

Electric Line Newsletter

Farm Safety Week

Harvest time is a very exciting time for farmers. After long hours working the crops, farmers can finally see the fruit of their labor. The grueling hours can make workers weary and prone to forget safety precautions. "Harvest time is the most likely period for farm related injury", says Bob Aherin, Extension agricultural safety specialist, University of Illinois. During the excitement and hard work of harvest time it is important to keep safety in mind.

Before you start your harvest, make sure you know how to use all your equipment. All farm workers should be trained on the equipment. Farm equipment may be tempting to children but it is very important to teach children that they are not toys and are very dangerous. It may be easy to want to push through fatigue but, this is very dangerous. When you are tired you are more likely to take shortcuts and risk injury to yourself and others.

Electrical safety is very important while farming. Know where all overhead lines are located on your property. Always keep objects ten feet away from overhead lines. It can be difficult to know where you are in relation to overhead power lines. Using a spotter can help minimize the risk of accidentally hitting a line. Always set extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads to prevent contact with overhead lines. The number one cause of electrocutions on farm is an auger that hits a power line when being used. Grain augers should always be positioned horizontally before being moved. Do not allow irrigation water nozzles to spray on powerlines. A water stream hitting a powerline could energize the entire system. This can create a shock hazard to anyone nearby or in contact with the equipment.

If equipment gets hung up on a powerline, the operator should not get off the machinery unless, they are in immediate danger. If the operator touches the ground and the equipment at the same time, they will become a channel for electricity.

Harvest time is very exciting. It might be easy to cut corners to save time however, cutting corners on safety can be extremely dangerous. Stay safe and be vigilant of your surroundings during harvest time. Cutting corners isn't worth getting hurt.

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Office Hours: Monday thru
Friday; 7:30am - 4:00pm

Important Dates:

Sept. 2: Labor Day

Sept. 11: Patriots Day

Sept. 15-21: Farm Safety
Week

Sept. 23: First Day of
Autumn



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Turning the Lights Back On

Two large storms ripped through Wisconsin July 19 and 20, leaving extensive damage and power outages. Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative's (CWEC) service area was hit particularly hard causing 6,151, about 78%, of our meters to lose power by Saturday morning. On Saturday morning CWEC sent out a request for assistance through the ROPE (Restoration of Power in an Emergency) program. Eight cooperatives and contractors sent 40 crew members to help throughout the week.

The process of restoring power was long and strenuous. When an outage comes in, it is impossible to know exactly what the crews will be dealing with until they get to the site. Nothing could have prepared them for the destruction they encountered in a number of our service areas. Linemen dealt with many downed lines, poles, and extensive damage to our substations.

Some roads were completely covered with trees. Before the linemen could work on the lines, they had to clear the downed trees and branches that blocked the roads in an effort to make the area safe. "The hardest part of restoration was clearing up the roads to get to the place that needed to be repaired," explained CWEC's Line Manager Dennis Magee.

When working long hours, it is easy to get fatigued and set safety to the wayside. All of the linemen working during the storm restoration practiced safety even when the hours got long. There were no injuries reported. "Safety was our number one thing," explained CWEC Vice President of Operations Kevin Kurtzweil, "We were lucky that even though the visiting linemen were coming into a system they didn't know, it went smoothly and no one got hurt."

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Lines down on Pulaski Road

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CWEC couldn't have done this alone. We were lucky to have our community, co-ops, and contractors rally around us during our time of need. Co-ops and contractors from around the state and Illinois traveled to help us restore power to our members. CWEC would like to thank Oakdale Electric Cooperative, Richland Electric Cooperative, Jo-Carroll Energy, Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative, Jump River Electric Cooperative, Scenic Rivers Electric Cooperative, Zielies Tree Service, Inc., and PUSH, Inc. for sending crews and equipment. Thank you to our local restaurants for helping feed the linemen while they were out in the field. Our vendors also, went above and beyond to make sure that our linemen had the tools and supplies they needed. We couldn't have done what we did without your help.

We would also like to thank our members for your patience, understanding and kindness. Being out of power for long stretches of time is frustrating. We appreciate your kind words and actions. A family in Tigerton generously brought dinner to a crew who was working in their area. Many members also shared encouraging thoughts on our Facebook page. One member commented, "Our neighborhood regained power this afternoon and I just want to thank all the hardworking people that make that happen from our wonderful employees of the community to the wonderful people that have traveled to help! Your hard work and time is greatly appreciated! Definitely more than words can express the gratitude I feel! Please continue to work safely! Again THANK YOU!!!!".

Your comments did not go unnoticed.

"This was quite the storm and we suffered a lot of widespread damage to our power lines across our whole system. Everyone in our company and several other co-ops worked around the clock to restore power as quickly as we could. It is always great to see how we can all come together and accomplish a lot in a relatively short amount of time," said CWEC Operations Crew Leader Mack Yarbrough.

After long hours and hard work we were able to restore power on Thursday, July 25.



Thank you Crews!