

POWERLINE

A monthly newsletter for co-op members of Corn Belt Energy

April 2015

Protect your home from power surges

Spring storms often bring an increased threat of power surges which could damage your valuable electronics and appliances.

Many people think a blink in power is a surge, but these are generally caused by something such as a tree contacting a line. When a blink occurs, Corn Belt Energy's protective devices work, causing an interruption to protect the wires and other components.

What is a power surge? A power surge is defined as sudden, short-lived increase in voltage. Power surges can enter the home in a variety of ways including power lines, telephone lines, cable/satellite connections and any other metallic system that connects to your home.

Corn Belt Energy can help protect your home from the threat of power surges which could damage your valuable electronics and appliances.

Internal Surges

80% of temporary power surges come from inside the home; protect your equipment with surge protector devices like power strips. Make sure to look for the UL 1449 label, which guarantees it meets tested and approved standards. Surge protectors carry a "joule" and/or a "surge-current" rating; the higher the rating of these two categories, the higher

the quality of internal surge-stopping components. Corn Belt carries several surge strips and outlet receptacles that may fit your needs.

External Surges

Whole-house protection is recommended for more severe surges, including lightning strikes. Corn Belt can install a surge protector on your exterior electric meter for \$6.95/month (200 amp meter) and a \$25 installation fee. 400 amp meter protection is available for \$8.95/month with a \$25 installation fee. **Sign up in April and we'll waive the installation fee AND give you a complimentary internal surge kit (valued at \$35) to provide an additional layer of protection for your high cost electronics.**



Inside your home, a panel-mounted circuit panel or service entrance suppression device (TVSS) forms a second layer of defense by greatly reducing harmful surges entering your home. A qualified electrician can ensure proper installation.

For more information, please visit our website at www.cornbeltenergy.com or call us at 800-879-0339.

Spring into savings with your Co-op Connections card

As a Corn Belt Energy member, make sure to use your **free** Co-op Connections Card for discounts and valuable offers at local businesses and national retailers for those everyday purchases and holiday gifts. Over 140 local offers are listed on the following pages. Go online to search for local and national deals by zip code or by category at www.connections.coop.

Prescription Discounts

Use your free Co-op Connections card to save 10% to 60% on prescriptions not covered by insurance at participating pharmacies including CVS, Walgreens, Wal-Mart, Target and many more! Simply present your card with your prescription at any participating pharmacy and pay the discounted price; no additional forms or paperwork are needed.

Corn Belt members have saved over \$139,000 on 10,675 prescriptions since the card program was launched in 2007. Corn Belt members have been saving an average of 33% on prescriptions!

Visit www.connections.coop to search for participating pharmacies.*



* Healthy savings discounts are not insurance and are not intended as a substitute for insurance.

Smart Phone App

Saving with your Co-op Connections Card is even easier when you download the free app for your Apple or Android smartphone!

Use the GPS function to easily find local offers near your current location. Identify your favorite local offers and save them in "My Deals" for easy access.

To download the app, visit www.connections.coop.



Need a New Card?

Contact us at 1-800-879-0339 or marketing@cornbeltenergy.com to request wallet cards. Simply show the card at participating businesses to receive your discount.

Levelized Billing Option

Levelized Billing gives you a way to guard against large fluctuations in your monthly electric bill, without ever having to play "catch-up" at the end of the year. The program is designed to keep your electric bills consistent every month of the year, as long as you remain on the plan. It's the ideal way to accurately anticipate your monthly electric bill, which makes budgeting your expenses even easier.

With Levelized Billing, your monthly electric bill becomes a "rolling average" of your electric usage for the most recent 12 months. By averaging your changes in usage over a 12-month period, your bill will remain fairly consistent every month, even in very cold or hot months when usage may be significantly higher. Our Levelized Billing program is completely free for members with accounts in good standing and with at least 6 months of service history.

Members can deactivate the Levelized Billing program at any time by contacting our Billing Department. If a member on Levelized Billing becomes delinquent or enters into a delayed payment agreement, they will be removed from the program.

Connect with your co-op

Keep in touch with Corn Belt throughout the year for safety information, energy efficiency tips, outage updates and more.



NEW! LED LIGHTING REBATE

Corn Belt Energy is now offering rebates to members for the purchase of energy efficient CFL and LED light bulbs. This rebate program rewards our members when they invest in new, energy efficient lighting. Some of the highlights of this program include:

- **Only ENERGY STAR® rated CFL and LED bulbs qualify for the rebate.**
- **The rebate only covers the cost of the bulb up to \$7.50 for LED bulbs and \$1.50 for CFL Bulbs.**
- To qualify for the rebate, applicants must be a cooperative member and receive electric service from Corn Belt Energy.
- **Bulbs can be purchased anywhere that qualifying ENERGY STAR CFL and LED bulbs are available.**
- **The shape and size of bulb does not matter.** CFLs and LED bulbs come in a variety of shapes and sizes.
- **Download or pick up your rebate form today!** Rebate applications are available for download at www.cornbeltenergy.com or can be picked up at one of Corn Belt Energy's office locations.
- Limit 25 bulbs per member account per calendar year. Include with the application a copy of the original receipt. Rebates cannot be issued for products that are not Energy Star qualified. Please retain bulb packaging until the rebate is received.

For more information, please visit our website at www.cornbeltenergy.com or call us at 800-879-0339.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

Always call JULIE at 8-1-1 to have underground utilities located before you dig.

To avoid personal injury and damage to underground lines, state law requires you to contact Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators (JULIE) before any digging project, regardless of the project size or depth. The call is free, and so are the services.

According to state law, the person doing the digging is required to call JULIE with the locate request information at least 48 hours (*two working days, excluding weekends and holidays*) in advance of the start of excavation. You must begin your project within 14 days from the time you call and if you want to start your project over the weekend, remember to contact JULIE by Wednesday at 4:00 PM.

In order to help the utility locator properly identify your project area, JULIE recommends that you mark the area where you will be digging with white paint and/or flags.

Each JULIE utility member is responsible to mark their own underground facilities with paint or flags within the two working day period required by law (*excluding Saturdays, Sundays and holidays*).

Visit www.illinois1call.com to learn more about the process.

Save the Date!

Mark your calendar for Corn Belt Energy's 77th Annual Meeting! Join us at Central Catholic High School off of Airport Road in Bloomington on the afternoon of Friday, June 19th.

Complimentary lunch and activities for kids will be provided, as well as musical entertainment. Make sure to stop by the booths, and stay for the co-op member meeting!

More details will appear in next month's issue and an Annual Report book will be mailed to co-op members in late May with a complete agenda.

If you receive electricity from Corn Belt Energy, you're a member-owner of the cooperative and invited to attend.





Contact Us

1-800-879-0339

Call this number to report an outage and call from a phone associated with your account if possible.

LOCATION

1 Energy Way
Bloomington, IL 61705

OFFICE HOURS

8:00 AM - 4:30 PM
Monday - Friday

cbec@cornbeltenergy.com
www.cornbeltenergy.com



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Recycle your old refrigerator

Corn Belt Energy offers a fridge recycling program aimed at removing old, inefficient refrigerators and encouraging the use of energy efficient models. Not only will your old fridge be hauled away and recycled, but you will also receive \$35!

To schedule your free pick-up through our vendor, call 877-395-5535 or visit www.powermoves.com/haulfree. This energy efficiency incentive is available to Corn Belt Energy co-op members through our power supplier's Power Moves® program. Our appliance vendor will recycle more than 95% of the materials from your old appliance and dispose of any hazardous materials according to EPA guidelines.

Before you schedule your free fridge pick-up, please read these requirements:

- Refrigerators and freezers must be clean, empty, defrosted, and in working condition. Each unit must measure between 10-30 cubic feet in size, using inside measurements.
- The pick-up address must be a residence served electrically by Corn Belt Energy.
- Limit two units per residential address per calendar year.
- A \$35 check will be mailed to participants within 6-8 weeks after the appliance collection.

Portable generator safety

Portable electric generators come in handy during prolonged power outages, but things could turn deadly if they're not used properly. Follow these tips to stay safe:

- Follow manufacturers' directions for installation and operation.
- To prevent electric shock, make sure your generator is properly grounded.
- Operate electric generators or other fuel-powered machines outside where deadly carbon monoxide fumes cannot enter the home.
- Do not overload the generator by operating more appliances and equipment than it can handle.
- Individual appliances should be plugged directly into the receptacle outlet of the generator using appropriately sized extension cords to carry the electric load. Never connect generators directly to your home's wiring or household outlet.
- Do not refuel a generator while it is running. Store fuel outside of living areas and away from heat sources like water heater pilot lights.
- Turn off all equipment powered by the generator before shutting it down.

