



By Mike Wade,  
President & CEO

## CWEC CONTINUES TO MOVE FORWARD

First, I hope that all of you are safe and healthy. Our country and our state have been through significant turmoil and we are seeing the effects throughout our service area. I wish all of our members and communities a speedy recovery as we adjust to a new normal way of life. Please continue to observe best practices for the health and safety of you and your family.

As I write my column, we are developing plans to open our lobby doors and welcome our members back on June 1. When we decided to close our lobby, we did so out of an abundance of caution to protect the membership and our employees from the spread of the coronavirus. The experience allowed many of our members to explore the different ways to pay their bills and interact with the cooperative. We continue to work with our members on new line extensions and service upgrades, so do not hesitate to

contact us if you have service needs.

Also, as I write my column, the board has not set a date for our annual meeting that was cancelled in April. The state's executive order precluded us from holding a large gathering at the time. Once we have an annual meeting date set, we will make the announcement to our members and send out the ballot material for the director election which has also been placed on hold. Our bylaws require that ballots may be submitted up until the date before the annual meeting.

The board has approved a \$200 donation to each of the food pantries in our service area. The donation will come from our unclaimed capital credit fund as authorized by the state. We know that the donation will help our food pantries maintain their inventory so they can continue to provide food to the needy in our communities.

With spring upon us, Zielies, our vegetation management contractor, is working diligently to clear our rights-of-way of unwanted vegetation so that

we can continue to access our power lines. We appreciate your support of this annual effort to maintain our easements. In addition, PUSH, our pole replacement contractor, is working in our system to replace poles that have reached their useful life. Thank you to PUSH and Zielies for the work you do to help maintain our system.

Although this summer may not be spent exactly like past summers, I hope that you are able to get out and enjoy the warm weather. Stay healthy. Be safe.

**CWEC LOBBY  
REOPENS TO  
THE PUBLIC  
JUNE 1**

## MARK JUNE DAIRY MONTH WITH A FREE GALLON OF MILK

June Dairy Month is a time to pay tribute to the dairy industry, a key contributor to our state's economy. Wisconsin is home to more than 7,000 dairy farms—more than any other state—and an estimated 57 percent of those operate on electric cooperative lines. The coronavirus pandemic has hit our state's farmers hard. With schools closing and restaurants limited to carry-out and delivery services only, dairy farmers have temporarily lost a huge market for their milk. Some have had to dump large quantities of milk.

Ironically, at the same time dairy farmers have been forced to dump milk, many families have been struggling to pay for groceries thanks to pandemic-caused furloughs and job lay-offs.

So this year for June Dairy Month, we're taking action to try to help our members on both sides of this situation.

Through the statewide organization, Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association, Central Wisconsin Electric Cooper-

ative is partnering with Kwik Trip in offering a coupon for a free gallon of milk to all of our co-op members, redeemable at any Kwik Trip store.

Clip out the coupon below and take it to Kwik Trip any time from June 1 to July 16 for a free gallon of your choice of non-fat, 1%, or 2% milk. And when you get back home and pour yourself a cool glass of delicious, wholesome milk, raise a toast to your local dairy farmers.

### BOARD MEETING UPDATE

Normally in this space we share a summary of a Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative board meeting, but because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the March board meeting was cancelled. Even though the meeting was cancelled, the board of directors did receive its normal reports for review.

The board meeting summary will return next month with a summary of the April board meeting, which was a virtual meeting.

**FREE**

One Gallon Jug  
**Nature's Touch® Milk**  
Skim, 1% or 2%

Limit one coupon offer per customer, per visit. Original coupon must be presented to the cashier at the time of purchase. Excludes Orange Juice and Chocolate Milk. Coupon may not be combined with any other offers. No cash value. Good at all Kwik Trip Stores. **Valid June 1 - July 16, 2020**



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**Kwik Trip**

**nature's  
TOUCH**

Central Wisconsin  
Electric Cooperative  
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

**MILK GALLON  
GIVEAWAY**  
WISCONSIN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION





When Jeff Strassburg was looking for ways to cut expenses on the family dairy farm, retrofitting the current light fixtures on the farm to LED light fixtures was one of the solutions he decided upon. The fact that the lighting project would be eligible for energy efficiency rebates through Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative helped cement the decision.

“LED Illumination Specialists did the lighting project for us,” Strassburg said. “They took care of the legwork with Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative for a rebate and other incentives to do the project.”

The project included replacing 4-foot, 32-watt fluorescent tube light fixtures with 15-watt LED fixtures in the farm workshop, milk house, and holding areas. Some 60-watt high output light fixtures were retrofitted with 15-watt LED fixtures. The light fixtures in the two free stall barns were replaced with 150-watt LED fixtures, and additional fixtures were added to the barns.

Bart Schultz, owner and operator of LED Illumination Specialists LLC which did the work, said the lighting changes in the free stall barns increased the foot candles to the eyes of the cows. A foot candle is a measurement of light intensity and is defined as the illuminance of a one-square-foot surface from a uniform source of light.

