

# POWERLINE

NEWSLETTER FOR CO-OP MEMBERS OF CORN BELT ENERGY



## What to do during an outage

Power outages can be caused by many things; maybe a vehicle hits a utility pole, ice accumulation weighs down power lines, tree limbs break off into the lines, or an animal gets too close to a warm transformer. Here are some steps to take if you experience an outage:

**Step 1: Make sure the outage is on our end;** check your fuses and breakers and see if your neighbors have lights.

**Step 2: Report your outage through our free SmartHub app or by calling our automated outage reporting system at 1-800-879-0339.** These two reporting mechanisms tie directly into our outage management system (OMS) for efficient and cost-effective reporting. Some members are concerned when they call in and don't speak to a live person; if the automated phone system tells you that we've recorded your outage, our dispatch center has been immediately notified through the OMS. *(Refer to the next page for more details on how to use the SmartHub app on your mobile device.)*

To make the outage process even more efficient, make sure we have your current phone number(s) associated with your account. Check your latest bill stub or log in to your online SmartHub account to see which number(s) are currently linked to your account. Don't worry - we

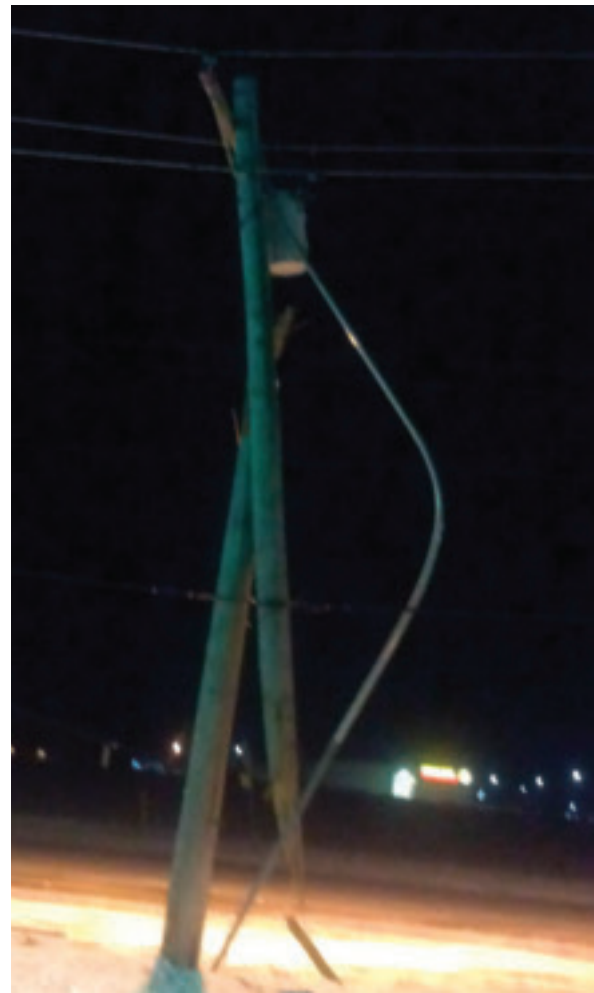
won't sell or share your contact information with anyone else.

Please do not report your outage to us via Facebook or Twitter as these outlets are not manned 24/7 and are not directly linked to our OMS.

**Step 3: Be patient.** As our outage management system is predicting the extent of the outage, our dispatch center assigns crews to investigate the issue and make necessary repairs. If your outage occurs after business hours, keep in mind that often times linemen need to stop what they're doing and grab necessary gear and supplies before heading out to the outage location to restore power, usually in adverse weather conditions. A little bit of patience goes a long way as our linemen work as quickly and as safely as possible.

**Step 4: Check our website, Facebook account or Twitter account for updates on major outages.** We usually post status updates for larger outage events *(those affecting 500 co-op members or more)*.

