



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



**Lila Shower,  
President & CEO**

## DO WE HAVE ENOUGH POWER TO KEEP THE LIGHTS ON?

There has been a lot of talk regarding the amount of electricity available to power homes, farms, businesses, and the newest addition – artificial intelligence (AI) centers. The new AI center in Mount Pleasant (formerly where Foxconn was located) can use as much electricity in one day as the city of Madison consumes in one day. With these types of businesses popping up around Wisconsin, there has been concern as to whether there will enough available power, and whether we may experience rolling black outs.

For the past several years, due to green energy mandates, generation plants have been shutting down coal plants, which generate massive amounts of electricity. Co-ops, through our national organization NRECA, have raised concerns with the federal government that by closing down these plants, energy prices will not be affordable to our rural members, and we are concerned about reliability. Will there be enough electricity for everyone? Electric cooperatives are bipartisan, we work with both sides of the aisle at

local, state and federal levels. We work with everyone who helps co-ops provide reliable, safe and affordable electricity.

On April 8, 2025 electric cooperative leaders joined President Donald Trump at the White House as he announced several executive actions aimed at protecting crucial coal-fired power plants and other always-available energy generating resources. The actions will prevent the premature closure of essential generation, helping co-ops meet tomorrow's energy needs.

The event showed that co-ops aren't just at the table when it comes to energy policy, they're helping set it. President Trump's actions included:

- A proclamation granting coal units that submitted a request to the Environmental Protection Agency an up to two-year statutory exemption from the mercury and air rule.
- An executive order directing Secretary of Energy Chris Wright to evaluate the nation's situation on reliability and use any authorities at his discretion, including emergency authorities, to keep units

operating and to maintain reliability.

- An executive order targeting unattainable and aggressive state renewable energy/electricity portfolio standards.
- An executive order to support coal mining and production, including coal exports, mining on federal lands, DOE Loan Program Office support for coal technologies and other actions.

Our advocacy work is paying off. We've worked closely with President Trump's team to ensure that they understand the importance of a diverse energy portfolio underpinned by always available power resources. At a time when electricity demand is skyrocketing, we need to be adding more always-available energy to the grid, not shutting down power plants that have useful life left.

Smart energy policies help keep the lights on, and I am incredibly proud of the work electric co-op's are doing together to unleash American energy, lower energy costs and ensure that the lights stay on for businesses and families. Across the country, 79 coal units are wholly or partially owned by 31 NRECA member co-ops.

This is good news for your co-op and for you. Thank you and have a wonderful month.

## BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative was held at 8:03 a.m. on February 27, 2025. The following is a summary of the meeting activities. The agenda, minutes of the January 23, 2025 meeting, new and terminated memberships, and the monthly safety and compliance report were approved.

### Action Items

- a. Monthly Financial Statements and Reports were reviewed by the Finance Committee.
- b. The Board approved the 2025 WACC rate for discounted estate retirement at 6.29%.
- c. The Board approved the Federated Youth Foundation Donations for 2025.
- d. Board Policy 301 – Whistleblower and Policy 401 – Financial Oversight and Reporting were reviewed. Both policies were approved with the changes presented.

Operations and Engineering – Mr. Kurtzweil submitted a written report. The new tandem digger truck is ready for use. The Sannes Substation work is on hold due to the frost in the ground. An update to the 10-year work plan was shared.

Accounting and Finance – Financial reports were presented by Ms. Claussen. The PCA for January was -\$0.00041. The auditors were on site on January 31, 2025, and are working on concluding the audit.

Member Services – Ms. Mazemke submitted a written report. The Annual Meeting will be held on April 10, 2025 at Wittenberg-Birnhamwood High School. The Member Appreciation Breakfast will be held on Saturday October 25, 2025 at the Rosholt Headquarters.

President and CEO – Lila Shower, CEO, reported on her submitted report.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:53 p.m.

### ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Turn your suds into savings. Lower your energy use in the laundry room by washing clothes with cold water whenever possible, as heating water accounts for most of the energy used in a laundry cycle. Wash full loads to make the most of energy savings, and use high-efficiency detergent designed for cold washes.

For drying cycles, clean the lint filter before each load to improve airflow and use dryer balls to reduce drying time.

Source: *energy.gov*

## LEHRER RETIRES FROM CWEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Retiring CWEC Director Lee Lehrer was recognized at the March 27 CWEC Board of Directors meeting with a cake celebrating his retirement from the board. He was also given a clock.

**L**ee Lehrer, who has served on the Board of Directors for Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative since 2008, has retired from the board.

