



## Tips to prevent wildfires

By Abby Berry

In 2016, more than 65,000 wildfires burned 5.4 million acres of land in the United States according to the National Centers for Environmental Information. The worst part? Many of these wildfires could have been prevented.

While some wildfires are caused by lightning, approximately 90 percent are caused by human error. Many times, wildfires occur when campfires are left unattended, debris is burned improperly or cigarettes are carelessly discarded.

A wildfire can grow rapidly out of control when the three following conditions are present: oxygen, fuel and a heat source. The fuel can be any materials that are flammable near the wildfire, and the heat source can be a variety of things, like campfires, cigarettes or even warm winds. When these three conditions are met, a violent wildfire can ensue.

By taking a few extra precautions, campers and outdoor



Never leave a fire unattended, and make sure you completely extinguish the fire when you're done. Drench the fire with water and stir the ashes until cold.



When burning yard waste, follow local ordinances. Avoid burning in windy conditions, and keep a shovel, water and fire retardant nearby to keep fires in check.



## Tips to Prevent Wildfires



Play it safe when using fueled lanterns, heaters and stoves. Lighting and heating devices should be cool before refueling. Keep flammable liquids and fuel away from appliances.



Never discard cigarettes, matches and smoking materials from moving vehicles, or anywhere on park grounds. Completely extinguish cigarettes before disposing of them.

Source: National Geographic

enthusiasts can enjoy the sights of nature without causing a wildfire. Take a look at the graphics for a few tips from National Geographic to help prevent wildfires.

Visit <https://www.ready.gov/wildfires> for more information about wildfire safety and prevention.

*Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*

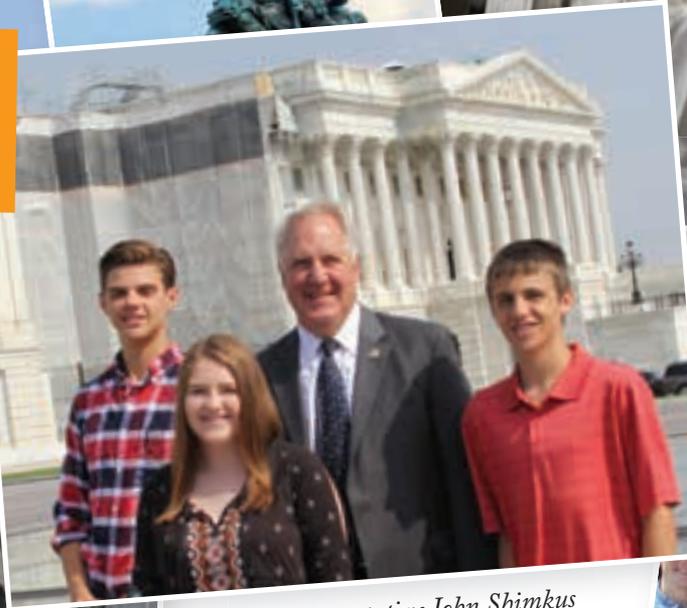


**In observance of Labor Day, the office will be CLOSED on Monday, September 4, 2017**

# Youth to Washington



*Students representing cooperatives from across the state of Illinois were able to talk with U.S. Representative Mike Bost during their recent visit to Washington D.C.*



*U.S Representative John Shimkus visited with the students representing Clinton County Electric during their recent visit to our nation's capital. Pictured left to right are Collin Henderson, Jenna Koelmel, Congressman Shimkus and Ben Herndon.*

At the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Annual Meeting in Chicago in 1957, Senator Lyndon Baines Johnson addressed the crowd stating, "If one thing goes out of this meeting, it will be sending youngsters to the national capital where they can actually see what the flag stands for and represents." Soon thereafter, Illinois sent a busload of young people to Washington. By 1964, approximately 400 students from 12 states made the trip to D.C. The word of the program continued to spread, and today, more than 1,730 students and their chaperones participate in the Youth Tour every year.

The program is stronger than ever, and Clinton County Electric Cooperative Inc. (CCECI) was

proudly represented by three outstanding youth on this year's "Youth to Washington" Tour held from June 9-16. Jenna Koelmel and Collin Henderson were chosen by a panel of judges at "Youth Day" in Springfield to attend this year's "Youth to Washington" Tour. Ben Herndon went as a "Willie Student" meaning he too went to Youth Day in Springfield, but attended Springfield and Washington D.C at his own expense. Jenna, Collin and Ben loaded a bus in Mt. Vernon early Friday morning, June 9, and started what was an eye-opening experience by seeing numerous D.C. area attractions and monuments, learning more about electric cooperatives, and creating countless friendships which will last for many years to come.

More than 1,730 youth, a record high for the "Youth to Washington" tour, from all over the United States gathered at the Hyatt Regency Hotel one morning for the Youth Day assembly to hear phenomenal speakers. The students were privileged to hear keynote speaker Mike Schlappi, who delivered an inspiring message from his wheelchair. Mr. Schlappi was accidentally shot at age 14 and doctors told him he would never walk again. Prior to his accident, he was dreaming of a career as a top American athlete. In his message he stated, "Just because you can't stand up, doesn't mean you can't stand out." His message was inspiring for the young and old.

The week in Washington D.C. was action-packed with over 69



students representing Cooperatives from the entire state of Illinois. They all traveled together to visit such sites as the Capitol Building, Gettysburg, Arlington National Cemetery, the Washington National Cathedral, several Smithsonian Museums, the United States Holocaust Museum, the World War II Memorial, memorial to Presidents Lincoln, Jefferson, Washington, and Roosevelt, the Newseum and numerous other historical locations. A highlight of the trip was the opportunity to meet our United States Representatives and Senators. Jenna, Collin and Ben were able to

personally meet with United States Congressmen John Shimkus along with other United States representatives and senators.

The Youth Program allows today's students to experience government first-hand by visiting Capitol Hill and seeing the historical sites in Washington D.C. Jenna, Collin and Ben, along with all of the students from Illinois who attended, did not want this awesome week to end. They made long-lasting friendships and will remember their week of learning more about our wonderful Nation for a very long time.

Each year Clinton County

Electric sponsors two students to attend this week-long all-expense paid educational trip. Children of Board of Trustee members and employees are eligible to attend at their own expense. The program is kicked off each year in March with "Youth Day" in Springfield and followed by the trip to Washington D.C. in June. Information about next year's trip will be available in the December issue of our newsletter or can be found on our website at [www.cceci.com](http://www.cceci.com) under the Youth Programs tab.



# Considering Solar? Call us first!

As interest in “green” energy and ways to save money on utility bills continue to grow, some cooperative members may be considering the installation of a solar array.

Since these types of systems have the capability of returning electricity back to the electric grid, there are some major safety considerations to sort out before a system is installed.

Before deciding to buy a solar array, examine the economics to determine whether such a system will lower your monthly electricity costs. If you do decide to install a solar array, contact our office as early as possible in the process.

A CCECI representative will provide information on our interconnection process and policies, as well as answer any questions you may have. That way, you and your installer will have the information needed as you progress with your system.

*For more information on CCECI policies and requirements, please contact our office Monday through Friday, between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. at 800-526-7282.*