



Cold Comforts: Ameren Illinois gives away air conditioning units to those in need

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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ALTON - Thanks to donations from **Ameren Illinois**, 60 River Bend families will have air conditioning units to survive the hottest days of summer.

The energy efficient air conditioning units were donated by Ameren Illinois in partnership with **Madison County Community Development**. They were distributed to those in need by Ameren Illinois Wednesday afternoon from their operating center, located at 700 Oakwood Avenue in Alton. **Ameren Illinois Community and Public Relations Director Stacy Young** said the 60 units given away to Madison County residents were given based on immediate needs.

"We give them to people who meet the low income housing and efficiency standards," she said "Those are based on income level and things like children and the elderly living in the home. It is not based on a first-come, first-served basis."



Young said Ameren Illinois consulted with Senior Services Plus as well as Madison County Development. She said Ameren Illinois has given 250 of the 1,700 air conditioning units donated since the program's inception in 2013 to Madison County residents.

The donations are done through the **Ameren Cares** program, which once donated fans to those in need. Young said the fan donations were changed to air conditioning units following the current **CEO Richard Mark** coming from St. Louis in 2013. Young said Mark helped institute such a giveaway in the St. Louis market during his time there.

Madison County Board Chairperson Alan Dunstan said the program is very beneficial to area residents.

"As we head into the summer months of high heat and humidity, the Ameren Cares program will keep 60 households stay safe and cool this summer," Dunstan said in a release. "The extreme temperatures we experience in the Midwest are particularly dangerous to senior citizens and the very young. During periods of high temperatures, we hope county residents will frequently check on family members, friends and neighbors to ensure they are safe."

Ameren Illinois also distributed 75 air conditioners to East St. Louis residents Wednesday morning. Young said residents of Peoria will receive 75 air conditioners as well. In all, the Ameren Cares program will give 500 air conditioning units to those in need this year. That is the most donations since the program's inception. Young said 300 units were distributed in 2013.

