



From Here to There

By Michael Wade, President and CEO

Spring. You just can't say enough about it. For me, spring is going outside and enjoying the great outdoors. For my wife, it's making me come back indoors to help her with spring cleaning. For the cooperative, spring is the start of a new construction and maintenance season. It's the time when we begin inspecting our overhead and underground distribution system and start our maintenance projects such as pole replacement and vegetation management.

In spring, one of our challenges is to keep our rights-of-way clear of underbrush and to trim tree limbs that could come in contact with our overhead lines. The underbrush hinders our efforts to access our facilities to perform inspections and routine maintenance. Limbs cause outages during storms as they contact our high-voltage circuits. To provide the reliability you deserve, we maintain a portion of our right-of-way each year. If you

are contacted by the cooperative concerning trimming our right-of-way, we ask for your support as our vegetation management crews provide this valuable service for the cooperative.

No matter how large or small, if your spring projects involve digging, don't forget to contact Diggers Hotline by dialing 811. Without knowing what is underground, you are putting yourself and your family at risk. Play it safe by making a free call to Diggers Hotline at 811 to ensure that your project won't involve a preventable accident.

Your opinion matters. In fact, your opinion tells us how we are doing and allows us to make the necessary changes to serve you better. As we mentioned last month, we will be conducting a telephone survey to gauge our member satisfaction with the cooperative. If you are contacted to participate in the survey, I would ask that you take the time to respond and help us improve our service to you.

We are putting the finishing touches on preparations for our annual meeting of the membership. If you haven't already made plans to attend, please mark your calendars; we hope to see you on Saturday, April 18, 2015, at the Rosholt High School in Rosholt. At the meeting, you will hear an update of our progress in 2014, visit with friends, enjoy a great meal, and maybe win a door prize. I hope to see each and every one of you there. ■



BUDGET PAYMENT PLAN AVAILABLE

To help reduce the impact of higher bills during higher usage times of the year, such as winter, we're pleased to offer our members a Budget Payment Plan option. With the Budget Payment Plan, you're able to spread the higher electric bills caused by seasonal usage over the course of a year.

Advantages of Budget Payment Plan

- **Easier Budgeting**—It's hard to budget household expenses when your electric bill goes up and down with seasonal use. With the Budget Payment Plan, you'll know what to expect to pay each month.
- **Convenience**—Budget Payment Plan is a free member service that spreads the cost of higher seasonal electric bills more evenly over the year.
- **Accurate Billing**—We review your account twice a year so we can adjust your budget amount, if necessary, to keep you on track with your actual account balance as closely as possible.
- **Easy Enrollment**—A quick call to us at 1-800-377-2932 is all it takes. Please note, to get started we'll need to have your account current.

Give us a call and we can let you know what your Budget Payment would be or answer any other questions you may have.



CWEC 77th Annual Meeting

**Saturday,
April 18**

Rosholt High School

346 Randolph Street West, Rosholt, WI

Join Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative on Saturday, April 18, 2015, for our 77th Annual Meeting. The meeting will be held at the Rosholt High School in Rosholt.

Registration for the meeting begins at 9 a.m., with members having an opportunity to socialize over coffee and rolls and view various displays.

President & CEO Mike Wade and Board Chairman Anthony Buss, Jr., will keynote the meeting's business session, which begins at 10 a.m. During the business session, members will have the opportunity to hear how their co-op is faring financially, learn details about various services offered by their member-owned power supplier, and receive updates on state and federal regulatory issues of importance to electric cooperatives. An election for two board positions will be held.

As a member-owner of an electric cooperative, you can voice your opinions at the annual meeting. This is an advantage cooperatives have over the investor-owned utilities, whose customers have no say in the management of the company and cannot vote for their board of directors.

Following the business meeting ComedyCity Improv (left) will provide the entertainment. This is a troupe of improvisation comedy performers who have been entertaining

Wisconsin crowds with their family-friendly show for over 25 years.

Prizes will be given to all in attendance. In addition to many door prizes, one lucky member will have a chance to win a grand prize consisting of a big-screen TV. There will be games for kids 4 years and older with a prize for each child. For all of the drawings, winners need to be present.

Lunch will be served after the entertainment, so make sure you stick around.

Help Fill Our Local Food Pantry Shelves

CWEC will be kicking off its food pantry drive at the annual meeting on Saturday, April 18, 2015. Bring three or more non-perishable food items, that are not expired, and you will receive a FREE compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulb (*limit of five bulbs per family*).

