



PILOT PROGRAM PROMOTES ENERGY SAVINGS, INDEPENDENCE

Little Tucker Doubet of Pekin, Illinois, is an active, happy kid, a proud big brother, and an avid video gamer. His differences don't slow him down.

"Tucker was born without arms or legs. His way of getting around is rolling or scootin' across the floor," says Brad Doubet, a single father who works in a chemical plant to support his two sons: Tucker, 6, and Mason, 4. "Tucker doesn't really have access to a lot of the things the other kids have access to, but he makes his own way pretty well with what he's got."

Still, small things most of us take for granted, like turning on a light, require more time and effort for Tucker.

That all changed in 2019, thanks to the Ameren Illinois Accessibility Pilot Project, which partnered the utility with Google. Ameren Illinois turns to trusted local non-profits like Easterseals to identify potential candidates for the Program and to ensure that best practices in accessibility are followed.

"We are giving smart home makeovers to families and individuals living with a disability to allow them to be more energy efficient and comfortable in their home and to gain some accessibility benefits," says Kristol Simms, Director of Energy Efficiency.

Participating customers first receive an Energy Assessment to provide a customized energy efficiency and accessibility solution for their home. Ameren Illinois then partners with trusted local contractors, with an emphasis on diverse-owned businesses, to implement the upgrades.

"It's pretty neat that Tucker has the independence now to go into a room and turn the light on or off himself. He's pretty excited to be able to do that."

— Brad Doubet,
Ameren Illinois Customer

"One of my goals has been to ensure that all utility customers have an opportunity to receive real and meaningful savings from the Energy Efficiency Program they have been paying for."

— Richard Mark, Ameren Illinois
Chairman & President

91% of participants said they were satisfied with the Ameren Illinois Accessibility Pilot Program.

To learn more, visit
[AmerenIllinoisSavings.com/
AccessibilityPilot](https://AmerenIllinoisSavings.com/AccessibilityPilot)

or call **1.866.838.6918**

Access to Independence

At no cost to the customer, the Accessibility Pilot Program provides a custom set of measures which include:



Smart Thermostat



Google Home Mini



Connected Lighting



Decorative Lighting



Smart Plugs



Motion-Sensing Night Lights

Each of these items allows the customer to conveniently turn them on and off by voice command, or a phone app. More than 90% of participants were satisfied with the equipment installed, and would recommend voice-activated lighting and smart thermostats to a friend. 100% reported satisfaction with their Google Home Mini.

TUCKER DOUBET

In the Doubet home, the Ameren Illinois team — including Jarvis Electric and Green Home Weatherization — installed voice-controlled lighting in Tucker's bedroom, his father's bedroom, the living room, and kitchen, and made the living room TV voice-controlled as well. Throughout the home, lighting was upgraded to high-efficiency LED bulbs anywhere voice-activated lighting technology was not installed. Advanced power strips were provided to reduce energy use from the three television sets in the home, and a smart thermostat will help the Doubets save on heating and cooling costs.

"We took measures in several rooms to make it more convenient for Tucker to go about his daily life," says Simms. "We also added faucet aerators and efficient shower heads throughout the house so they can save money on their water bill."

A centerpiece of the Pilot is the Google Home Mini, a voice-controlled speaker that can be used to control smart home lighting and measures, play music, answer questions, create a shopping list, and many more helpful tasks.

"Tucker is happy that he can turn the lights on himself so he won't be scared at night to roll into different rooms in the house," says Brad Doubet, noting that Tucker can now take over a daily chore previously assigned to Mason: turning off the bedroom night light every morning. "It's pretty neat that Tucker has the independence now to go into a room and turn the light on or off himself. He's pretty excited to be able to do that."

Tucker is also pretty excited about the Google Home Mini's broadcast function, which allows him to communicate with his father and brother when they are in different rooms.

GREG DOYLE

In nearby Peoria, that same voice-activated and energy-saving technology is making a difference in the home of Greg Doyle, a print shop employee with cerebral palsy. Greg uses crutches or a wheelchair outside the home, but often crawls to get around his home.

"Before, I used one or two lights in my entire house depending on what level I was on. Now, I can use the smart lighting and choose which one I want to use instead of just what is closest to me. I like being able to hop into bed at night and get under the covers and then turn off the lights. That's the best ever," says Greg, whose morning routine now takes half the time it did before. "The Google Home Mini saves a lot of time. It's pretty awesome actually. I didn't realize how much it would help."

Greg is equally enthusiastic about the impact to one of his most challenging chores: laundry. It was dangerous for him to carry the basket to the basement laundry room without use of his legs, and have to flip on the light switch on the stairs and then again in the dark basement. Now he can control all of the lights with his voice.

"It's made a humongous difference with my laundry, because I used to have to basically get level with the light switch, get everything on, turn everything off," says Greg. "Now I can go down to my basement and turn on the lights as I go. I don't have to risk a fall; I don't have to risk pulling a muscle. That's been a godsend."

Like Greg, 91% of participants feel that their home is safer and more accessible, thanks to the Ameren Illinois Accessibility Pilot Program. Along with the safety benefits, smart technology will help these customers save money on their utility bill. In addition, the independence they gain is priceless.

Visit AmerenIllinoisSavings.com/AccessibilityPilot to learn more.