When Lehrer became a CWEC Director in 2008, he was appointed to the board to fill a vacant seat, but his interest of serving on the board predated that appointment. In 2007, Lehrer ran for the director at large position on the board, but was defeated. Looking back at that election, Lehrer said it was a blessing that he didn't win. "It was really kind of fortunate that I lost only because that year was hell for me, I had cancer, and I didn't realize it at the time," Lehrer said.

Lehrer said his original interest for

seeking a seat on the board was his experience working for a municipal utility. "The utility business was in my blood. I retired from a utility," Lehrer said.

Once he was appointed to the board he said he realized he had a lot to learn, but each board member at the time took him "under their wings" and helped guide him through everything he had to learn. He added that during his time on the board, he not only became friends with the board members, but also with people throughout the entire state of Wisconsin.

Lehrer said he has reached the age where he feels now is the time for him to retire. "I thought it was time for somebody younger to take over," Lehrer said.

But he admitted that it was a difficult decision for him. "I'm going to miss the board members," he said. "I'm going to miss the utility business. Like I said, it's in my blood."

While on the board, Lehrer said one of the most challenging decisions the board had to make was the decision to build the current CWEC headquarters. "I was on the board when this was first talked about, and all of sudden we started really getting serious about it," Lehrer said. "It was a big decision to spend the money for this building. That was probably the biggest challenge."

When asked what he will miss the most about serving on the board, he said the camaraderie with the other board members. "It's been a good run, it really has," Lehrer said.

## GREZENSKI FOREST PRODUCTS COMPLETES LIGHTING UPGRADE

**G**rezenski Forest Products, of Stevens Point, is a logging firm, sawmill operation, and trucking operation all rolled into one business.

"I started right out of high school in 1960 on my own, a one-man operation," said James Grezenski, who owns the business with his wife. "From there on, we just grew. I know we bought our first skidder in 1968, a new one. I paid \$11,700 for that skidder, and the last one we bought, we paid over \$700,000."

Back then, Grezenski said he cut pulp and sold it to local paper mills.

Then in 1973, Grezenski built his first sawmill.

"We had good years and we had bad years," he said. "I did that (built a saw mill) because I just felt that we could control our own production that way."

Even though the saw mill has gone through some changes over the years, such as going from circular saws to bandsaws, the location has remained the same.

Grezenski said that equipment today is "fantastic" compared to the equipment his business started with.

"Everything had to be done by hand," he said. "Now it's just sit in an air conditioned cab and push buttons. All they have to do is punch in what they want, and the computer does the rest."

Just as equipment has changed over the years, lighting has also become more efficient. Grezenski Wood Products recently upgraded its lighting to LED lights and received energy conservation rewards through Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative. The lighting upgrade project included light replacement in the facility, including the yard.

"We did the new lighting for the yard, and boy, that is really nice," Grezenski said. "The place is very well lit up all the way around."



### *We Will Never Forget*

Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative will be closed Monday, May 26 for the Memorial Day holiday. Regular business will resume on Tuesday, May 27. From everyone here at CWEC, we wish you a safe and enjoyable holiday.

# CALL 811 BEFORE YOU DIG

**W**ith the weather continuing to warm up, it's time to get moving on the yardwork that needs to be done. 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. By law, a property owner or anyone else doing digging, must call Diggers Hotline at least three working days before they start digging.

When a property owner calls Diggers Hotline, they 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 are 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.

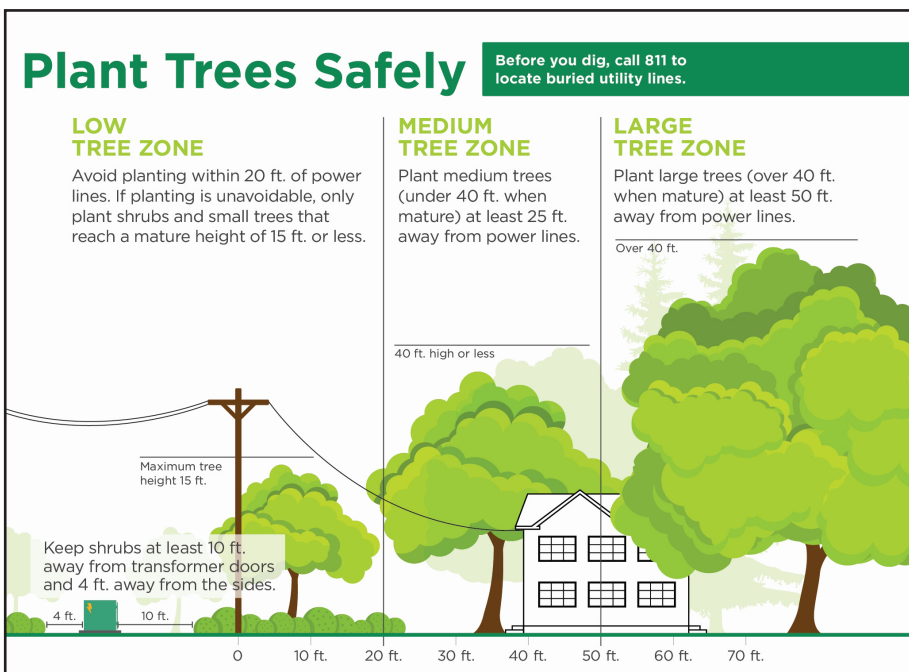
Since locating underground lines is not an exact science, the actual location of the lines could vary from the position of the marks. Because of that, state law mandates an 18-inch buffer zone on each side of the marks indicating an underground line.



