

POWERLINE

NEWSLETTER FOR CO-OP MEMBERS OF CORN BELT ENERGY



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Four tips for winter safety

It's no surprise that winter months bring increased potential for fire risks and electrical safety hazards. This makes sense because during the coldest months, consumers are using additional electrical devices and appliances, like space heaters, electric blankets and portable generators.

The National Fire Protection Association estimates that 47,700 home fires occur each year in the U.S. due to electrical failure or malfunction. These fires result in 418 deaths, 1,570 injuries and \$1.4 billion in property damage annually. This winter, safeguard your loved ones and your home with these electrical safety tips from the Electrical Safety Foundation International.

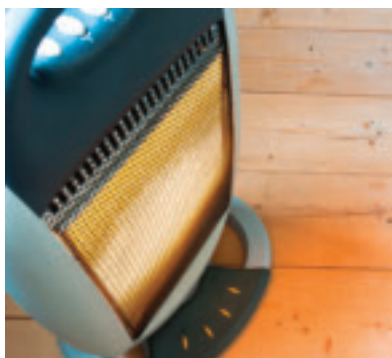
Don't overload outlets.

Overloaded outlets are a major cause of residential fires. Avoid using extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliance connections—they should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. If

you're relying heavily on extension cords in general, you may need additional outlets to address your needs. Contact a qualified electrician to inspect your home and add new outlets.

Never leave space heaters

unattended. If you're using a space heater, turn it off before leaving the room. Make sure heaters are placed at least three feet away from flammable items. It should also be noted that space heaters take a toll on your energy bills. If you're using them throughout your home, it may be time to upgrade your home heating system.



Inspect heating pads and electric

blankets. These items cause nearly 500 fires every year. Electric blankets that are more than 10 years old create additional risks for a fire hazard. Inspect your electric blankets and heating pads – look for dark, charred or frayed spots, and



make sure the electrical cord is not damaged. Do not place any items on top of a heating pad or electric blanket, and never fold them when in use.

Use portable generators safely.

Unfortunately, winter storms can cause prolonged power outages, which means many consumers will use portable generators to power their homes. Never connect a standby generator into your home's electrical system. For portable generators, plug appliances directly



into the outlet provided on the generator. Start the generator first, before you plug in appliances. Run it in a well-ventilated area outside your home. The carbon monoxide it generates is deadly, so keep it away from your garage, doors, windows and vents.

For more safety tips, visit our website at cornbeltenergy.com.



Volunteers restore historical Tremont building to showcase the community's agricultural heritage

The simple, red brick building stands looking as pristine as it as it may have when it was newly built in 1912. The one-story building with a loft, which once housed the water works for the village from 1912 to 1968, the local volunteer fire department from 1921 to 1941, and village street department storage from 1968 to 2017, is now known as the Tremont Agricultural Heritage Museum and contains agricultural artifacts and images donated from the community.

"In 2017, we received a grant from the community betterment fund, which is funded largely from the profits from the Tremont Turkey Festival, to convert the old building located at 100 West Madison Street in Tremont into the Tremont Agricultural Heritage Museum," stated Lori Fuoss, Secretary of the Tremont Museum and Historical Society.

After years of fundraising and work by volunteers, the Tremont Agricultural Heritage Museum became reality in fall of 2019. "With a dedicated team of over 30 volunteers and the support of corporate donors, we've been able to restore the building, update the HVAC, electrical, paint and bring it to the state it is today," said Fuoss.

The museum pays tribute to the agricultural heritage in the Tremont area but also pays tribute to the history of the building itself. As the original home of the village water department as well as a water tower that was located on the property to the west of the building, the museum contains water meters once used throughout the town as well as an original sink where parts were washed. Over a hundred years ago, the building also served as the local volunteer fire department housing a hand cart fire truck, Model T as

well as a 1938 International fire truck which has now been restored and can be seen in town parades. Memorabilia such as turnout gear, fire extinguishers and other





Pictured above from left to right: Tremont Museum and Historical Society Board Members: Rich Sauder Sauder, President; Lori Fuoss, Secretary, and Rick Otey, Director.

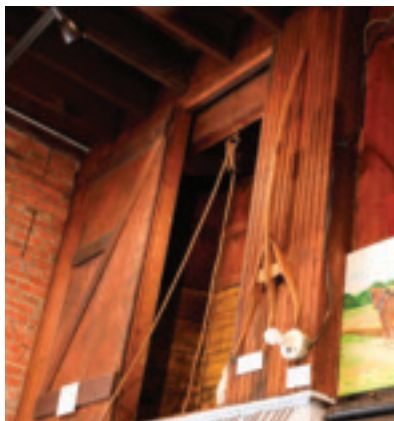
equipment from the volunteer fire department can be seen on display as well. And the building, which is leased from the Village of Tremont, also contains several items of note from the Village street department including street signs and tools used by the Village employees.

“The museum has effectively collected, maintained and documented local Tremont agricultural history,” stated Richard Sauder, President of the Tremont Museum and Historical Society. As you walk in the main door, the exhibits begin with family farms in the “Our Agriculture Heritage” room. The next room showcases agriculture from the past to the present including notable highlights from the 1800s to present day.