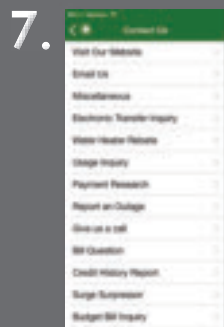
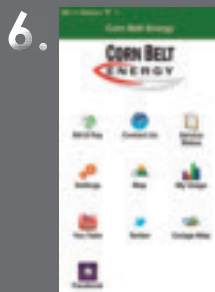
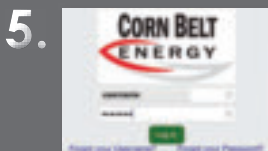
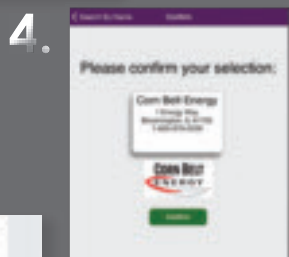
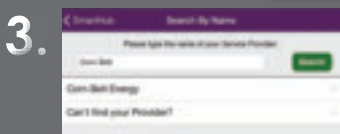
Check the extent of the outage by viewing a live outage map at [www.cornbeltenergy.com](http://www.cornbeltenergy.com). If you don't have internet access, we also post status updates on our main phone greeting at 1-800-879-0339 during major outages.



If you experience a power outage, rest assured that we're doing everything in our power to restore yours as quickly and safely as possible. Safety and our co-op members are our priority; that's the cooperative difference.

# HOW TO REPORT OUTAGES

conveniently from your mobile device!



Every day the employees of Corn Belt Energy work hard to prevent and minimize the interruptions in power to our members. Unfortunately, unforeseen events such as storms can often cause power outages. Corn Belt understands how inconvenient it is to be without electricity. We strive to make the process for reporting outages as easy as possible including from your mobile device.

### Instructions

1. Download the free mobile app for your Apple or Android device by searching for "SmartHub" in your app store.
  2. Select the "By Name" button in the lower right section of the screen.
  3. Type in "Corn Belt Energy" and click on the "Search" button, and select "Corn Belt Energy".
  4. Make sure that "Corn Belt Energy" appears on the next screen and select "Confirm".
  5. Enter your username and password. Then, select the "Login" button.
- Please note: steps 1 - 5 will only need to be completed one time. Once you are logged in, you will only need to complete steps 6-8 to report an outage.*
6. Click on the "Service Status" icon.
  7. Click on "Report an Outage".
  8. Confirm that the address listed is correct for the outage location, and type a comment (optional). Then, select the "Report Outage" button.

### More SmartHub features

Reporting outages is not the only benefit of SmartHub. You also have the ability to:

- View hourly, daily and monthly usage data
- Compare usage between hours, days, months or years
- Set usage thresholds and alerts
- Receive bill reminders
- Pay your bill quickly
- View Corn Belt Energy's social media feeds

For more information, check out our short, easy-to-follow SmartHub video tutorial at [www.youtube.com/cornbeltenergy](http://www.youtube.com/cornbeltenergy).



# education **GRANTS** program

Corn Belt Energy is now accepting applications for our 2019 Education Grants Program. Five schools that serve children of Corn Belt electric members will each be awarded a \$1,500 grant and one school will be awarded the \$2,000 Jeff Reeves Memorial Education Grant to fund innovative programs that enrich students' education.

Teachers and administrators of public or private K-12 schools may apply; the facility does not need to receive electricity from Corn Belt Energy, but must serve families within our footprint in Central Illinois. Multiple projects within the same school can be combined to a total of the awarded grant amount.

The application deadline is December 31, 2018, and grants will be awarded in spring of 2019. The application and further details can be found online at [www.cornbeltenergy.com](http://www.cornbeltenergy.com).

## 2019 scholarship applications now available

In spring 2019, twelve scholarships of \$2,000 each will be awarded to eligible high school seniors through the Illinois Electric Cooperative (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program. The fund was designed to financially assist deserving students in the "electric cooperative family," while also providing a means for co-ops and individuals to honor deceased members of the co-op family through memorial gifts.

Six 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. One scholarship, the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship, is awarded to a student who is the child of an Illinois electric cooperative employee. The remaining four 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. One 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. Military veterans and relatives of cooperative members, employees and directors are eligible to apply.

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 and deadline information are available at [www.cornbeltenergy.com](http://www.cornbeltenergy.com).



## Safeguard your home this fall with surge protection

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 Energy 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. 3-phase meter-mounted surge protector for \$14.95/month with a \$25 installation fee.

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](http://www.cornbeltenergy.com) or call us at 800-879-0339.

## CONTACT US

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1 Energy Way, Bloomington IL 61705 | Office hours: Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM