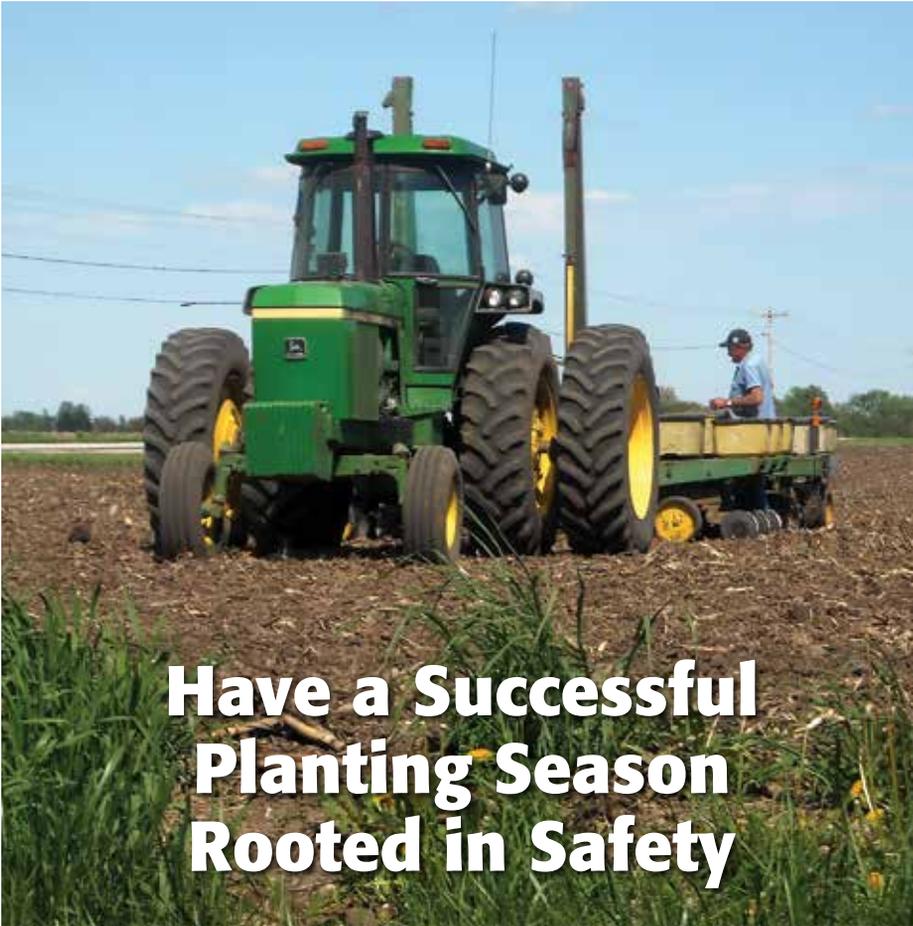


Your generous donation helps fill the shelves of food pantries in our service area.

If you cannot make it to the annual meeting, you can bring your food pantry donations at our office, located at 10401 Lystul Road in Rosholt, throughout the year, and you will still receive the free CFL bulb.

For more information call 715-677-2211.





Have a Successful Planting Season Rooted in Safety

As farmers make plans to return to their fields for spring planting, Safe Electricity urges farm workers to be particularly alert to the dangers of working near overhead power lines. Operating large equipment near these lines is one of the often overlooked, yet potentially deadly, hazards of working on a farm.

Start by making sure everyone knows to maintain a minimum 10-foot clearance from power lines. “The minimum 10 foot distance is a 360-degree rule—below, to the side, and above lines,” says Molly Hall, executive director of the Energy Education Council’s Safe Electricity program. “It can be difficult to estimate distance, and sometimes a power line is closer than it looks. A spotter or someone with a broader view can help.”

Be aware of increased height

when loading and transporting tractors on trailer beds. Many tractors are now equipped with radios and communications systems that have very tall antennas extending from the cab that could make contact with power lines. Avoid raising the arms of planters or cultivators or raising truck beds near power lines, and never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path.

Simply coming too close to a power line while working is dangerous as electricity can arc or “jump” to conducting material or objects, such as a ladder, pole, or truck. Remember, even non-metallic materials such as lumber, tree limbs, tires, ropes, and hay will conduct electricity depending on factors like dampness, dust, and dirt contamination.

When guy wires (a grounded wire used to stabilize utility poles) are

broken, these normally neutral wires can be anything but harmless. If you hit a guy wire and break it, call the utility to fix it. Do not do it yourself. When dealing with electrical poles and wires, always call the electric utility.

“If your equipment does come into contact with power lines, stay in the cab and call for help,” explains Hall. “If the power line is energized and you step outside, your body becomes the path to the ground. Even if a line has landed on the ground, there is still potential for the area to be energized. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until the electric utility arrives.”