For high school students who will be a sophomore or junior in the fall, Youth Leadership Conference is designed specifically for you. This three-day, all-expense paid program is jammed with fun, hands-on activities and seminars designed to help students identify and develop their leadership skills. It is planned by high school students and features nationally recognized speakers.

This year's event, scheduled for July 15-17, will once again be held at UW-Stout in Menomonie.

High school students who are interested in being a sponsored representative of Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative, please contact your high school guidance counselor or Bert Lehman at 715-677-2220 or by email at [bert.lehman@cwecoop.com](mailto:bert.lehman@cwecoop.com).



## KEEP POWER POLES FREE AND CLEAR

We want to remind all our members that nothing should be placed on the Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative power poles. This includes, but is not limited to: posters, flyers, decorations, birdhouses, lights, etc.

The poles need to be clear of items because sometimes CWEC linemen need to climb the poles, and items on the poles can make that task more difficult and dangerous.



# 2025 MEMBER PHOTO CONTEST

## "Life in Rural Wisconsin"

Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative is holding our annual photo contest for members' photos to be featured in our 2026 calendar. Winning photos may be used in future newsletters or cooperative publications.

- Photos must be taken within the Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative service area.
- Photos should capture life in rural Wisconsin (seasons, wildlife, landscape, people, etc.)
- Photos must have a horizontal (landscape) orientation.
- Photos can be in color or black and white.
- Contest will run until August 25, 2025; however, submitted photos can be taken during anytime of the year.



### Photo Contest Entry Options:

**Email:** Bert Lehman at [bert.lehman@cwecoop.com](mailto:bert.lehman@cwecoop.com)

**Mail:** PO Box 100, Rosholt, WI 54473. (Photo(s) must be 8"x10" in size)


**Online:** [www.cwecoop.com/member-photo-contest](http://www.cwecoop.com/member-photo-contest)

**Drop Off:** Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Office – 10401 Lystul Road, Rosholt. (Photo(s) must be 8"x10" in size if dropped off at our office.)

**For a complete set of rules as well as entry forms and photo release forms, visit our website at:** [www.cwecoop.com](http://www.cwecoop.com).



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**Lila Shower, President & CEO**

**Bert Lehman, Editor**

### Board of Directors

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Lou Oppor  
Vice Chairman  
608-575-8653

Michael Schultz  
715-370-1378

#### District 3

Sue Rombalski  
Secretary/Treasurer  
715-701-2053 - cell  
715-341-4571 - home

Allen Zander  
Chairman  
715-630-8239

### Our Mission

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

## MAY IS ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

Electricity lights homes and businesses, provides warmth and keeps appliances and equipment running smoothly. During Electrical Safety Month, Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative and Safe Electricity provide these electrical safety tips to avoid hazards both inside and outdoors.

### INSIDE

1. Avoid plugging too many devices into one outlet.
2. Make sure all powered devices are properly grounded.
3. Install ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlets in kitchens, bathrooms, and other potentially wet areas.
4. If small children are present, install safety plugs on all unused outlets.
5. Use extension cords only on a temporary basis and never locate them under rugs or furniture.
6. Make sure all lightbulbs are the appropriate wattage for the fixture.

### OUTSIDE:

1. Install protective covers on all outlets and make sure they are GFCIs.
2. Use only weather-resistant extension cords rated for outdoor use.
3. Check wires for wear and tear before using any powered equipment.
4. Look around for overhead power lines before using a ladder or trimming tree branches.
5. Power lines may be buried underground. Before digging, call 811 to have underground lines marked.