

# POWERLINE

NEWSLETTER FOR CO-OP MEMBERS OF CORN BELT ENERGY



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## Four ways Santa saves energy in his workshop

The holiday season is finally upon us, and Santa and his elves have been especially busy as they gear up for their biggest night of the year.

It's no secret that Santa is known for running an efficient workshop—how else could he make all those toys in time for Christmas Eve? Rumor has it that one way Santa ensures an efficient workspace is through energy-saving measures.

Here are four ways Santa saves energy in his workshop.

1. Santa leaves his decorations up year-round, so by using LED holiday light strands, he's able to save on his monthly energy bills. LED holiday strands can last up to 40 seasons, which make them a great option for any festive home.
2. Santa requires several power tools to make a year's worth of new toys. That's why he insists on using cordless power tools with the ENERGY STAR® rating. According to energystar.gov, if all power tools in the U.S. used ENERGY STAR®-rated battery chargers, 2 billion kWh hours of electricity could be saved—that's equivalent to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 1.7 million tons!



3. Mrs. Claus loves to keep warm by the fire in the evenings, and Santa knows one of the best tricks to ensure fireplace efficiency. While a fireplace can keep a small area of your home cozy and warm, it can also pull heated air from the room through the chimney. That's why Santa always closes the fireplace flue when a fire isn't burning.
4. Santa also saves energy by using power strips. Power strips

are ideal for workshops, craft nooks, game rooms and other spaces in your home. With one simple switch, you can conveniently control several devices and electronics that are plugged into the power strip.

This holiday season, let's take a page from Santa's book and remember to save energy when possible. With these four tips, you'll be well on your way to savings (and hopefully, Santa's "nice" list!).



## Stay safe as you travel in winter weather conditions

The holiday season is a busy time of year for many of us. Along with putting out decorations and baking cookies, we often spend more time in our cars than usual – shopping for presents, traveling to family gatherings or attending holiday events. Although the holidays may be different in regard to traveling to family gatherings and in how we attend holiday events, it is still prudent to be aware of extreme weather conditions that can make safe driving difficult.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, winter weather conditions such as snow, sleet and slush cause more than 550,000 traffic accidents each year, leading to approximately 138,000 injuries and 1,700 fatalities.

Along with risk of injury, possible damage to your vehicle, and plain inconvenience, collisions may also involve downed power lines or other electrical hazards. Unfortunately, when this happens, it adds another significant danger to the mix that can cause severe shock, burns or electrocution. Knowing what to do in this situation can save lives.

If you are in an accident involving a downed power line:

- Call 9-1-1 and tell the dispatcher a downed power line or other electrical equipment is involved in a collision. Co-op personnel will be dispatched to the scene to deenergize the power.
- Put your window down and alert others not to approach the scene. They could be shocked or electrocuted if they walk or run over the energized area or touch anything that is energized.
- Never attempt to drive over a power line or through water, snow or other debris that could be hiding one. There is no way to tell if a power line is energized, even if it is not sparking or buzzing.
- Do not exit the vehicle UNLESS the vehicle is on fire or you see smoke. The vehicle acts as an insulator that keeps you safe from stray electricity.
- If you MUST exit the vehicle, cross your arms across your chest, put your feet together, and make a clean jump from the vehicle. Then hop with feet together as far as you can — at least 50 feet away. Once a power line is in contact with a car or truck, the ground or other objects, it energizes the area. The electrical current spreads to the vehicle and ground, and it ripples out. Each “ring” of the ripple represents a different voltage. Stepping from one voltage to the next can cause your body to become a path for electricity and electrocute you.
- If a power line is inside the vehicle due to damage or an open window, stay in the vehicle. DO NOT touch or try to move the wire. DO NOT attempt to use other objects to move it.
- If your vehicle collides with a pad-mounted transformer, which houses electrical equipment connected to underground power lines, the same safety precautions apply.

