POWERLINE

NEWSLETTER FOR CO-OP MEMBERS OF CORN BELT ENERGY

CORN BELT ENERGY

Get familiar with cyber basics

At a time when we are more connected than ever, being "cyber smart" is of the utmost importance. This year has already seen more than a fair share of cyber attacks and breaches, including the high-profile attacks on the Colonial Pipeline and other critical infrastructure. Furthermore, as has been underlined by these recent breaches, cyber attacks are becoming more sophisticated with more evolved bad actors cropping up each day. Luckily, there are several steps that we can take on a daily basis to mitigate risks and stay one step ahead of malefactors. Here are a few quick tips:

Enable multi-factor authentication.
Multi-factor authentication (MFA) adds that necessary second check to verify your identity when logging in to one of your accounts. By requiring multiple methods of authentication, your account is further protected from being compromised, even if a bad actor hijacks your password. In this way, MFAs make it more difficult for password cracking tools to enable attackers to break into accounts.

Use strong passphrases/password manager.
This may seem obvious, but all too often securing strong passphrases/password managers is overlooked. People spending more time online during the pandemic has certainly contributed to more bad actors prowling for accounts to attack. Using long, complex and unique passwords is a good way to stop your account from being hacked, and an easy way of keeping track and remembering your passwords is by using a password manager.

Perform software updates.
When a device prompts that it's time to update the software,

PASSWORD DOS AND DON'TS

A strong password can make all the difference in protecting your personal information. Follow these tips for stronger passwords.

DO:
- Change the manufacturer's Wi-Fi password on your router.
- Use two-factor authentication.
- Use unique phrases (like lyrics to your favorite song) to remember passwords.

DON'T:
- Don't use common words or numbers like "password" or "1234."
- Don't use personal details like your date of birth in a password.
- Don't use the same password for multiple accounts.

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month.

Do Your Part. #BeCyberSmart

PAYMENT OPTIONS FOR MEMBERS

WAYS TO PAY

AutoPay	Walk-in*	Send via mail	MoneyGram
SmartHub	Dropbox		
Phone Payment			

PAYMENT RECOGNITION

Payment posted immediately after payment is made	Payment posted immediately after payment is made (may be next business day for dropbox payments)	Payment posted within 7-10 business days depending on mail delivery	Payment posted immediately after payment is made

TRANSACTION COST

None	None	None	$1.50 fee

FORMS OF PAYMENT ACCEPTED

AutoPay: account number & bank routing number, debit card, VISA, Mastercard & Discover SmartHub and Phone Payment: Checking account number & bank routing number, debit card, VISA, Mastercard & Discover	Walk-in payments*: Cash, check, money order, debit card, VISA, Mastercard & Discover Dropbox payments: Check or money order	Check or money order	Cash*

OTHER DETAILS

Set up AutoPay through SmartHub online or over the phone. Sign up online for SmartHub. SmartHub is offered online or as the SmartHub app on your Apple or Android phone. With SmartHub, you can check usage, receive notifications. Phone Payments are offered 24/7/365 and can be made by calling 800-879-0339.	Pay at our office location: Corn Belt Energy 1 Energy Way, Bloomington, IL 61705 Walk-in payments may be made Monday - Friday during regular office hours when the lobby is open. * Due to COVID-19 our regular office hours may change. Please contact us at 800-879-0339 to verify our office hours.	Member is responsible for the cost of postage. Mail payments to: Corn Belt Energy 1 Energy Way, Bloomington, IL 61705	Make your payment at a location near your home or work. No bank account needed. Many locations are available throughout the Corn Belt Energy service territory. Visit our website to find MoneyGram locations.

it may be tempting to simply click postpone, and ignore the message. However, having the latest security software, web browser, and operating system on devices is one of the best defenses against online threats. So, don't wait - update.

Do your research.
Common sense is a crucial part of maintaining good online hygiene, and an intuitive step to stay safe online is to do some research before downloading anything new you are downloading to your device, such as apps. Before downloading any new learning app on your device, make sure that it's a by checking who created the app, what the user reviews say, and if there are any articles published online about the app's privacy and security features.

Check your settings.
Be diligent to double check your privacy and security settings and be aware who can access your documents. This extends from Google docs, to Zoom calls, and beyond. For meetings on Zoom, for example, create passwords so only those invited to the session can attend, and restrict who can share their screen or files with the rest of the attendees.

Being cyber smart and maintaining stellar online hygiene is the best way to protect yourself and others from cyber attacks. No single tip is foolproof but taken together they can make a real difference for taking control of your online presence. Following these tips is also easy, and free. By taking preventive measures and making a habit of practicing online safety, you can decrease your odds of being hacked exponentially - and prevent lost time and money, as well as annoyance.

