

# POWERLINE

NEWSLETTER FOR CO-OP MEMBERS OF CORN BELT ENERGY



EDITION: AUGUST 2019

## CORN BELT ENERGY HOSTS 81ST ANNUAL MEETING

Approximately 1,537 cooperative members and their families attended Corn Belt Energy Corporation's 81st Annual Meeting, which was held at Central Catholic High School in Bloomington on the afternoon of Friday, June 21. The theme for the meeting was "The Future is Bright". Attendees enjoyed complimentary lunch, bucket truck rides, educational workshops on a variety of topics, alpaca petting zoo, kettle corn, snow cones and ice cream, safety demonstrations, and several free activities for children.

Cooperative Board Chairman Rae F. Payne remarked on how prudent oversight of maintenance and operational expenses affords Corn Belt Energy the ability to do many things like reinvest in its infrastructure and maintenance program to maintain reliability. It also allows Corn Belt Energy to do capital credit retirements. Capital credits are periodically returned to members as the financial condition of the Cooperative dictates. It was formally announced that \$7 million will be disbursed to members as retired capital credits starting this fall. He closed his remarks by thanking the cooperative members for their involvement in the cooperative. During the business meeting, the following Directors were elected to serve three-year terms: Peter Borowski (District 1), Jessie Slager (District 2), Terry Longman (District



3), Laverne Malone (District 4) and Robert Angus (District 9).

After the business meeting concluded, the Directors held a reorganizational

meeting and re-elected Rae F. Payne as Chairman, Charles Meisenheimer as Vice Chairman, Albert Hagenbuch as Secretary Treasurer, and Janice Reimer as Assistant Secretary Treasurer.



## Providing safety and reliability through our vegetation management program

Trees may seem harmless on a calm, sunny day, but wind and other weather can cause those same beautiful trees to threaten your electric supply.

At Corn Belt Energy, we are committed to providing our members with reliable power. There are some things we can't stop such as high winds, ice storms, tornados, etc., but do take proactive measures to prevent other outage causes.

As you can probably guess, weather-related events cause the majority of power outages for Corn Belt Energy. Vegetation such as trees, shrubs and brush growing close to power lines and distribution equipment can also cause interruption of service for our members.

In order to reduce potential tree-related problems, Corn Belt Energy operates an aggressive vegetation management program. Our line crews look for foliage growing under lines, overhanging branches, leaning or other types of trees that could pull down a power line if they fall, and trees that could grow into lines. It's a job that's never done. By the time crews finish trimming along our 5,002 miles of distribution lines, vegetation has started to grow back at the starting point.

We need your help in working to keep a safe, reliable, and affordable supply of power flowing to your home or business. Let us know if you notice trees or branches that might pose a risk to our power lines. Even more important, before planting

trees in your yard, think about how tall they may grow and how wide their branches may spread. As a rule of thumb, 25 feet of ground-to-sky clearance should be available on each side of our utility poles to give power lines plenty of space. Choose tree varieties with care and plant with power lines in mind.

We appreciate your help as we work together to keep electricity reliable. To report trees you think may pose a problem, please call us at 800-879-0339 or email us at [cbec@cornbeltenergy.com](mailto:cbec@cornbeltenergy.com).

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY REBATES

Find energy efficient rebates and incentives that may apply to your home, business, farm or school. The Corn Belt Energy rebate programs include: lighting, HVAC, geothermal, heat pump water heaters, as well as commercial and industrial.

Learn more about the rebates offered by Corn Belt Energy at [www.powermoves.com](http://www.powermoves.com) or by calling us at 800-879-0339.

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## Defining degree days

Weather can have a major impact on energy bills, and when the outdoor temperatures become extreme, your heating and cooling equipment works harder to keep your home comfortable.

Did you know the energy experts at Corn Belt Energy use degree days to anticipate heating and cooling needs for you, our consumer-members?

Never heard of a degree day? Don't worry, you're not alone. Let's take a look at what degree days are and why they're important for electric utilities.

Degree days measure how cold or warm a location is by comparing the average of the high and low (mean) of the outdoor temperatures recorded in that location to the standard U.S. temperature, which is 65°F. The assumption is that we don't need heating or cooling to be comfortable when this is the outdoor temperature.

So, the more extreme the outdoor temperatures, the higher the number

of degree days. And the higher the number of degree days, the higher the amount of energy used for space heating and cooling. Summer is in full swing, so let's look at cooling degree days.

Cooling degree days are a measurement of how hot the temperature was on a given day or during a period of days. With summer temperatures rising, you'll likely require more cooling for your home or business, which results in more cooling degree days. Variations in electric bills often follow closely with degree days, which is why electric utilities use this data to anticipate future energy demand.

Degree days are tracked for a variety of reasons. Farmers can better plan the planting of crops and timing for pest control, and weather experts can better assess climate patterns.

To view degree days for our area, visit [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov) and search "degree days calculator."

If charts and data aren't your forte, no problem. Here are a few tips to help you save on energy bills this summer:

- Set your thermostat as high as comfortably possible. The smaller the difference between the indoor and outdoor temperatures, the lower your cooling costs will be. The Department of Energy recommends setting your thermostat to 78°F when you're home and a higher setting for when you're away.
- Turn off ceiling fans when you leave a room.
- Close window coverings, like curtains and blinds, during the day to block sunlight.
- Use caulk and weather stripping to seal air leaks around doors and windows.

If you have questions about your energy use or to learn more ways to save, contact Jeremy Myers, Energy Advisor at 800-879-0339.

## U.S. COOLING DEGREE DAYS

Cooling degree days measure how hot the outdoor temperature was on a given day or during a period of days. The map below shows measurements of U.S. cooling degree days in 2018 by census region. Extreme outdoor temperatures bring a higher number of degree days, which results in higher energy use.





*Pictured above from left: Austin Meissner, Easton Paul, Congressman Darin LaHood and Lianna Benjamin.*

## Local students participate in Youth to Washington Tour

What do you get when 62 students from 26 Illinois electric and telephone cooperatives join 1,800 of their peers across the United States? You get the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Youth to Washington Tour!

Three students from Corn Belt Energy service territory were selected from a diverse group of applicants to represent their cooperative and enjoy an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. from June 14-21 as part of the annual Youth Tour.

The 2019 Youth Tour delegates from Corn Belt Energy included Lianna Benjamin of Ellsworth, Austin Meissner of Hudson and Easton Paul of Bloomington.



The students toured Capitol Hill and met with U.S. Senators Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth and U.S. Representative Darin LaHood. They also visited historical and cultural sites including Arlington National Cemetery, the Supreme Court, President Lincoln's Cottage at First National Cemetery, a variety of memorials and the U.S. Capitol. Among fun activities the students enjoyed were an assembly of more than 1,800 Youth Tour participants from across the nation and a special farewell event at the Newseum, scheduled to close later this year.

Since 1964, the nation's cooperative electric utilities have sponsored more than 60,000 high school students to visit Washington, D.C., talk one-on-one with their U.S. congressional

delegations and learn from energy and grassroots government education sessions. NRECA is the national service organization representing the nation's more than 900 consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives, which provide service to 42 million consumer-members in 47 states.

Parents or grandparents who currently receive electricity from Corn Belt Energy are welcome to nominate their high school sophomore and/or junior students to attend the annual electric cooperative Youth to Washington Tour. To learn more about the Youth to Washington Tour, visit our website at [www.cornbeltenergy.com](http://www.cornbeltenergy.com) or call 800-879-0339 x250.

### CONTACT US

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