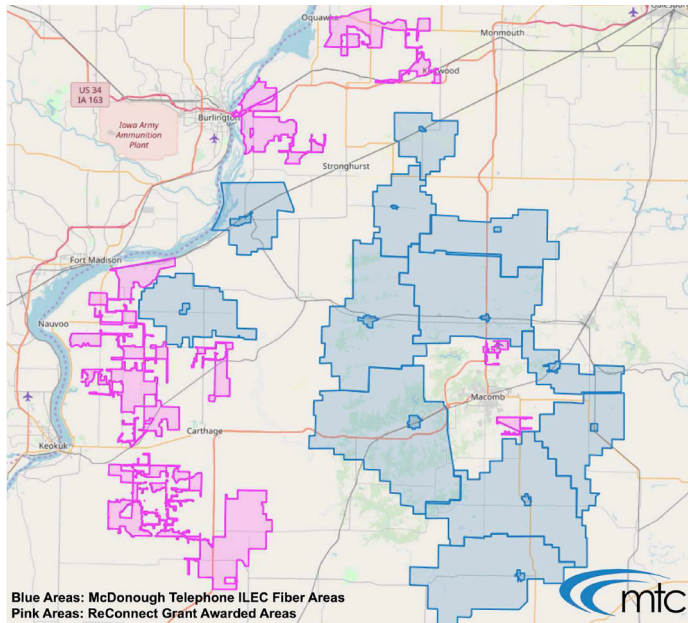
McDonough Telephone Cooperative | Colchester, IL

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MTC Awarded \$18 Million in USDA ReConnect Grant Money to Expand Fiber in Rural Illinois

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced McDonough Telephone Cooperative's (MTC) \$18 million award from the ReConnect Program at a press conference in Galesburg. The USDA created this program to help fund projects that work to bring fiber-optic internet to rural Americans.

With this grant, MTC will expand its fiber-to-the-premises (FTTP) network to more than 1,583 people, 274 farms, and 41 businesses to offer high-speed internet in Hancock, Henderson, McDonough and Warren counties, providing currently unserved locations with Gigabit high-speed fiber internet.



Blue Areas: McDonough Telephone ILEC Fiber Areas
Pink Areas: ReConnect Grant Awarded Areas



"We are proud to receive this award and look forward to expanding reliable fiber broadband to the underserved and unserved rural areas of Western IL," said Jay Griswold, President and CEO of MTC. "This ReConnect grant aligns with our commitment to bring fast, reliable and affordable broadband to rural America. We are excited to be able to finally connect locations like the Macomb Airport and many family farms who lack access to high-speed Internet today."

MTC's construction teams will be working throughout the Grant areas placing conduit, cable and fiber lines underground once they finalize all authorizations later this year. MTC will begin offering their services to homes and businesses as the network is completed and is already collecting interest registrations through their website, mtc.crowdfiber.com.

For more information about MTC's ReConnect build, visit mdtc.net/mtc-awarded-reconnect-grant/ or follow MTC's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/followmdtc.

What's HAPPENING



We will be closed for Good Friday, Friday, April 7.



Happy Easter! April 9 is Easter Sunday



Know what's below!



24/7 Pay by phone!
833-699-1832

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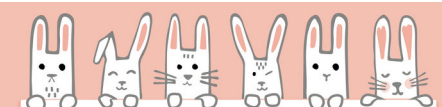
Jason VYHNANEK



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- 4/1-30: **Prairie Egg Hunt**, 9am-6pm, Lakeview Nature Center
 - 4/2: **Foos For Families**, 2-7pm, WIU Rec Center
 - 4/5: **Wednesday Wine Run/Walk**, 6pm, The Wine Sellers (*Every Wednesday*)
 - 4/8: **Western Horn Festival**, 9am-4pm, COFAC Recital Hall
 - 4/15: **Nature Makers Workshop**, 12-1pm, Lakeview Nature Center
 - 4/15: **The Ex-Bombers**, 8-11:30pm, Forgottonia Brewing
 - 4/20: **Free Food Pantry**, 5:30-6:30pm, The Crossing
 - 4/22: **Earth Day Volunteer Opportunity**, 12-2pm, Lakeview Nature Center
 - 4/29 **Dan Eilers**, 7-9pm, Forgottonia Brewing
 - 4/28: **Noticing Nature**, 3:30-4pm, Lakeview Nature Center
- For more events or details, visit macomb.com/events/



Phone Number Update:

Name: _____

Account Number: _____

New Phone Number: _____

A contact number is as important as your address. Help us update our records by completing the form and returning it with your payment or call our office at 309.776.3211.

April is National Safe Digging Month!

April is the month when outdoor digging projects begin in earnest. From small do-it-yourself tasks to large construction jobs, every digging project requires a call to JULIE – it's quick, easy, and provides for the safety of excavators and homeowners. Simply call JULIE at 8-1-1 or 1-800-892-0123. You can also enter your locate request via www.illinois1call.com.

Tips for safe digging:



Know What's Below: Call 811 or make an online request at least 48 hours before digging to have underground lines marked.



Projects Large and Small Require a Call: This includes activities such as planting trees, building decks, and installing a fence or mailbox.



Dig with Care: The horizontal location of underground utilities will be marked, but their depth will not be. Any time you suspect unmarked hazards or if you must dig near a marked utility line, hand dig the area carefully. Backfill the soil gently to avoid damaging any utilities.

If an underground facility is struck:

Leave the area immediately and tell others to stay away. Call 911 and then call 811 to report the incident. Report even minor damage; what looks harmless can cause big trouble.

Get a \$10 Bill Credit!

Sign up for paperless billing and auto-pay and get a **one-time \$10 bill credit!**

*To Qualify for the one-time \$10 bill credit, customers must enroll in paperless billing AND Auto-Pay for the first time.

Recipe Of The Month

Recipe: Ground Beef Orzo with Tomato Cream Sauce



- Ingredients:**
- 1 pound lean ground beef
 - 1/2 medium onion chopped
 - 3-4 cloves garlic minced
 - 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes optional
 - 1/2 teaspoon Italian seasoning
 - 1 cup uncooked orzo pasta
 - 1 (14 fluid oz) can tomato sauce
 - 3/4 cup beef broth
 - 1 cup heavy/whipping cream
 - 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
 - 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
 - 2 cups (packed) fresh spinach
 - Salt & pepper to taste

- Directions:**
1. Add the ground beef to a large pot and break it up with your spoon. Let it cook, without stirring, over medium-high heat for 5-6 minutes.
 2. Add the onion to the pot and stir/break the beef up into small pieces. Let it cook for another 5 min. or so. If there's a lot of excess fat, spoon some of it out. Otherwise, leave it in the pot.
 3. Stir in the garlic, red pepper flakes, Italian seasoning, and orzo. Cook for about a minute.
 4. Stir in the tomato sauce, beef broth, cream, and Worcestershire sauce. Once it starts to bubble, reduce heat to medium or medium low, and simmer for 10 min., uncovered, stirring fairly often (so the orzo doesn't stick to the bottom).
 5. Take the pot off the heat, stir in the parmesan and spinach, and cover the pot for about 3-5 minutes or until it has thickened up to your liking. Season with salt & pepper as needed and serve immediately.