Lisa Gaddis
Member Account Representative

Corn Belt Energy hosts regional member meetings

Corn Belt Energy recently invited members to regional member meetings to learn more about their electric cooperative and hear how we're looking out for their long-term needs. We served 207 members and guests a complimentary meal and gave away gifts and prizes.

This summer, Corn Belt Energy hosted regional member meetings in the following areas: Kewanee (August 4), Marseilles (August 5), Maroa (August 9), Mackinaw (August 10) and Lexington (August 12). Thank you to all who attended these meetings.

We plan to continue to reach out to our members by moving the regional member meeting locations throughout our service territory annually.

Light up your property with a LED security light

Light up your yard, driveway or business with a dependable LED security light.

For a few dollars per month, we will install, maintain and supply the power to an outside yard light. The price includes maintenance and electricity for an automatic dusk-to-dawn 40-watt LED light. Corn Belt Energy can install these lights for members in an overhead area on a Corn Belt Energy-owned pole where there is currently a service.

For more information, contact us today at 800-879-0339.

For a limited time, eligible members who sign up for an LED security light by November 15, will receive two months of free security light service. Some restrictions may apply.

How long have you worked at Corn Belt Energy?
22 years

What is your role at Corn Belt Energy?
Providing member services for a host of billing functions. Assisting members through understanding billing concerns. I assist in usage explanations, accuracy of billing, and overall any concerns our members may call in with. I also cover the front counter for our walk in members to pay their bills, etc.

What aspect of your role do you enjoy the most?
The overall communication with our members. Also providing the very best customer service possible to make the cooperative a different experience than the investor owned utilites for each and every member.

If there is one piece of advice that you could share with our members, what would it be?
We at Corn Belt Energy not only assist our daily functions, but truly care about community and our members.

Corn Belt Energy puts SAFETY FIRST. What safety tip would you share with our members?
Always feel free to call when you feel there is a safety issue. We will assist you in providing the education to get through any safety issues related to our service.

What are your hobbies and outside interests?
I love taking my three grandkids to the zoo and just hanging out with family. I also enjoy traveling. Most generally, anywhere with a beach.

Who or what inspires you?
I am inspired by anyone that exudes kindness. I am passionate about spreading kindness and putting my bit of input into making the world a kinder place.

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

What to do during an outage?

Power outages can be caused by many things; ice accumulation weighs down power lines, tree limbs break off into the lines, an animal gets too close to a warm transformer, or maybe a car hits a utility pole. Here are some steps to take if you experience an outage:

Step 1: Make sure the outage is on our end; check your fuses and breakers and see if your neighbors have lights.

Step 2: Report your outage through our free SmartHub app or by calling our automated outage reporting system at 1-800-879-0339 or 309-662-5330. These reporting mechanisms tie directly into our outage management system for efficient and cost-effective reporting. Some members are concerned when they call in and don't speak to a live person; if the automated phone system tells you that we've recorded your outage, our dispatch center has been immediately notified through the outage management system.

To make the outage process even more efficient, **make sure we have your current phone number(s) associated with your account.** Check your latest bill stub or log in to your online SmartHub account to see which number(s) are currently linked to your account. Don't worry - we won't sell or share your contact information with anyone else.

Please do not report your outage to us via Facebook or Twitter as these outlets are not manned 24/7 and are not directly linked to our outage management system.

Step 3: Be patient. As our outage management system is predicting the extent of the outage, our dispatch center assigns crews to investigate the issue and make necessary repairs. If your outage occurs after business hours, keep in mind that often times linemen need to stop what they're doing and grab necessary gear and supplies before heading out to the outage location to restore power, usually in adverse weather conditions. A little bit of patience goes a long way as our linemen work as quickly and as safely as possible.

Step 4: Check our website, our Facebook page or Twitter for updates on major outages. We usually post status updates for larger outage events.

Check the extent of the outage by viewing a live outage map at www.cornbeltenergy.com. If you don't have internet access, we also post status updates on our main phone greeting at 1-800-879-0339 or 309-662-5330 during major outages.

If you experience a power outage, rest assured that we're doing everything in *our* power to restore yours as quickly and safely as possible. Our co-op members are our ONLY priority; that's the cooperative difference.

CONTACT US

1-800-879-0339 | cbec@cornbeltenergy.com | www.cornbeltenergy.com |
1 Energy Way, Bloomington IL 61705 | Office hours: Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM

Corn Belt ENERGY