

# POWERLINE

NEWSLETTER FOR CO-OP MEMBERS OF CORN BELT ENERGY



EDITION: APRIL 2020

## How will you celebrate Earth Day?

Earth Day is considered one of the world's largest civic events. This year marks the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day, and on April 22, we can all be part of this global movement to help the environment.

Corn Belt Energy has a continued focus on positively impacting the communities that we serve. Through education and program offerings, we work to help our members become more energy efficient. Our overall energy mix that comes from renewable energy sources is at 14% and continues to increase on an annual basis.

We are also working to help create pollinator habitats within our service territory, and our vegetation management program is committed to promoting the health of the animals and invertebrates that make our ecosystems function by pollination. Pollinators are integral to our ecosystems and our economy, regardless of landscape, and you can contribute to pollinator habitat in your own backyard. By implementing pollinator conservation practices, we will not only benefit our most well-known pollinators, the bees, but also other wildlife, from butterflies to birds. Conservation is a responsibility of all utilities, so by increasing the biodiversity of nectar-producing plants that anchor soil on your

lands, you also attract invertebrates, birds, bats and other unlikely pollinators to your system. The additional diversity of habitat and organisms can also benefit your property through additional services, like biological control and the provision of additional soil organic matter.

Recreating a habitat enhanced through vegetation management is our goal.

Development of these pollinator areas is important because they provide floral resources including nectar and pollen to pollinators. A greater diversity of (or dominance by) native plants provides a greater diversity of floral resources and host plants (such as for butterflies) and nesting sites (such as for native bees). While non-native plants may provide some resources for pollinators, native plants provide other ecosystem services including



soil stabilization, water quality improvements, and habitat for birds and other wildlife, and are persistent and typically less costly to maintain for long-term sustainability.

There are many ways we as individuals can help the environment, and some are easier than you'd think. Here are a few simple actions you can take now to reduce your energy use.

**Corn Belt Energy members who sign up for paperless billing will receive a one-time \$10 bill credit.**



## How will you celebrate Earth Day?

>>Continued from page 20a

### **Audit your light bulbs**

Swapping out any remaining incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs can make a big difference in home efficiency, and it's one of the easiest ways to reduce your energy bill.

### **Maintain your HVAC system**

Replace your home air filters to allow your HVAC system to run more efficiently. Air filters prevent dust and allergens from clogging your HVAC system. Changing the filters makes your unit function more effectively – keeping your home cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.

### **Examine your smart or programmable thermostat**

Make sure it is programmed for the current season and family schedule. This is one of the best tools at your fingertips, however, you can only achieve these efficiencies and savings if it is

programmed properly and adjusted periodically to keep pace with changes in household routines.

### **Seal windows and doors**

Seal leaks with weather stripping and caulk to keep cool air indoors during warm months and prevent cold air from penetrating the indoors during colder months. Sealing gaps around piping, dryer vents, fans and outlets also helps to seal the envelope and increase efficiency.

### **Reduce water usage**

Conserve water by taking showers instead of baths and replace your current shower head with a water-saving shower head or flow restrictor. The average dishwasher uses approximately 25 gallons of water, so optimize your dish washing by filling your dishwasher completely before using.

### **Reduce waste**

Bring your own bag to the market and other shopping locations. Use reusable straws in your containers at home and consider bringing them with you to a restaurant.

### **Go paperless**

Pay as many bills as possible online. As a Corn Belt Energy member, you can view your bills online or on the SmartHub app and each member who switches to paperless billing will receive a \$10 bill credit.

As we celebrate Earth Day this April, let's continue to work together and make a positive impact on our local community – and our beautiful planet.

We're always here to help if you want more information on how you can save energy. Stop by our office or give us a call at 800-879-0339.



# Trimming trees near power lines can kill

There's really no other way to say it: Trimming branches or limbs near power lines can kill.

If you look the other way, get distracted by deciding which limb to trim next or lose your footing, you could inadvertently make contact with a power line. You might think you have a steady hand, but moving a few inches off course could be the last thing you ever do.

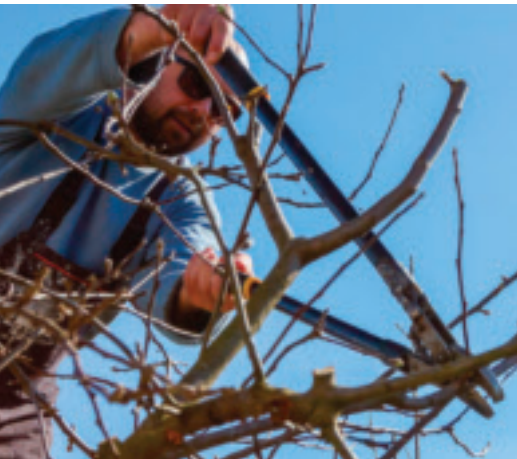
That is why trimming within 10 feet (in any direction) of a power line is

illegal. Only OSHA-certified line clearance workers are authorized to trim near power lines.