Keep your family safe while on the road this holiday season! For more information about safety around electricity, go to [cornbeltenergy.com](http://cornbeltenergy.com) or [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



## 2021 Education Grant applications available online

Corn Belt Energy is now accepting applications for our 2021 Education Grants Program. Five schools that serve children of Corn Belt electric members will each be awarded a \$1,500 grant and one school will be awarded the \$2,000 Jeff Reeves Memorial Education Grant to fund innovative programs that enrich students' education.

Teachers and administrators of public or private K-12 schools may apply; the facility does not need to receive electricity from Corn Belt Energy, but must serve families

within our footprint in Illinois. Multiple projects within the same school can be combined to a total of the awarded grant amount.

The application deadline is December 31, 2020, and grants will be awarded in spring of 2021. The application can be found online at [www.cornbeltenergy.com](http://www.cornbeltenergy.com).

For more information, please contact Hillary Cherry, Director of Communications & Marketing, at 309-664-9250 or by email at [hillary.cherry@cornbeltenergy.com](mailto:hillary.cherry@cornbeltenergy.com).



## Check your electric usage online with SmartHub

Are you interested in checking your electric usage online? You can view your own electric usage compared to previous months by logging in to your SmartHub account at

[cornbeltenergy.com](http://cornbeltenergy.com). You can also overlay temperature data with your usage to see how the weather plays a significant role in your energy use.



<< To access SmartHub from your desktop, simply click "Account Login" at [cornbeltenergy.com](http://cornbeltenergy.com) and log in with your email address and password.



**Jeremy Myers**  
Energy Advisor

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

*What is your role at Corn Belt Energy?*  
**I work with our membership to provide them with energy efficiency options for their home and business. I also assist our membership with rebate programs available through Corn Belt Energy. I have to the opportunity to visit our members homes for energy auditing when consumption concerns arise.**

*What aspect of your role do you enjoy the most?*  
**I enjoy interacting with our membership whether it is discussing plans for a new home, the new electric vehicle to hit the market, or taking the next step to a more efficient home.**

*If there is one piece of advice that you could share with our members, what would it be?*

**I think it is important to understand your utility bill, we do our best to make the bill layout and terminology is streamlined, but it can still be confusing. Give me a call anytime and I would be happy to help!**

*Corn Belt Energy puts SAFETY FIRST. What safety tip would you share with our members?*

**Pray for our line workers. They work through some tough working conditions. Please be patient so they can safely provide us all with safe and reliable electrical service.**

*What are your hobbies and outside interests?*

**Most of my hobbies revolve around the outdoors, I enjoy camping with my family and also hunting trips to Montana. I am a huge Chicago Cubs and Chicago Bears fan and enjoy Fantasy Football with friends and Coworkers.**

*Who or what inspires you?*

**My kids and family, I truly am blessed and thankful for the time we have together.**

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

**#phonecallaway#BEElectric#GOBEARS**



## Help us keep our records up-to-date

If you have changed your phone number or disconnected your landline phone and are now using a cell phone number, Corn Belt Energy would like for you to help us keep our records updated.



Check your latest bill stub or log in to your online SmartHub account to see which number(s) are currently linked to your account. Phone numbers listed on your account can be found in SmartHub by going to My Account > Notifications >

Manage Contacts. You may also add additional phone contacts on this screen.

To update your phone number(s), simply call us at 800-879-0339, email us at [cbec@cornbeltenergy.com](mailto:cbec@cornbeltenergy.com), or correct the info on your next bill stub. We can record up to three numbers to associate with your account, including cell phones. We won't sell or share your contact information with anyone else.

By having your current phone number(s) on file, it will also help our automated outage reporting system to work efficiently. When you call in to report an outage, our automated system takes the phone number you are calling from and checks it against phone numbers we have on file in our account management system. If your number is on file, it makes outage reporting faster and more efficient.

### CONTACT US

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