The Tremont community is widely known for turkey growers but also has a diverse agricultural legacy to tout. Families have donated artifacts to the museum demonstrating the

rich and diverse agricultural legacy of Tremont. Examples of some of those families include the Leslie family who had a huge Percheron draft horse farm and thus had a train station named after them, as well as the Sommer Brothers Seed Company, Precision Planting (now known as 360 Yield) and Keystone-Woven-Wire Fence Co. (known more recently as Keystone Steel and now Liberty Steel) all companies that originated in the Tremont area.



From a hay loft to barn photos, crop and livestock farming, grain cooperatives, farm sale bills to tools used in farming as well as demonstrations of new farm technology, the Tremont Agricultural Heritage Museum has a wide variety of examples of how agriculture shaped and continues to shape the Tremont area.

The museum is rich in Tremont agricultural history and has been a

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Meet our employees



Patrick Carr
Warehouseman

How long have you worked at Corn Belt Energy?
6 years

What is your role at Corn Belt Energy?
I have many duties but mostly I help to insure that the material needed for our linemen to "keep the lights on" for our members is ordered, unloaded, stocked and pulled for whatever the given job may be.

What aspect of your role do you enjoy the most?
I love that the daily grind is never exactly the same... there seems to always be a new challenge or task to tackle in helping to serve our members.

If there is one piece of advice that you could share with our members, what would it be?
Root for one another no matter the difference in views or morals. We're all in this together... just different levels... fighting the same devil.

Corn Belt Energy puts SAFETY FIRST. What safety tip would you share with our members?
Understand the risk. No matter what it is that you're doing. If you're unsure, always ask, we can always learn.

What are your hobbies and outside interests?
Outside of work I enjoy Jeeping, camping, golfing, playing slow pitch softball and coaching my 7 year old son's baseball and basketball teams.

Who or what inspires you?
I'm passionate about my faith, God has never let me down, also my wife and children, they are my whole world....oh and the Chicago Cubs :)

If you had to select a hashtag to describe yourself, what would it be?
#blessedbeyondmeasure

Is there anything else that you'd like to share with our members?
It's incredible to see the inner workings of the cooperative world and the heartbeat that is injected into serving and caring for it's members from the top to the bottom. I was never quite aware before how far these folks will go to show their care until I saw it all for myself. I'm now a better man for it and blessed to be a part of it.



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labor of love by those volunteers who have contributed to bringing the museum to life. Some of the unique installations in which volunteers contributed at the museum include a stained-glass window created by Joe Venovich and a mural depicting the progression of agriculture painted by Kay Sommer.

The Tremont Museum (located at 367 S. Sampson Street, Tremont, Illinois just east of the Tremont Agricultural Heritage Museum) and the Tremont Agricultural Heritage

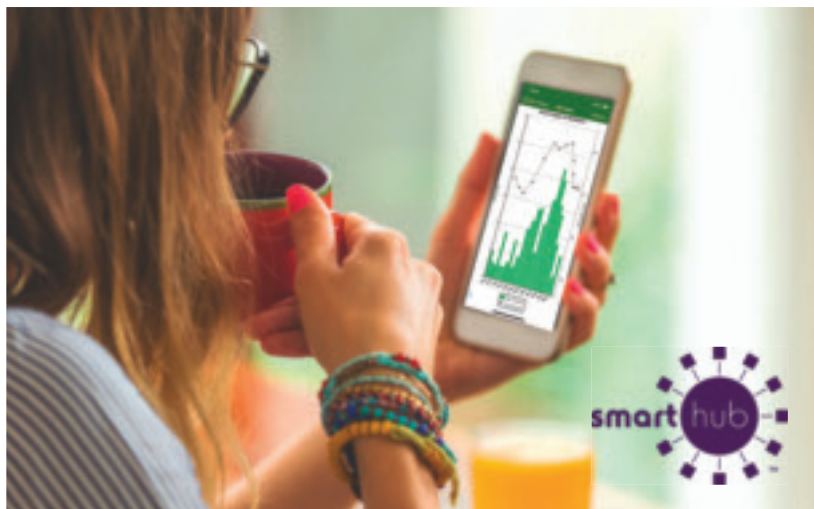
Museum are run completely by volunteers. There is no paid staff but simply many passionate volunteers who have a goal of preserving their community's heritage. Approximately 140 members belong to the Tremont Museum and Historical Society.

Both museums offer tours by appointment and partner with the local FFA chapter, high school art classes and provides annual tours to elementary, junior high and high school students.

The museums have been closed during the months of January and February. However, they will re-open to the public in March and will be open on the second Sunday and fourth Saturday of each month from 2 pm to 4 pm.

For more information or to set up a private tour, contact Tremont Museum and Historical Society Board President, Rich Sauder at richsauder@gmail.com or by phone at 309-231-1123.

Monitor your hourly energy usage



If you receive electricity from Corn Belt Energy, you can access your usage data online! As your electric co-op, we're here to help you use energy wisely, and SmartHub is a

great way to track your usage, down to the hour.

Getting Started

Go to www.cornbeltenergy.com



and log in to your eBill account by clicking the "Account Log-in" link along the top and enter your username and password. If you don't have an account, setting up a new one is fast and easy. Once you're logged in, click the "Usage&Billing" text link to access SmartHub.

You can view your electric consumption by month, day or hour. You can even overlay temperature data to see how the weather impacts your heating and cooling costs.

For more information

Call us at 800-879-0339 and speak to a member service representative during normal business hours.

CONTACT US

1-800-879-0339 | cbec@cornbeltenergy.com | www.cornbeltenergy.com |  
1 Energy Way, Bloomington IL 61705 | Office hours: Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM

