

POWERLINE

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

June 2012

Join Us for an Afternoon of Family Fun!

74th Annual Meeting of Members
Central Catholic High School, Bloomington
Friday, June 22

Join us on the afternoon of Friday, June 22nd for Corn Belt Energy's 74th Annual Meeting of co-op members! Bring the whole family and enjoy an afternoon of great entertainment and prizes! If you receive electricity from Corn Belt, you're a member-owner of the cooperative and invited to attend.



Complimentary lunch and activities for all ages will be provided, including great bluegrass music from the River Ramblers. Find more details in the Annual Report book, which will be mailed to every co-op member by early June.



Check your mailbox for our Annual Report, which includes an RSVP postcard for lunch!



Free reusable tumbler for each co-op household in attendance!

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Noon - 2:30: Complimentary lunch

Noon - 3:00: Registration; Visit direct sales booths; Free activities for kids including face painting, bucket truck rides, bouncy houses, balloon animals, glitter tattoos and much more!

1:30 - 2:50: River Ramblers Bluegrass

3:00 - 4:30: Business Meeting and new iPad grand prize giveaway

Grand Prize Giveaway **iPad**



Grand prize winner must be present to win.

New this year, consultants representing these businesses will set up booths with samples, prizes, and items for cash & carry sales:



Going on Vacation? Save Energy at Home

Before you head out the door for your summer vacation, follow these simple steps to give your electric bill a vacation, too!

Turn down the temperature on your water heater. Heating water can account for 15% or more of the energy consumed in your home. If you're not home, you don't need to have hot water on standby.

Set your thermostat at a higher temperature than usual. Again, if you're not home, then there's no reason to air condition the space until you return.

Keep your shades drawn. Not only is this practical for security reasons, but you prevent sunlight from entering the home and heating things up.

Make sure all lights are turned off. Don't forget to check your closets!

Unplug those energy vampires - electronics that still draw power even when turned off. These types of devices (*battery chargers, TVs, computers, coffee makers, etc.*) still use a small amount of electricity, called phantom loads, unless they are completely unplugged.



Scholarship Winner

Congratulations to Lindsay Morr on receiving an Illinois Electric Cooperative Memorial Scholarship in the amount of \$1,250 towards her college education at Olivet Nazarene University in the fall. Lindsay is an accomplished senior at Olympia High School and is pictured above with Ralph Steiger, Corn Belt Energy's District 2 Director who represents members in Tazewell County. Lindsay was one of four Illinois cooperative students to receive a scholarship towards her full-time university education this year.

LOOKING FOR CONSISTENT ELECTRIC BILLS EACH MONTH?

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 affordable 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 a little easier.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

With Levelized Billing, your monthly electric bill becomes a "rolling average" of your electric usage for the most recent 12 months. For example, this month's bill would be the average electric usage of the previous 11 months, plus the current month. 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 unusually high.

If you have at least 6 months of service with us, we can still calculate a "rolling average" and enroll you in the program.



SIGN UP TODAY!

Corn Belt's Levelized Billing program is completely free. Co-op members with accounts in good standing and with at least 6 months of service history can call us at 1-800-879-0339 to enroll.

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.

Local Church Receives Geothermal Funding

The North Danvers Mennonite Church received a GeoAlliance grant check in the amount of \$31,926 on May 6 to help fund the installation of a geothermal heat pump heating and cooling system in its facility. The grant is part of the \$1.5 million GeoAlliance geothermal incentive program that was developed by the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation (ICECF) in Chicago and the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) in Springfield in 2003.

The purpose of the grant program is to encourage the use of clean and efficient geothermal systems to heat and cool not-for-profit and public facilities that receive electric service from Illinois electric cooperatives. Geothermal systems have a slightly higher up-front cost, which the grants help to offset. The grants are awarded for one third of the incremental difference between the cost of a traditional fossil heating and cooling system and a geothermal heating and cooling system, up to a cap of \$50,000 per installation.

Corn Belt Energy assisted the church in obtaining the geothermal funding. "It's estimated that the new geothermal system will save the church \$7,766 per year as compared to a traditional fossil fuel heating and cooling system," said Nancy Nixon, marketing administrator at the AIEC.