When hiring a tree trimmer to trim near power lines in your yard or on your property, make sure the person you hire is certified to do so. The same applies for DIY trimming: do not trim near power lines; instead, hire it out to a certified line clearance tree trimmer.

Remember: Trimming trees within 10 feet of a power line can be fatal. Never trim branches or limbs near a power line. It's the law: only OSHA-certified line clearance workers are authorized to trim near power lines.

Call us with any questions about trees and power lines at 800-879-0339. For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



# Know what's below before you dig

Protect yourself and your family. State law requires you to notify JULIE at least two business days (excludes weekends and holidays) before any digging project regardless of the project size or depth. Even if you are digging in the same area as a previous project, notify JULIE. This is a free service.

A few examples of projects that may require JULIE service include

planting trees and shrubs, adding new room additions, decks and patios, sheds, swimming pools and fencing.

You can prevent injury and avoid damage calling JULIE or entering a self-service, locate request online at: <http://newtina.julie1call.com/request/>



**Steve Cimei**  
Area Serviceman

*How long have you worked at Corn Belt Energy?*  
**25 years**

*What is your role at Corn Belt Energy?*  
**To provide reliable electricity to our membership.**

*What aspect of your role do you enjoy the most?*  
**I enjoy working with the employees at Corn Belt and working together to provide reliable power and working on the challenges that come along with it.**

*If there is one piece of advice that you could share with our members, what would it be?*  
**When the power goes out be as patient as you can and know that the employees at Corn Belt are doing everything they can to get the power back on as soon as possible.**

*Corn Belt Energy puts SAFETY FIRST. What safety tip would you share with our members?*  
**Keep kids out of trees that are near power lines, we try and do the best we can at keeping trees trimmed away from our lines but seems that our trees growth cycles have increased and it is getting harder to keep up with them.**

*What are your hobbies and outside interests?*  
**I have a home in northern Wisconsin with my parents and siblings and I enjoy fishing in spring summer and fall and I also enjoy riding snowmobiles with my family in the winter months**

*Who or what inspires you?*  
**My late grandfather inspires me, I was so fortunate to have him in my life for as long as I did and I try to measure up to the great family man he was.**

*If you had to select a hashtag to describe yourself, what would it be?*  
**#crappieslayer@onthelines**

*Is there anything else that you would like to share with our members?*  
**I have enjoyed working at Corn Belt over the years and looking forward to many more and meeting more people!**

**SAVE THE DATE:** Mark your calendar for Corn Belt Energy's 82nd Annual Meeting! If you receive electricity from Corn Belt Energy, you're a member of the cooperative and are invited to attend. Join us at Central Catholic High School off of Airport Road in Bloomington on Friday, June 19th.



# GEOCENTS

MAKING GEOTHERMAL AFFORDABLE

## GeoCents makes geothermal affordable for Corn Belt Energy members

Whether you are in the process of new construction, updating HVAC systems or just looking into geothermal as a heating and cooling alternative, Corn Belt Energy's GeoCents program makes geothermal more affordable for our members.

As a part of this program, Corn Belt Energy will pay to have the geothermal loops (the outside loops that go into a member's yard) installed at a member's home. In turn the member will pay a monthly fee to be able to utilize the loops.

Participating members will receive:

- \$1100/vertical ton & the

member will pay \$7/ton/month on their electric bill

- \$900/horizontal ton & the member will pay \$6/ton/month on their electric bill
- Corn Belt Energy also has a \$1500 rebate for the installation of a geothermal that utilizes electric as the backup

Corn Belt Energy will do an initial face-to-face meeting explaining all of the program details and a review of the interested participant's current heating and cooling system. All participants must utilize a certified HVAC contractor and geothermal looper for installation.

Both new construction or retrofits qualify for the program.

Corn Belt Energy is focused on serving our members while promoting overall energy efficiency and environmental stewardship. The GeoCents program is an example of this focus.

For additional information about the Corn Belt Energy GeoCents program or for the most up-to-date GeoCents certified HVAC and looper contractor list contact Jeremy Myers, Energy Advisor at 800-879-0339.

## Energy efficiency rebates

Find energy efficiency rebates and incentives that may apply to your home, business, farm or school. Rebates include lighting, HVAC, geothermal, heat pump water heaters, commercial and industrial.

These savings are available in conjunction with Corn Belt Energy's power supplier, Wabash Valley Power Alliance.

Learn more about the rebates

available to Corn Belt Energy members by visiting [www.powermoves.com](http://www.powermoves.com) and entering your zip code or by calling us at 800-879-0339.

### CONTACT US

1-800-879-0339 | [cbec@cornbeltenergy.com](mailto:cbec@cornbeltenergy.com) | [www.cornbeltenergy.com](http://www.cornbeltenergy.com) |



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

