

WIEC NEWS

P.O. Box 338 ■ Carthage, Illinois 62321 ■ www.wiec.net ■ 800/576-3125

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Who will map your future?

You can find out on the Youth to Washington trip

OK. So you aren't really into politics. As a junior or senior in high school, you're thinking about college and where you're going to come up with more than \$100,000 to pay for higher education. You're also trying to decide what you want to work at the rest of your life to make that college experience pay off.

Oddly enough, the very people who may have answers to those questions are wearing the title of state legislator or seated in chambers of the U.S. Congress in Washington D.C. Or just maybe, you could talk with a future president. In 2006, WIEC Youth To Washington winner, Dan Scheetz of Carthage met then-Senator Barack Obama. Who would have thought?

Before you know it, you will be voting in your first election and the weight of the country's decisions will partially belong to you. Will you support a Congressman who wants to pass Cap & Trade? Will you be in favor of farm subsidies? As you approach what was once "draft-age," do you think we should send more troops to Iraq and Afghanistan or should the military be strengthening our borders? Oh, and when you get the opportunity to meet your Congressman, in addition to these questions will you ask: What has Congress done to make higher education more affordable and will I be able to find a job when I graduate?

Electric and telephone cooperatives in more than 40 states believe that young people deserve a first-class



Maybe you could talk with a future president

opportunity to educate themselves in the government process. Each year, the cooperatives across the nation sponsor more than 1,500 high school students to make the trek to Washington to get that personal initiation, and they have a lot of fun in the process.

It all begins in Springfield on April 21, 2010 during the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperative Youth Day where nearly 300 students will visit the State Capitol and spend much of the morning meeting with legislators. You will tour the Supreme Court and spend the afternoon touring local sites.

The final leg of the journey will be Washington D.C. This year marks the 51st trip to the nation's capital and promises to be as exciting as ever. Students learn the principles required to keep cooperative members working

together for the cooperative's success by establishing their own "chip and pop" cooperative while on the bus trip.

While in Washington during the week of June 11-18, in addition to meeting with Congressman from Illinois, students are treated to tours of historic sites, given the opportunity to make life-long friends and receive information to help determine career paths.

Hopefully, at the conclusion of the tour, you will understand the only crystal ball in Washington is the one you help develop through your participation in government and public service. The future of the country depends on the youth of today getting involved.

Western Illinois Electrical Coop. is participating in this program as a way to build strong citizens for the future. Besides, we hope they have a great time and make new friends from around the state of Illinois.

Any son or daughter of an active WIEC member may enter by completing a Web Quiz and return it to the WIEC office by February 15, 2010. Six entrants will be chosen to visit Springfield IL and the top entry will be awarded the free trip to our nation's capital.

To learn about this opportunity, visit the WIEC website at wiec.net, contact Becky Dickinson at Western Illinois Electrical Coop. or see your high school guidance counselor.



Western Illinois
ELECTRICAL COOP.

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

524 North Madison | P.O. Box 338
Carthage, IL 62321
www.wiec.net | 800/576-3125

OFFICE HOURS

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Monday - Friday

DURING OFFICE HOURS, OR AFTER HOURS TO REPORT OUTAGE

217-357-3125
800-576-3125

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MAP LOCATION CONTEST

Every month we are printing four member's 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.

Tax Credits Still Available for 2010

Not too late to make your home more energy efficient and save tax dollars

Just because 2009 is over, it doesn't mean that the tax credits for energy saving improvements to your (5810-9) home are gone forever. Below are some of the tax credits still available for this year and beyond. Check out energystar.gov/taxcredits for more information.

Federal Tax Credits for Consumer for Energy Efficiency includes:

Tax credits are available at 30 percent of the cost, up to \$1,500, in 2010 (for existing homes only) for:

- n Windows and Doors
- n Insulation

- n Roofs (Metal and Asphalt)
- n HVAC
- n Water Heaters (non-solar)
- n Biomass Stoves

Tax credits are available at 30 percent of the cost, with (5710-6) no upper limit through 2016 (for existing homes & new construction) for:

- n Geothermal Heat Pumps
- n Solar Panels
- n Solar Water Heaters
- n Small Wind Energy Systems
- n Fuel Cells

Security Lights

*A small price to pay
for home safety and security*

As you drive around the countryside at night, security lights dot the horizon. Each security light is added safety and protection to the farm or home it illuminates. A well lit yard or residence provides:

- n Safety - to avoid injury when outside in the yard after dark.
- n Security - to help deter prowlers and varmints, discourage vandals and welcome you home to a lighted yard.
- n Productivity - a little extra "daylight" can be very valuable when it gets dark so early in the winter months.

Western Illinois Electrical Coop. rents two types of security lights. For \$7 per month, we can hang a light on your meter pole. We will take care of the maintenance and the electricity the light will use.

