



## WIEC board approves capital credit refund

**M**anager Todd Grotts is pleased to report that the WIEC board of directors has once again approved capital credit retirements for this fall. A refund of close to \$260,000 was approved earlier this year. This represents the remaining portion of capital credits from 1983 as well as all the capital credits from 1984. The board (directed by both bylaws and policy) can only approve the retirement of capital credits when it will not adversely impact the cooperative's financial condition. **6733-62**

Capital credits represent the cooperative members' equity in (or ownership of) their cooperative. Your capital credit for a given year reflects your individual portion of any margins (a.k.a. profits) earned that year by the cooperative.

Members may wonder why it takes so long for co-ops to refund capital credits. It's because, prior to refunding the credits, co-ops use member equity to help maintain, construct and otherwise improve physical systems (wires, poles, transformers, meter-reading equipment, etc.). Each new generation of members helps pay for their own maintenance as well as any growth in size or technological advancement that occurs.



**AND THE  
WINNER IS...**

**Gary Jacobs of rural Hamilton**  
Map Location Winner - July issue

*Congratulations!*



**Western Illinois**  
ELECTRICAL COOP.  
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

524 North Madison | P.O. Box 338  
Carthage, IL 62321  
www.wiec.net | 800/576-3125

**OFFICE HOURS**

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

**BUSINESS OFFICE**

217-357-3125

**TO REPORT AN OUTAGE**

800-576-3125

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- **Kent Flesner** —  
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- **Mark Burling** —  
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- **Kim Gullberg** —  
Director, Stronghurst
- **Jay Morrison** —  
Director, Niota

**STAFF**

- **Todd Grotts** — General Manager
- **Ryan Biery** — Manager  
of Operations
- **Wendi Whitaker** — Finance and  
Accounting Manager

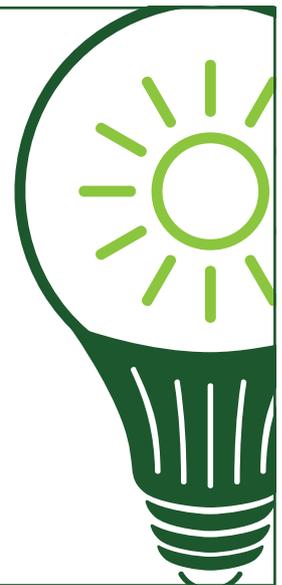
**MAP LOCATION CONTEST**

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.

**Energy Efficiency  
Tip of the Month**

**Cookware Tip:** Copper-bottomed pans heat faster on the stove. In the oven, ceramic and glass dishes are better than metal. With ceramic and glass dishes, you can turn the oven down about 25 degrees, and your meal will cook just as quickly.

Source: *energy.gov*



**Becky Dickinson retires**



**F**inance and Accounting Manager Becky Dickinson retired after nearly 25 years of dedicated service. Becky leaves behind a legacy of encouragement, kindness and customer service. We wish her the very best on her retirement. Enjoy the opportunity to do wonderful things just for you and your family! Becky is photographed with her husband, Matt, who surprised her with a bouquet of flowers during WIEC's annual meeting held at the end of June.



**Welcome New Members**

**June 2019**

Buckert, Tori & Jared  
Erke Nagel Farms, LLC  
Fader, Avery  
Harris, Steve  
Lionberger, Jill

Sheeley, Patrick  
Skees, Holly  
Stokke, Jennifer  
Wilkins, Daniel C. & Brenda K.  
Wilson, Felicia L. & Joshua D.

# Farmers: Remember electrical safety this harvest season

**I**n 2017, farmers ranked eighth in the list of the most dangerous jobs (civilian jobs with highest fatality rates) according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics/U.S. Dept. of Labor. Unfortunately, farmers, ranchers and other agricultural managers rank right below other hazardous jobs such as logging, roofing, and steel work.

It is no wonder farmers make that list. As agriculturists are well-aware, many dangers are present in their long and arduous workdays.

