

## Remember to #ThankALineworker on April 13

Lineworkers serve on the frontlines of our nation's energy needs, and on April 13, 2020, Western Illinois Electrical Coop., along with other electric cooperatives across the country, will honor the brave men and women who work hard to keep the lights on. Line crews work around the clock, often in difficult and dangerous conditions, to keep power flowing to our local communities. Whether they're restoring power after a major storm or maintaining critical infrastructure to our electric system, lineworkers are at the heart of our co-op.

When a storm hits, they set aside their personal priorities because Mother Nature doesn't work around holidays, vacations, birthdays or ballgames. A service-oriented mentality is one of the many admirable characteristics of an electric lineworker.

WIEC is proud to honor the team of lineworkers that maintain just under 1,170 miles of power lines in our service territory. **5820-15**

WIEC invites all co-op members to take a moment and thank a lineworker for the important work they do. On April 13, you can use #ThankALineworker on social media to show your support for the brave men and women who power our lives.



LINEWORKERS KNOW HOW TO GET THE JOB DONE.

LET'S THANK THEM FOR POWERING OUR LIVES.



Lineworker Appreciation Day  
April 13, 2020

### 2020 Line Crew Western Illinois Electrical Coop.

Lineworker	Years of Service	Job Title
Eric Johnson	33	Line Foreman
Greg Bolton	30	Mechanic/Groundman
Mark Kissinger	29	Electrician (not pictured)
Cody Grainger	17	Area Serviceman
Andrew Lafeber	17	Crew Foreman
Tim Shumate	11	Journeyman Lineman
Eric Belshaw	6	5th Year Apprentice Lineman
Garrett Kestner	3	3rd Year Apprentice Lineman
Kyle Tanner	1	1st Year Apprentice Lineman



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#### 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** —  
President, **West Point**
- **Mark Burling** —  
Vice President, **Carthage**
- **Janet Spory** —  
Secretary/Treasurer, **Sutter**
- **William Newton** —  
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer,  
**Burnside**
- **Rob Gronewold** —  
Director, **Carthage**
- **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.

## Beautify your yard, not utility equipment

**G**reen or grey utility boxes, known as pad-mounted or padmount transformers, are part of the supply chain that helps provide power to your neighborhood. Those boxes sit on an easement, which allows us access to them.

What are the green boxes for? Their job is to step down high-voltage electricity to a lower voltage needed for the underground wires supplying power to the lights and appliances in homes.

Please do not paint, enhance, block or otherwise obstruct padmount transformers. By respecting all utility equipment, including meters and transformers, you can help keep the power on and your local utility workers safe.

As you beautify your yard this spring and summer, Western Illinois Electrical Coop. and Safe Electricity remind you of these safety tips:

- Do not plant shrubs and trees close to green box transformers or other utility equipment. Limiting or restricting access to the box in your yard by us could delay restoration work during an outage and create a serious safety hazard. We need at least 10 feet of clearance in front of the transformer (the side that is pad-locked), as well as four feet of clearance on the other three sides.

- Contact us with questions about landscaping around or installing fencing near a padmount transformer (or any other changes) to learn what is allowable.
- Contact us if the transformer becomes unlocked or if it or any other type of electric utility equipment appears to be damaged.
- Call 811 prior to digging around a transformer and respect the clearance requirements previously noted. If you dig near a transformer (even if it is beyond the clearance requirements), you could inadvertently hit a live underground cable. Always call 811 prior to any digging.
- Keep a clear path to the transformer. Although the transformer seems like it is in "your yard," it is technically on an easement, and our workers need clear access to it to maintain equipment and keep power running smoothly.

Contact us with any questions or concerns about the safety of padmount transformers. Always teach children that they should never sit on, open or play around the green boxes.

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



*Do not plant shrubs close to padmount transformers or other utility equipment. We need at least 10 feet of clearance in front of the transformer.*

# Nominating Committee appointed

At the February WIEC board meeting, current board members appointed the following co-op members to serve on the 2020 Nominating Committee:

**District No. 1** – Lyman Ross, Gladstone

**District No. 2** – Spencer Berry, Nauvoo

**District No. 3** – Matt Dallas, Dallas City

**District No. 4** – Bryan Stevens, West Point

**District No. 5** – Austin Ufkes, Carthage

**District No. 6** – Robert Menn, Plymouth and Gary Akers, Carthage

**District No. 7** – Max Roskamp and Todd Beeler, both of Sutter

Two committee members were appointed from the districts whose board members' terms expire this year. Other districts each have a single appointee. This committee will nominate at least one member from District No. 6 and at least one member from District No. 7 to represent those districts on the WIEC Board of Directors for a three-year term. **957-24-1**

Robert Gronewold from District No. 6 and Janet Spory from District No. 7 are the current board members.

The first Nominating Committee meeting was scheduled for Monday, March 23 at the Carthage WIEC office to begin at 7 p.m.

## Welcome New Members

Lone Hollow 2, LLC  
Maes, Michael & Alicia

January  
2020

# Vegetation management

In order to help maintain reliable electric service, WIEC has contracted with Illinois Forest Products (IFP) to handle brush and tree management needs this year. They will handle spraying, trimming, cutting, and removal of trees and brush.

