

POWERLINE

A monthly newsletter for member-owners of Corn Belt Energy

September 2011

Insulating Your Attic: *More is Better*

As the heating season approaches, now is a good time to determine whether there's adequate insulation in your attic. By adding insulation, you can improve your home's energy efficiency and save money on your energy bills. With adequate attic insulation, your home's heating/cooling system will operate more efficiently. It will keep you cooler in the summer and warmer in winter—and it will keep more money in your wallet, possibly saving you an additional \$240 a year.

Many older homes have less insulation than homes built today, but adding insulation to a newer home may also pay for itself within a few years. The first step is to go find out how much insulation you already have in your attic. As a rule of thumb, if you look at your attic floor and the insulation level is at or below the floor joists, you probably need to add more.

You'll need to know four things about your existing insulation before determining whether you need more:

1. How much insulation already exists
2. Type of insulation installed (loose-fill, batts, spray foam, etc.)
3. Thickness of insulation
4. R-value

You can hire an energy auditor to find these answers or you can inspect your home yourself. Check the attic as well as walls and floors adjacent to an

unheated space, such as the garage or an unfinished basement. The structural elements are usually exposed in these areas which makes it easy to see what type of insulation is being used. Inspect and measure the thickness in inches of any insulation in unfinished basement ceilings and walls, or above crawl spaces.

Once you've determined the type and thickness of your insulation, refer to the U.S. Department of Energy's online Insulation Fact Sheet at <http://1.usa.gov/rvalues> for how to determine the R-values. The R-value indicates the insulation's resistance to heat flow; the higher the R-value, the greater the insulating effectiveness.

Once you know the R-value of your current insulation, you can determine how much insulation to add by using the U.S. Department of Energy's Zip Code Insulation Program at <http://1.usa.gov/zipsearch>. The online Zip Code Insulation Program also provides insulation cost estimates and a rate of return on your investment.

Now you're ready to decide what kind of insulation to install: loose-fill (such as blown cellulose) or blanket (batt and roll) insulation.



Loose-fill insulation consists of small particles of fiber, foam, or other materials; blanket insulation, the most common and widely available type of insulation, comes in batts and rolls made from mineral wool, plastic fibers, and natural fibers. Loose-fill insulation is usually less expensive to install than batt insulation, and can provide better coverage when properly installed.

For other tips on how to save energy and money, visit www.TogetherWeSave.com. See how little changes can add up to big savings on your energy bills.

Nicor Gas Customers: You have a choice!

With cooler weather just around the corner, it's time to think about your natural gas heating costs. If you're a Nicor Gas customer, you can choose who supplies your gas through their Customer Select program.

Nicor will continue to deliver your gas, but you can select Corn Belt Energy to supply your natural gas. We offer two competitive variable therm rates and convenient billing options. There are no monthly fees or termination fees and no equipment to install. The Corn Belt Energy supplier cost will be conveniently included on your Nicor Gas statement, so you only receive and pay one bill.

Enroll by October 31 and we'll send you a \$20 check after your first bill!



GREAT RATES • NO FEES • LOCAL SERVICE

Current Rates per Therm:



Market Advantage Plan

By selecting this plan, your natural gas therm cost will fluctuate according to current market conditions. You will benefit from this plan if it's a mild winter and market prices remain stable or decline.

Winter Protection Plan

With this plan, the goal is to protect you from the volatility of the winter market. You'll benefit from this plan if it's an extremely cold winter causing higher market prices.

\$20 *Switch now and get \$20!*
www.countoncornbelt.com

Treat Power Tools with Care

Before you fire up that power tool for your next do-it-yourself home project, remember that these electrical devices must be treated with care. Even though many tools are equipped with safety mechanisms, it's still important to heed precautions.

Keep in mind these tips from the U.S. Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) when using power tools:

- Do not carry tools by their cords.
- Pull the cord out of the outlet by the plug, not by pulling on the cord.
- Do not use in a wet or damp job sites, unless the tool is specifically approved for those conditions. Store them in a dry place when not being used.
- While carrying a tool, do not touch the switch or trigger that operates it to avoid accidental starts.
- Ensure your work area is well-lit.
- Unplug tools when cleaning or fixing, while changing other parts of the tool such as blades or bits, and when not in use.
- Ensure that all extension cords are not worn or frayed.
- Wear proper clothing – no ties, jewelry, or other loose items that could get caught.



Whether you're on the job or working at home, staying safe around power tools is a must. Following a few rules could mean the difference between a successful project and an accident.

Source: U.S. Occupational Safety & Health Administration

Water Heater REBATES

If you're purchasing a new electric water heater, Corn Belt can help defray the cost.