Safe Electricity and Western Illinois Electrical Coop. remind farmers that accidents related to power and electricity are also possible but in most cases they can be prevented. Especially during the busy harvest season, take the following steps to decrease the chances of an electrical-related incident:

- Always use a spotter when operating large machinery near lines.
- Use care when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from lines — at all times, in all directions.
- Inspect the height of the farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Always lower extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, call us right away. **6532-68**
- If your equipment does hit a power line, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 9-1-1, warn others to stay away, and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.

Although harvest season is a time filled with tight deadlines and heightened work stress, take the time to consider electrical safety. It could save your life or the lives of others.

For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## HARVEST SAFETY TIPS FOR FARMWORKERS

**Maintain a 10-foot clearance** around all utility equipment in all directions.

**Use a spotter and deployed flags** to maintain safe distances from power lines and other equipment when doing field work.

**If your equipment makes contact with an energized or downed power line, contact us immediately** by phone and remain inside the vehicle until the power line is de-energized. In case of smoke or fire, exit the cab by making a solid jump out of the cab, without touching it at the same time, and hop away to safety.

**Consider equipment and cargo extensions of your vehicle.** Lumber, hay, tree limbs, irrigation pipe and even bulk materials can conduct electricity, so keep them out of contact with electrical equipment.

*Source: Safe Electricity*

# Don't wait. Be prepared before the storm.

By Anne Prince, NRECA

**I**t's your worst-case scenario. A major storm was predicted and this time, the predictions were right. Many power lines are down, and your electricity may be out for several days. You are low on everything—food, pet supplies, toilet paper, batteries, diapers and medication. **6515-45**

Imagine how you would feel in this situation. While you can't predict which weather forecast will come true, you can plan ahead so when a severe weather event strikes, you have the tools and resources to effectively weather the storm. The Department of Homeland Security offers several resources to help you prepare for major weather events and natural disasters. Visit [www.ready.gov/make-a-plan](http://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan).

## Preparedness Actions and Items

- Stock your pantry with a three-day supply of non-perishable food, such as canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee, water and other essentials (e.g., diapers and toiletries).
- Confirm that you have adequate sanitation and hygiene supplies including towelettes, soap and hand sanitizer.
- Ensure your First Aid kit is stocked with pain relievers, bandages and other medical essentials, and make sure your prescriptions are current.
- Set aside basic household items you will need, including flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener and portable, battery-powered radio or TV.
- Organize emergency supplies so they are together in an easily accessible location.

## With advance warning

If a severe storm is expected with high winds and sustained rain, you

may need to take extra steps to safeguard your home. Securely close exterior doors and windows. Fully charge all cell phones, laptops and devices so you have maximum power in the event of a power outage. If you plan to use a small generator, make sure it's rated to handle the amount of power you will need, and always review the manufacturer's instructions to operate it safely.

## During a prolonged outage

In the event of an outage, turn off appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This will help avert damage from a power surge and will also help prevent overloading the circuits during power restoration. That said, do leave one light on so you will know when power is restored. If utilizing a small household generator, consider using LED holiday lights to illuminate a living area. A strand of 100 white lights draws little energy yet produces considerable light. Solar lights also work, if they can receive some sunlight during the day for charging. **562-5**

During thunderstorms, the American Red Cross recommends avoiding electrical equipment and land-based telephones. Use battery-powered TVs and radios instead. Keep away from windows. Listen to local news or NOAA Weather Radio for current emergency information or check the WIEC Facebook page for possible updates.

After the storm, avoid downed power lines and walking through flooded areas where power lines could be submerged. Allow ample room for utility crews to safely perform their jobs – including on your property.

## Power in planning

Advance planning for severe storms or other emergencies can reduce stress and anxiety caused by the weather event and can lessen the impact of the storm's effects. Sign up for NOAA emergency alerts and warnings and "Like" us on Facebook to stay abreast of restoration efforts and other important co-op news and information. Act today, because there is power in planning.