“If leaving the cab is necessary, as in the case of fire, the proper action is to jump—not step—with both feet together, hitting the ground at the same time,” Hall advises. “Do not allow any part of your body to touch the equipment and the ground at the same time. Hop to safety, keeping both feet together as you leave the area.” Once you get away from the equipment, never attempt to get back on or even touch the equipment before the power has been shut off.

Managers should make sure full-time and seasonal workers are educated on these safety precautions, and danger areas need to be thoroughly identified and labeled. Designate pre-planned routes that avoid hazard areas.

Farmers may want to consider moving or burying power lines around buildings or busy pathways. If planning a new outbuilding or farm structure, contact your power supplier for information on minimum safe clearances from overhead and underground power lines. Call your electric cooperative to measure line height—no one should attempt this on their own without professional assistance.

For more electrical safety information, visit SafeElectricity.org. ■



If It's Not in Use, Turn Off the Juice!

How Saving Energy Saves More Than Money

By Anne Prince

Reducing household energy use doesn't mean doing without. It doesn't require walking around your house wearing extra sweaters and earmuffs in the dead of winter, or stripping down to the bare essentials in the summer. It means being smarter about how you manage the energy you do use. Consider Central Wisconsin Electric

Cooperative your trusted resource for exploring energy-saving strategies. Not-for-profit, member-owned electric co-ops want to help their member-owners. Sometimes that involves lowering their members' bills, and other times it involves increasing efficiency options to reduce operating costs.

Energy efficiency means performing the same job and getting a similar outcome using less energy. This efficiency is often achieved through a mechanical change, such as replacing an older, less efficient appliance or

mechanical unit with a new model, but sometimes a minor change of habit is all that's needed. Examples could include dimming lights, turning down the thermostat, or washing clothes in cold water instead of hot.

Electric Co-ops Can Help You Use Less Electricity

Consumers recognize that conserving energy is the smart and right thing to do. But they're also looking for guidance on how to do just that. Electric co-ops are a great local resource for helping consumers develop plans tailored to their needs and the local environment. Our employees understand better than most that every household has its own complex energy system.

CWEC offers energy audits, energy-saving tips, recommendations on the latest technology, and advice on choosing and maintaining heating and cooling systems. The first step in this process is easy—simply reach out to us for help with taking control of your own energy use, and you'll be well on your way to achieving the ideal balance of efficiency and conservation. In turn, you will be helping yourself, your community, and the environment—and that benefits all of us.

For information on how you can be more energy efficient, contact Mark Forseth at 1-800-377-2932. ■

Dates to Remember in April

CWEC office closed – Friday, April 3

Easter Sunday – April 5

Iola Community Health Fair

Saturday, April 11

7–10 a.m. at the Iola-Scandinavia Community Fitness & Aquatic Center. Free glucose and lipid panel blood tests (don't forget to fast). Balance testing, numerous health professionals. Iola-Scandinavia LEO Club will serve a pancake & sausage breakfast, \$5 adults, \$3 kids under 12. Sponsored by Iola Lions and ThedaCare. For more information call 715-445-4024.

Walls of Wittenberg Presents: 8th Annual Wine, Beer and Cheese Gala

Saturday, April 11

7–10 p.m. \$25 per person. WOWSPACE, 114 Vinal St., downtown Wittenberg. For more information call 715-253-3525 or go to www.wallofwwittenberg.com.

Walls of Wittenberg Presents: "Artists' Free Play: III"

Opens Saturday, April 11

7–10 p.m. Features work of painters, photographers, three-dimensional artists, and textile artists from Wisconsin. Opening night of the 8th Annual Wine, Beer and Cheese

Gala, \$25 per person. Continues Saturdays and Sundays, 11 a.m.–3 p.m. through May 3; those showings are all FREE. WOWSPACE, 114 Vinal St., downtown Wittenberg. For more information call 715-253-3525 or go to www.wallofwwittenberg.com.

CWEC Annual Meeting

Saturday, April 18

9 a.m. registration, 10 a.m. business meeting starts, followed by entertainment, and lunch served at the conclusion of the entertainment. Rosholt High School. For more information call 715-677-2211.

Rural Health Initiative 4th Annual Wine & Cheese Tasting Fundraiser

Friday, April 24

7–10 p.m.

Crystal Falls Banquet Hall, New London. 45 kinds of wine, 7 brews from Pigeon River Brewing, 25 types of Wisconsin cheeses, and entertainment. For more information go to www.wiruralhealth.org or call Rhonda at 715-524-1488. Fundraiser for Waupaca & Outagamie Counties to benefit the Rural Health Initiative.

To submit your community events email brenda.mazemke@cwecoop.com or call Brenda at 715-677-2211



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