If a member would like the light on a building or a different pole, we can hang the light there (providing it already has electricity) for \$2.50 per month. WIEC will take care of maintenance however, the member will pay for the electricity.

The light is also available for purchase for \$68 plus tax. WIEC will even install it on an existing pole or already wired building at no charge.

Either way you choose, a security light can be very useful as it lights your way around your home or farm.



How To Weather a Winter Outage

Severe winter storms containing high winds and ice can cause widespread and prolonged outages. When an outage occurs, always check your (5510-48) meter to see if there is a digital display. If there is not a display, call WIEC to let us know. Follow these steps to get through the outage until power is restored.

1. Have the following on-hand this winter:
 - n Battery-powered radio
 - n A corded telephone (cordless phones rely on electricity to work)
 - n Flashlights
 - n Extra batteries
 - n Extra blankets
 - n Spare containers you can fill with water for drinking/washing/hygiene
 - n Food that doesn't require cooking and a hand-held can opener
 - n Extra prescription medicines
 - n Special items for infant, elderly or disabled family members
 - n A first aid kit
2. If you have a standby generator, make sure you operate it safely and have a transfer safety switch. Install a transfer safety switch now, before your generator is needed. The switch will prevent electricity from traveling back through the electric lines, making the lines very dangerous for crews working to restore your power.

- n Switch off lights and appliances so (6610-39) you don't overload your circuits when power is restored. Leave on one lamp to signal when your power is back on.
- n Close off any unused rooms.
- n If you fear your water pipes will freeze and you don't have a well, turn the taps on slightly so water slowly drips. If you are on a well you can shut off the main water supply to your home and then turn all the taps on all the way to drain any remaining water (pour this water into containers so you can use it for drinking, washing, etc.)
- n If using grills to heat food, use them outside only, away from the house, to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.
- n Don't open the refrigerator or freezer. Food can stay fresh in a full refrigerator for 24 hours, and in a full deep freezer for 48 hours (24 hours if only half full).
- n Stay inside when possible and dress in layered clothing.

Warning: Never go near downed electrical lines. Even if your power is out, the lines could be energized. Call WIEC immediately and inform them of any dangerous lines.

Call toll free 800-576-3125

When The Weather Outside is Frightful

Tips when you are stranded in your vehicle...



When heading out during the winter, always make sure your gas tank is full and your cell phone is fully charged. Road conditions can change suddenly from merely wet to ice covered. It's always a good idea to have a winter survival kit stashed in your truck or cab. Taking time to prepare now could save your life later. Suggestions for the kit include: blankets; extra gloves, hats, scarves and boots; flashlight with extra batteries; energy foods - granola bars, nuts, and non-perishable canned foods; shovel; tow rope; booster cables; tool kit and first aid kit.

If you were involved in an accident involving a power pole:

- Stay in your car - Stay in your car - Stay in your car!!! Do not assume that the wires are non-energized just because the pole is leaning or broken. Do not assume that the wires are still hanging from the pole - they may be hard to see in the dark.
- Use your phone to call authorities.

If stuck in the snow,

- Use your phone to call for help.
- Make sure exhaust pipe is clear of snow.
- Run the engine only when necessary and open windows slightly during that time.
- Preserve your energy - don't try to shovel out.
- Don't remain in one position for long periods of time; exercise mildly; massage muscles.
- Warm hands under arms or legs.
- Ration your food items.

Welcome New Members

Debra J. Boys, Carthage	Rousonelos, Gladstone
Robert Cole, Biggsville	Eric Ryan Magee, Laharpe
Tony & Rachel Gibb, Stronghurst	Richard R. & Donna Neill, Sutter
Frank Hanks, Burnside	Taylor H. Russell, Carthage
Curtis E & Andrea L. Holloway, Aurora	Roberta N Siegfried, Niota
William & Lisa Johnson, Lomax	Todd & Amy Struhs, Bushnell
Steve D Klein, West Burlington IA	Scott Swank, Carman
Mage Farms, LLC, By Guy	Adam Thomatos, Lomax
	Dan & Jennifer Young, Avon



State of Illinois
Pat Quinn, Governor
Illinois Department on Aging
Charles D. Johnson, Director

Be a Savvy Senior



© Elder Financial Protection Network

Were you the victim of a home repair scam?

Don't let it happen again!

- ▶ If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- ▶ Get estimates before doing home renovations.
- ▶ Do not pay for work in advance.
- ▶ Never do business without checking references.
- ▶ Don't be afraid to call the police and have them check out the credentials of someone who is working in your area.

If you or someone you know has been the victim of a scam, call the Department on Aging to talk confidentially with someone who will help you to alleviate the situation.

**Statewide Elder Abuse Hotline:
1-866-800-1409, 1-888-206-1327 (TTY)**