The project was started in March and completed in April. “We have a lot more light in our barns,” Strassburg said. “We have, I think, 21-foot candles in the barn. It’s pretty impressive.”

Schultz said the change in lighting should increase the milk production of the cows on the farm.

With the current uncertain situation with the milk market, Strassburg said he is trying to keep milk production steady. He added that the change in lighting has allowed him to reduce the cost of feed, while keeping milk production steady.

Timers for the lights were also installed in the free stall barns.

“The free stall barns were running at 24 hours a day on, and we currently have them down to 16 hours a day,” Schultz said.

In addition to saving money because the lights use less energy, Schultz said the LED lights last longer, so they don’t need to be replaced as often. All the products come with a five-year guarantee.

Schultz said his company, which is located in Wittenberg, specializes in farm and school lighting projects.

“I will do a full analysis on their farm and give them a breakdown on what they can expect in energy savings and what we might do to help them increase milk production,” Schultz said. “I’m trying to get farmers to save as much as they can right now.”

The savings will help Strassburg, who owns the farm with his wife, Jeni, and his parents, Ken and Shirley, keep the farm running successfully. The farm, which has around 1,000 milking cows, dates back to 1886. Jeff Strassburg is the fifth generation operating the farm. His son, Jacob, recently graduated from Fox Valley Technical College with a degree in soils and agronomy. His daughter, Alyssa, is a senior at Bowler High School and plans to pursue a degree in accounting and ag science technology.

“I’m pretty lucky and pretty fortunate to have two kids interested in the family business,” Strassburg said.

He added, “I really appreciate the incentives that Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative put towards the light project. With the tough economic times on a farm today, every little bit helps. And it is really a testament of the partnership that we have between our local supplier, like Bart Schultz at LED Illumination and Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative and ourselves.”

## Youth Leadership Congress cancelled

The 2020 Youth Leadership Congress (YLC), planned for July 14–16 at UW-River Falls, has been canceled due to the continuing need to avoid large gatherings in an effort to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. This will be the first summer that the longstanding, popular youth leadership gathering will not be held since the program was first launched in 1964; however, the number-one priority is the health and safety of students, electric cooperatives, and their members.

Next summer’s YLC is tentatively set for July 13–15, 2021.

# CALL OUR OFFICE TO MAKE BILL PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

As we continue to navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic, we realize some of our members may be experiencing financial difficulties because of lost income. Even though we have currently suspended disconnects due to nonpayment, we encourage our members to pay their electric bill by the due date.

If you are unable to pay your entire electric bill balance, we ask that you pay as much as possible to help prevent an ever-increasing balance on your account. If you are having financial difficulties because of lost income, please call the Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative office at 715-677-2211 to discuss setting up a deferred payment agreement for your account.

## PAYMENT METHOD OPTIONS

Visit our website at [www.cwecoop.com](http://www.cwecoop.com) for a list of all the options we have for members to pay their electric bill without coming to the office.

Once you are at the homepage of the CWEC website, go to “Billing” on the main menu bar, and click on “Payment Options” in the dropdown menu. This will take you to a web page that contains the payment options, which include:

- Log in to SmartHub and click “Make Payment”
- Click on “One-Time Online Payment” button (need last name/business name and account number)
- Call our 24/7 payment line at 844-239-0083
- Mail your payment to: Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 100, Rosholt, WI 54473
- Drop your payment in one of our drop payment boxes located at: the west side of the co-op’s office building in Rosholt; and the second is located next to the gas pumps at the Cenex Convenience Store in Iola.

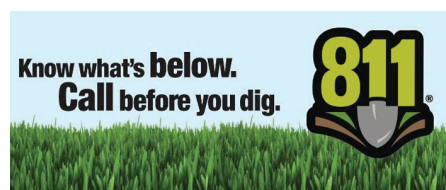
- Enroll in Automatic Bill Pay
- Call (800) 377-2932 for customer service or to report a power outage
- Email us at [cwec@cwecoop.com](mailto:cwec@cwecoop.com)

As we continue to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic, any steps we take in accordance with local, state, and federal directives and the CDC, will be posted on our website at [www.cwecoop.com](http://www.cwecoop.com) or our Facebook page. Any additional steps we take will be with the safety of our members, employees, and the public in mind.

## Financial assistance may be available

Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative’s Commitment to Community Program is designed to help households with their energy costs, including electric bills. For many Wisconsin households, energy costs place a severe and continuing stress on the family budget. To better serve our members, CWEC is joining the Wisconsin Home Energy Plus (HE+) program. This program is funded through public benefits and federal dollars to help eligible low-income households pay for home energy assistance and weatherization. Members may be eligible for energy assistance if they meet the HE+ program guidelines. Members should contact their local agency to determine eligibility.