Buy an electric 40-gallon water heater and you'll receive a \$100 rebate; purchase a 50-gallon or larger unit and we'll give you a \$125 rebate. You can purchase your water heater from any retailer, and we encourage you to buy an energy efficient model with good insulation.

To claim your rebate check, send a copy of your receipt to:

Corn Belt Energy
Attn: Justin Stuva
1 Energy Way
Bloomington, IL 61705-6356

Make sure the receipt indicates the size of the water heater and include your Corn Belt account number.



Clothes Washer REBATES

Corn Belt members with electric water heaters may qualify for a \$50 rebate if they have purchased an ENERGY STAR clothes washer after April 15, 2010.

Call Justin Stuva, Energy Advisor, at 1-800-879-0339 or find the rebate form at www.cornbeltenergy.com > Programs & Services > Energy Efficiency Programs.

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Scholarships for High School Seniors

This year, eight scholarships of \$1,250 each will be awarded to eligible high school seniors through the Illinois Electric Cooperative (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program.

Four scholarships will be awarded to students who are children of an Illinois electric cooperative member receiving service from the cooperative, including Corn Belt Energy members.

A fifth scholarship, the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship, is awarded to a student who is the child of an Illinois electric cooperative employee.

The sixth and seventh scholarships are reserved for students enrolling full-time at a two-year Illinois community college who are children of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees or directors.

A new eighth scholarship, the LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker's Scholarship, will be awarded to help pay for costs associated with

lineworker's school conducted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield. Relatives of cooperative employees or directors are eligible, as are individuals who have served or are serving in the armed forces or National Guard.



Candidates are judged on the basis of grade point average, college entrance exam scores, work and volunteer experience, school and civic activities, and a short essay that demonstrates their knowledge of electric cooperatives. Applications will be posted at www.cornbeltenergy.com under "Community" until December 31. Applications must be postmarked by January 1, 2012.

Help Us Battle Copper Theft

Soaring metal prices have been blamed for an increase in thefts of copper and aluminum across the country, primary components of electric distribution lines. A 542% increase in the price of copper in the past decade has prompted thieves to become bolder and more inventive.

Copper in wire is appealing to thieves who want to sell the metal for scrap. Burglars will often climb power poles, scale fences, and break into buildings to steal the precious metal.

Recent thefts of copper wire and equipment from electric utilities have been responsible for power outages, additional maintenance and expenses, diminished service reliability, and, in some cases, serious injury or death.

If you see unmarked or suspicious vehicles in or near Corn Belt substations, please contact the police or call Corn Belt Energy at 1-800-879-0339 to report it. We appreciate your help in protecting the cooperative's distribution system.

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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 

ELECTRIC HEAT RATE

If your home utilizes an electric heat source - including geothermal - you can take advantage of Corn Belt's Electric Heat Rate of 4.45 cents/ kWh (*plus any additional current cost of power as indicated by the Wholesale Power Cost Adjustment on your monthly statement*).

All electric heat is sub-metered through equipment supplied by Corn Belt Energy and the Electric Heat Rate is applied to your sub-metered usage from Oct. 1 through April 30.

This rate is applicable when at least 50% of the square footage of a home is heated electrically from a hardwired 240 volt electric heat source.

To see if you're already receiving this rate, check for a Rate 10 or Rate 19 line item charge on your monthly statement. For more information contact Justin Stuva, Energy Advisor, at 309-664-9235 or 1-800-879-0339.



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. Visit www.connections.coop to search for participating pharmacies. Need a card? Call us at 1-800-879-0339.

MONITOR YOUR USAGE

Corn Belt Energy has several Kill A Watt™ usage monitors available for our members to purchase. Learn which appliances are costing you the most and identify those energy hogs.

To use, simply plug the Kill A Watt unit into an outlet and plug your appliance or electronics device into the monitor. The large LCD display will track the device's consumption by kilowatt-hour and you can calculate your electrical expenses by the day, week, month or annually.



Purchase a Kill A Watt monitor for \$25 (plus \$5 shipping) by contacting Justin Stuva, Energy Advisor, at justin.stuva@cornbeltenergy.com or 1-800-879-0339 x235.

CommUniversity

Make sure to visit the Corn Belt Energy booth for free kettle corn during ISU's CommUniversity event, scheduled for 3:00-6:00 PM on Saturday, September 24, north of Hancock Stadium.

In its 8th year, CommUniveristy is a family-friendly tailgating event hosted by the McLean County Chamber of Commerce and Illinois State Athletics, held in conjunction with the first Saturday home game of the Redbird football season.