We plan to have crews performing routine brush spraying this spring and summer in Gladstone, Biggsville, Media, Stronghurst, Carman, Raritan, Terre Haute and Lomax townships in Henderson County as well as in Appanoose, Pontoosuc, Durham, Rock

Creek, Sonora, Montebello, Prairie, Bear Creek, Wythe and Wilcox townships in Hancock County. **6532-73**

Fallen trees and limbs account for many power outages, momentary flickers and blinks. Brush spraying and tree trimming are necessary to provide the continuous service WIEC members deserve and expect.

Due to the advanced printing of this issue of the WIEC News, these plans are subject to change. If you have questions, please contact the office at 217-357-3125 or 800-576-3125.



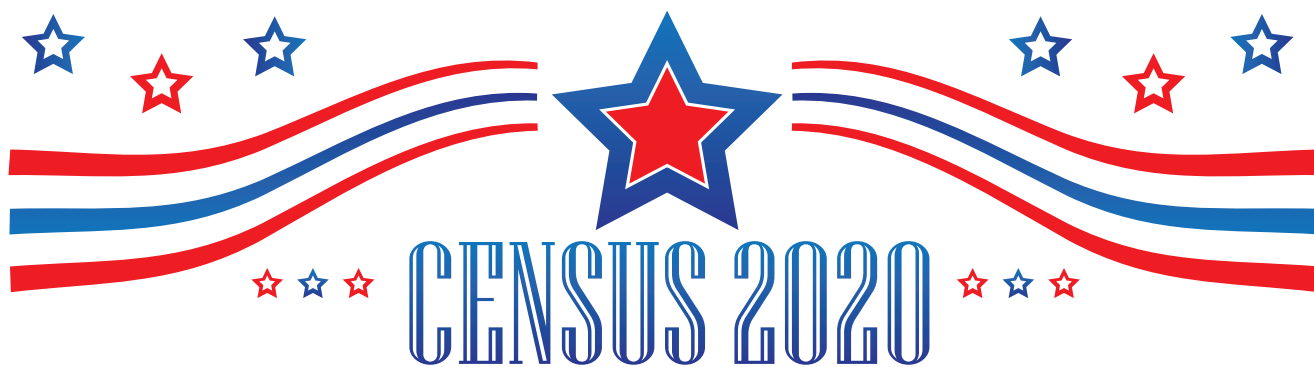
The WIEC office will be closed on Friday, April 10  
in observance of Good Friday.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

This spring, consider using a rain barrel to save energy. Rain barrels capture rainwater from a roof that can be used later for watering your lawn, garden or indoor plants.







## ***Make sure Illinois counts***

**T**homas Jefferson directed the first decennial census in 1790. As required by the U.S. Constitution, a census has been taken every 10 years thereafter. In 1840, the Census Act authorized the establishment of a centralized Census Office. In 1902, the Census Office became a permanent organization within the Department of the Interior. A year later, it was renamed the Bureau of the Census and moved to the new Department of Commerce and Labor.

### **Why should it matter to me?**

Many Illinois residents think census data is only used to determine the number of legislative seats Illinois has in Washington or Springfield. This is only a part of what is determined by census results. Census participation and results also determine the amount of federal money Illinois receives each year to support:

- ★ Infrastructure needs, such as road construction and repair
- ★ Schools and school districts in your community
- ★ Hospitals and emergency healthcare centers for the insured and uninsured
- ★ Social service programs that provide assistance for senior citizens, veterans and low-income families
- ★ Large companies' and local business enterprises' decisions to potentially

build or expand their corporate offices or factories, bringing employment opportunities to communities

### **Let's count everyone...**

While many residents will respond, the following groups are historically undercounted in the census:

- ★ Veterans, or active military personnel living on Illinois military bases
- ★ Minority communities
- ★ Retirees spending their spring and summer in Illinois and wintering in warmer climates
- ★ Illinois university/college students with a permanent residence outside Illinois **7718-44**
- ★ Persons living in large housing units or apartment complexes
- ★ Foreign born residents (documented and undocumented) living and/or working in Illinois
- ★ Farmers and their families residing in rural Illinois counties
- ★ Children under age 5
- ★ Homeless population

One way you can help is to encourage anyone you know that may fall into one of these groups to participate in the census. This will help to increase Illinois' overall numbers and accurately reflect our true population.

### **Census Day is April 1, 2020.**

The most important thing you can do is respond to the census questionnaire when you receive it. There will be multiple ways to respond:

- ★ **Online** – For the first time, this census questionnaire can be completed online using your personal computer. If you do not have a computer or access to the internet, please visit your local library and ask to use a public computer.
- ★ **Phone** – The U.S. Census Bureau will have a phone system set up so you can call and complete the census questionnaire at your convenience.
- ★ **Mail** – If you do not choose to complete the questionnaire online or utilize the phone system, you can still submit your questionnaire via U.S. mail.

Your information is protected by law. The law requires the Census Bureau to keep your information confidential and use your responses only to produce statistics. They cannot publicly release your responses in any way that could identify you. They will never share your information with immigration enforcement agencies such as ICE, law enforcement agencies such as the FBI or police, or allow it to be used to determine your eligibility for government benefits.