County	Agency	Telephone Number
Marathon	Energy Services, Inc.	715-842-3111
Portage	Energy Services, Inc.	715-344-5999
Shawano	Dept. of Human Services	715-526-4740
Waupaca	Energy Services, Inc.	715-258-6820



## CALL 811 BEFORE DIGGING

With more people spending time at home, chances are that more yardwork is being done than in years past. Some of this yardwork may include the need for digging on your property. If that is the case, property owners need to take proper safety steps. The first step to ensure safe digging is to call Diggers Hotline at 811.

Diggers Hotline is a free service that must be used if you plan on doing any kind of digging in order to avoid damaging underground lines. Property owners

must call Diggers Hotline at least three working days before they start digging.

Wisconsin Statute 182.0175 requires that property owners notify Diggers Hotline before they excavate, grade, trench, dig, drill, auger, tunnel, scrape, plow cable or pipe.

When you call Diggers Hotline, you will need to provide the following information: your name, mailing address, phone number, email address, as well as the name of the person who will be doing the digging and their phone number. Diggers Hotline will also need to know the city, township, or village your work will take place in, the address of the dig site, and the name of the side street your dig site is on and the nearest intersecting road.

Dig site information will also need to be provided. This includes the start date of the dig project, the type of project you

a doing that requires digging, as well as marking instructions on how you will mark the area in which underground lines need to be located in.

After the call to Diggers Hotline is completed, they will coordinate between excavators and the owners of the buried lines on the property. The owners of the lines will mark the locations near your job site with paint and/or flags. Property owners need to be aware that private lines are considered the responsibility of the landowner and will not be marked by Diggers Hotline. A locating company can be hired to mark private lines.

Since locating underground lines is not an exact science, the actual location of the lines could vary from the position of the marks. Because of that, state law mandates an 18-inch buffer zone on each side of the marks indicating an underground line.





## CWEC LINEMEN HELP FELLOW CO-OP IN UPPER MICHIGAN

When a ROPE (Restoration of Power in an Emergency) request was received from Alger-Delta Electric Cooperative in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative linemen Mack Yarbrough and Nate Singer didn't hesitate to volunteer to help.

The ROPE request was needed because Alger-Delta Electric Cooperative's distribution systems were damaged when an April 12 snowstorm dumped heavy wet snow on the area. Yarbrough and Singer left on April 13 with a CWEC bucket truck and a Polaris Ranger with tracks to help Alger-Delta Electric Cooperative.

"It's a good experience working with other crews and I enjoy restoring power to those without it," Yarbrough said on why he volunteered to help.

Singer added, "It's always fun meeting and working with new people for a common goal and it was nice to be able to make a positive difference with everything going on in the world right now."



Of course, Singer was referring to the COVID-19 pandemic. Both he and Yarbrough said COVID-19 didn't play a role in them volunteering for the ROPE request.

"I just knew I had to be cautious during the trip, but we were still happy to go help," Yarbrough said.

Singer said they practiced social distancing during the trip, washed their hands regularly, and disinfected the cab of the truck each morning.

Yarbrough said the heavy snow caused trees and branches to fall on powerlines, so they spent a lot of their time putting

powerlines back up in rights-of-way. Singer added that there were also broken poles to be replaced.

Singer said that a lot of the damaged powerlines were in areas that were inaccessible with trucks, so the linemen had to climb many poles in order to restore power. Yarbrough and Singer returned on April 15.

Helping other co-ops in times of need is Principal No. 6 of the Cooperative Principles – Cooperation Among Cooperatives.

## HOW TO SAVE ENERGY WHILE WORKING FROM HOME

Working from home, even on a temporary basis, may increase your energy use. It means that you're spending more time using a computer, lights, and other appliances at home instead of in your workplace. But by improving the energy efficiency of your home office equipment, you can save on energy costs without hampering your productivity.

1. Make sure computers and other office equipment are turned off when they're not in use for an extended period.
2. Many electronic devices continue to use standby power even after they're turned off. Connect your office equipment to an advanced power strip, which will automatically shut off power to unused devices.
3. Set office equipment, such as printers and scanners, to automatically switch to sleep mode when not in use. In addition to saving energy, the equipment will stay cooler, which will help to extend its useful life.
4. Use a laptop computer instead of a desktop. Laptops use less than one-third the energy of a typical desktop computer.
5. Adjust the thermostat to the unoccupied setting. This avoids wasting energy by conditioning the entire house while you're occupying only a small portion of it.
6. Use task lighting with energy-efficient lamps. A desk lamp uses less energy than whole-room lighting.



When purchasing new office equipment, make sure it's ENERGY STAR qualified. These products use less energy than standard models. If every home office product purchased in the United States were ENERGY STAR qualified, Americans would save an estimated \$75 million a year in energy costs, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.



**Central Wisconsin  
Electric Cooperative**  
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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### Our Mission

**We are your trusted energy  
partner and provider of valued  
community support.**