



**Western Illinois**  
ELECTRICAL COOP.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

P.O. Box 338 ■ Carthage, Illinois 62321 ■ [www.wiec.net](http://www.wiec.net) ■ 800/576-3125

# news

## WIEC again sponsors the Youth to Washington contest

*Students could "point and click" their way to our nation's capital*

As a way to encourage high school students to learn more about government and their role in it with a chance to get an up-close look at their government, WIEC is again sponsoring its "Youth to Washington" and "Youth to Springfield" programs this spring.

This contest is a great way for a high school sophomore, junior or senior to win an all-expense paid trip to Washington D.C. Western Illinois Electrical Coop. will award one son or daughter of a WIEC member an all-expense paid eight-day trip to our nation's capital. To enter the contest, students must complete a Web quiz that consists of multiple-choice, short answer and short essay questions. By spending a small amount of time, a student could win a free trip of a lifetime.

The WIEC winner will join about 50 other Illinois high school students in Washington during the week of June 9, 2017. During the time in D.C., students will learn about American and rural electric history, as well as state and federal government. In past years, students met with representatives in the House and Senate, visited Arlington National Cemetery, the Smithsonian Air and (571-16) Space Museum, Mt. Vernon, the World War II Memorial, the U.S. Memorial Holocaust Museum, and even danced the night away on a river boat cruise on the Potomac River.

As part of the contest, WIEC will



*By spending a small amount of time, a student could win a trip of a lifetime.*

award the top six entrants an all-expense paid trip to Springfield, IL as part of the Youth Day in Springfield to visit the Illinois State Capitol on April 5, 2017 (**5516-22**) and see state government in action. One of those six students will be awarded the trip to Washington, D.C.

For entry information: visit our website at [wiec.net](http://wiec.net), call Western Illinois Electrical Coop. or see your high school guidance counselor.

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Carthage, IL 62321  
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#### OFFICE HOURS

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Monday - Friday

#### BUSINESS OFFICE

217-357-3125

#### TO REPORT AN OUTAGE

800-576-3125

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#### MAP LOCATION CONTEST

Every month we are printing four members' map location numbers in the newsletter. If you find your map location number call the WIEC office by the 25th of the following month, tell us where it is and we will give you a \$10.00 bill credit. Keep on reading the WIEC News.

## Youth to Washington *(Continued on page 16B)*

Organizers commonly refer to this trip as a "Trip of a Lifetime," but trip winners think so too. See what past winners have said about the trip:



#### 2013 winner- Alex Ourth –

*"This has been the best trip I have ever taken. I hope you continue this awesome program! It truly makes a difference."*



#### 2014 Winner – Sydney

**Metternich** — *"There were so many good times on the trip that I could not even attempt to list them all, but I took over 800 pictures so I'm sure I will be able to remember the great times you've made possible. Thank you again for the wonderful experience."*



#### 2015 Winner – Katlyn

**Pollock** — *"My favorite thing I got to see was the White House. It's still hard to believe it was that close! Thank you again so much for this amazing experience."*



#### 2016 Winner – Megan

**McElroy** — *"This trip really allowed me to spread my wings and try new things. Not only was it a trip of a lifetime, it really gave me a better understanding of America."*

## Welcome New Members

**Clifton Carle, Carthage**  
**Malibu Judd, Stronghurst**  
**Charles & Marilene Miller,**  
Bowen  
**Amy Provine, Metamora**

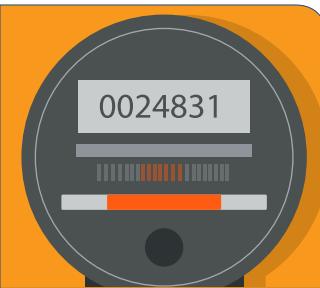
**Michael D. & Gloria J. Rea,**  
Nauvoo  
**Camie M. Weisenburger,**  
Carthage

# 2017 Energy Efficiency Calendar



## Start the New Year off by being more energy efficient!

Each month, try changing one daily habit that will save energy (and save on your usage).

<b>JANUARY</b> Make a NYE Resolution to turn off the lights when you leave a room.	<b>FEBRUARY</b> Try to use cold water instead of hot when washing clothes.	<b>MARCH</b> Turn off the water when brushing your teeth.	
	<b>APRIL</b> Celebrate Earth Day on April 22 by planting a tree. Be sure to call JULIE and WIEC before you dig to locate UG electric lines.	<b>MAY</b> Use your microwave for cooking whenever possible.	<b>JUNE</b> Vow to keep your thermostat at 78 degrees when days get warm. <i>Also plan to attend the WIEC Annual Meeting!</i>
<b>JULY</b> Close curtains and blinds during the day to block the sun's warm rays.	<b>AUGUST</b> Unplug all battery chargers when not in use.		<b>SEPTEMBER</b> Give your clothes that fresh-air scent by using a clothes line instead of a clothes dryer.
<b>OCTOBER</b> Replace any light bulb that burns more than one hour a day with an energy efficient LED equivalent.		<b>NOVEMBER</b> Save water and money by taking shorter showers. <i>Five to seven minutes is a good target.</i>	<b>DECEMBER</b> Replace old Christmas lights with energy efficient LED lights.



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

According to the Consumer Electronics Association, the average household owns 24 consumer electronic products, which are responsible for 12 percent of household electricity use. ENERGY STAR-certified audio/video equipment is up to 50 (**563-6**) percent more efficient than conventional models.

*Source: energy.gov*

# The differences between overhead and underground power lines

By Tom Tate

There are two methods of installing the power lines that carry electricity to your home, overhead and underground. Western Illinois Electrical Coop. members sometimes ask why we use one versus the other, or more to the point, why all power lines are not installed using the underground construction method. Isn't one method better than the other? These are great questions, and the answer is that each method has its place.

Overhead line construction starts with the setting of utility poles. Poles can be set in nearly any type of terrain, even rocky. In the case of heavy rock, special (7512-63) equipment is used to auger out the hole. If placement occurs in wet terrain, many techniques are available to set poles securely. Once the poles are in place, wires can be strung and then equipment—like transformers, fuses and reclosers—are installed. Power can now flow.

Underground line construction requires digging a trench that is deep enough to keep the lines well away from surface activities. Where the terrain is extremely rocky, underground lines may not be an option. Next, wires are laid in the trench directly or placed in conduits for protection. The trench is filled in, and the surface is restored to its original condition. Padmount transformers and additional equipment are installed as needed, now the system is ready to deliver electricity.

Look at this graphic for a listing of the pros and cons of each method.



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## OVERHEAD & UNDERGROUND POWER LINES

THE PROS AND CONS

### OVERHEAD

#### PROS

- Lower cost
- Quicker construction
- Easier to spot damage and faults
- Less expensive to repair and upgrade
- Can be built in any terrain

#### CONS

- Susceptible to wind, ice and snow
- More vulnerable to damage from trees and vegetation, which requires right of way trimming
- Vulnerable to blinks when animals and branches contact lines
- Susceptible to damage from vehicle collisions
- Less attractive

Photo: Artur Paliwka

### UNDERGROUND

#### PROS

- Not vulnerable to damage from tree branches
- Does not interfere with views
- No right of way (tree trimming) required
- Less susceptible to damage from vehicle collisions
- Not impacted by wind, ice and snow
- Less vulnerable to blinks when animals and branches contact lines

#### CONS

- More expensive to build
- Susceptible to flooding
- Difficult to locate faults
- Expensive to repair
- Fed by overhead lines at some point, making the lines vulnerable to outages and interruptions
- Can be vulnerable to dig-ins