

## Do your part to keep lineworkers safe



*It's nearing 5 p.m. on a workday. Your boss wanted that last-minute report and your kids need to be picked up from soccer or play practice. You jump in your car and on the way you approach a work zone. You don't have time to slow down so you rush through it and ignore the orange work zone signs.*



*You're having a garage sale and you think posting a sign on a utility pole won't hurt. Everyone does it, right?*

Either of these scenarios could injure or kill one of our lineworkers.

The job of an electric lineworker is not easy. Lineworkers take great pride in providing safe and reliable service, but their job involves working on and around live power out in the elements. (673-33) We ask you to do your part to keep them safe:

1. Slow down and move over in work zones. Cars or trucks that go too fast not only endanger workers on the ground. Driving

too fast or not moving over can also put a lineworker who is working high up in a bucket in danger by causing it to move or sway.

2. Do not post anything on a utility pole, especially with staples, nails or tacks. These can puncture insulated gloves or other protective clothing and expose workers to high voltages.
3. Never plug a generator into an indoor or outdoor wall outlet.

The power that back feeds into the electric line could electrocute a utility worker.

4. Please be patient when the power goes out. Workers need to efficiently and safely restore power.

We appreciate your help in keeping our employees safe. For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## HELP KEEP LINEWORKERS SAFE

Lineworkers take great pride in providing safe and reliable service, but their job involves working around high-voltage power lines in all kinds of weather conditions.





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

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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

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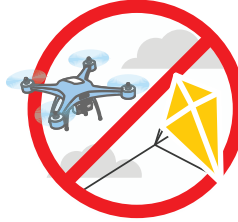
**MAP LOCATION CONTEST**

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.

**Electrical Substation Safety Tips**



Teach youngsters to stay away from electrical substation fences — they are NOT for climbing.



Never fly kites or drones near substations.



Never release metallic balloons near substations, which can cause outages when they contact power lines.

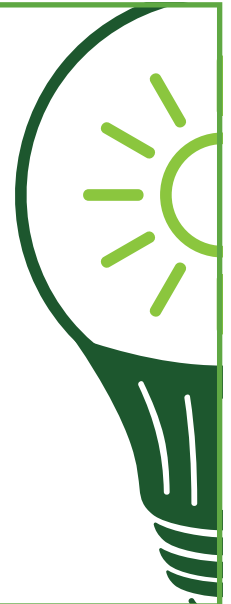


Contact us if you see a substation fence or transformer cabinet that is open or vandalized.

**Energy Efficiency**  
**Tip of the Month**

Are you using your fireplace efficiently? Remember to turn down the thermostat when burning a fire, and close the damper when a fire is not burning.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



**Welcome New Members**

**November**  
**2019**

Canfield, Danialle & Thomas Crotts  
Clark, John H.  
Courtney, David R.  
Gunderson, William  
Hamman, Glen  
Hocker, Jennifer  
Jacobs, Allison  
Johnson, Miriam R.  
Kirby, Matt & Amanda Debrito

Merritt, Jordan  
Munoz, Rita L.  
Neally, Tyler & Hannah  
Paxton, Cody  
Pierce, Chris  
Pitchfork Rafter Cattle Co., LLC  
Ruebush, Deborah  
Teague, Patricia  
Vick, William Scott & Lori Lynn

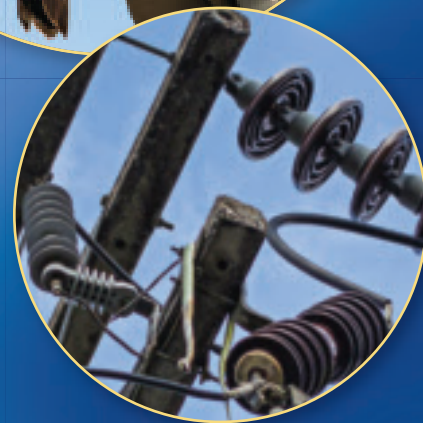
## What do squirrels, birds and snakes have in common?

Besides being cute, fun to watch or just plain slithery, animals can disrupt power. Although we do all we can to prevent animal interference, sometimes our efforts are no match for persistent and curious critters who use overhead power lines as a superhighway or substations as a nesting ground.

According to the Electrical Engineering Portal (EEP), the following classes of animals have caused shorts and subsequent power outages or service disruptions:

- **Squirrels** love to use power lines as their overhead highway. They are agile and crafty – oftentimes equipment guards and other deterrents cannot keep them away, much like a squirrel outsmarting a bird feeder. If they touch the power line and pole (or other equipment) simultaneously, the electric current travels through them and their demise can cause problems with power transmission.
- **Mice, rats and groundhogs** (oh my!) sometimes cause interruptions in service by gnawing through underground cables. These offenders (and others) can also try to make a home in a substation, which often does not turn out well for them and can cause a hiccup in power distribution for us.
- **Birds** – different species can cause different types of problems. Although small birds can sit on a wire without a problem, some larger varieties like to build nests at the tops of poles, on transmission towers and in substations. Nesting material can cause faults (abnormal electric currents), and bird droppings can contaminate insulators, according to EEP. Other times, large birds with long wing spans can touch a live power line with one wing tip and something else with the other and become a conductor for the voltage to pass through them. This is called “bridging.”
- **Snakes** – these slithering reptiles can disrupt service in both substations and underground service. They can squeeze through small spaces, travel upward, and have enough length to bridge from one current to another, causing a problem.
- **Large animals** like cattle, horses and bison can cause damage to guy wires and poles. They can cause physical damage and cause an outage or make the system more prone to outages in the future.

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





## Keep your furry friends safe around electricity

**Y**ou do all you can to keep your pets healthy: you take them to the veterinarian for checkups, feed them well and ensure they are up to date on vaccinations. After all, for many people, pets are part of the family.

Two-thirds (67 percent) of U.S. households, or about 85 million families, own at least one pet, according to the 2019-2020 National Pet Owners Survey. The survey was conducted by the American Pet Products Association, and the numbers are up 11 percent from 1988.

There is something else you can do for your pets, and that is to keep them safe around electricity. **Western Illinois Electrical Coop.** and **Safe Electricity** offer these tips:

Puppies and other pets love to chew on electrical cords. Keep cords out of sight or hidden with a cord cover. Provide teething or play alternatives.

- Watch your pet around dangling or sagging cords, including

phone or tablet charging cables. Unplug charging cables once your devices are charged. Not only do they draw a small amount of energy when not in use, but the dangling cords are just crying to be played with.

- Watch where you place lamps and other plugged-in items. Lamps can be a fire hazard if they are knocked over, especially if they have halogen bulbs.
- Do not leave your pet alone around items that get hot: curling irons and straighteners, an outdoor grill, a portable heater and other electric appliances, including cooktops.

Pet proof your home much like you would for a baby or toddler. If you suspect your pet has been shocked or burned, take it to the vet right away. Owners may not realize a pet has been

shocked until a few hours later when it has trouble breathing. Other symptoms include ulcers in the mouth and lesions on the tongue and gums.

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