Russ Middleton, chairman of stewardship at the church, said that he did extensive research before approaching the church leadership about pursuing geothermal technology. He and the congregation have been very satisfied with both the savings and comfort afforded by the system.

Geothermal heat pump systems use the earth's natural energy and that's why they are so efficient and inexpensive to operate. Just below the earth's surface, the temperature stays approximately 50 degrees throughout the year. During cooling months, equipment installed inside a building pushes heat and humidity from the building into polyethylene tubing loops that have been installed in the ground.

Although geothermal system installations cost more on the front end, heating and cooling costs can be reduced 30-70%, resulting in a quick payback and considerably better comfort than with traditional systems. Even virtually free hot water can be generated, which adds to the savings.

Although Dennis O'Brien, executive director of the ICECF, was unable to personally attend the check presentation, he said, "The ICECF appreciates the leadership of AIEC



(L-R) Bruce Hinrichsen, owner of Hinrichsen Heating & Cooling in Goodfield; Russ Middleton, chairman of North Danvers Mennonite Church Stewardship Committee; Nancy Nixon, marketing administrator at the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives; Justin Stuva, energy advisor at Corn Belt Energy; and Craig Eickhorst church board chairman

and North Danvers Mennonite Church on this effort. The church will benefit from improved comfort in its new facility, lower operating and maintenance costs and reduced energy use, leading to less pollution in Illinois communities. At the same time, organizations like the church can offer their peers and the wider commercial sector proof of the energy and maintenance savings during a building's lifecycle. These benefits far outweigh the initial capital investment for installing a geothermal system."

GeoAlliance grant funding is still available for geothermal installations in not-for-profit and public entities that receive electric service from Illinois electric cooperatives. Eligible organizations may apply for a grant of up to \$50,000. The grants will be available until April 30, 2013, or until the funding has been exhausted. Download the grant application and learn more at www.aiec.coop.

THE KING OF CAULK & TALK

Get valuable home efficiency advice from nationally renowned architect and home energy expert, Doug Rye. Tune in for an hour of energy saving ideas every Saturday from 9:00 to 10:00 AM in the Bloomington-Normal area.



"Home Remedies" Saturdays 9-10 AM

Outage Map

Visit www.cornbeltenergy.com from your computer or mobile device to view a live outage map of Corn Belt's service territory. To protect the privacy of our co-op members, outages are displayed by county or zip code only.

SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

AVOID POWER LINES

Overhead wires enter houses and buildings at places called service drops. Service drops are not insulated, so never attempt to touch these wires.

Storms or accidents can sometimes cause power lines to fall to the ground. Assume any wire lying on the ground is carrying electricity and stay away from it. If you spot a downed wire, immediately call your local police and Corn Belt Energy; Keep others from getting near the downed wire until help arrives.

TREE SAFETY

Tree limbs that grow up near power lines can be unsafe. If you climb such a tree, you could get hurt from electrical shock. Never trim trees near power lines – if you see a tree growing too close to power lines, contact Corn Belt to report it.

HOT TUBS AND POOLS

Water and electricity never mix! Keep electronics like radios away from pools and hot tubs, and watch for overhead power lines when cleaning pools, sailing or fishing. Never install pools underneath or near power lines. Never touch an electrical appliance if you are wet; always dry off completely.

OUTDOOR ELECTRONICS

Be careful when using electrical appliances outdoors. Whether it's a bug zapper, an electric charcoal lighter, or a radio or CD player, use outlets that have weatherproof covers and ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI) to prevent serious shock injuries. Use portable GFCIs for outdoor outlets that don't have them.

KITES AND BALLOONS

Since overhead power lines are not insulated, a kite or balloon string can conduct electricity to the ground. If a kite gets stuck in a tree that is near power lines, do not climb up to get it. Fly kites and model airplanes in large open areas like a park or a field.



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 



Celebrating Arbor Day

Each year on Arbor Day, Corn Belt Energy partners with a local school to plant a tree on their grounds and to educate students on the importance of trees and safety.



On Friday, April 27, Corn Belt employees met with 5th and 6th graders from Rutland Grade School near Ottawa. The students helped plant a white oak tree on school grounds and learned about electrical safety and the importance of having underground utilities properly flagged.