

POWERLINE

NEWSLETTER FOR CO-OP MEMBERS OF CORN BELT ENERGY



EDITION: APRIL 2023

We're Ready for Storm Season. Are You?

Now that spring is finally here, like many of you, we welcome more opportunities to be outdoors and enjoy the warmer weather. Springtime brings many of our favorite activities like planting flowers and gardens, spending time outdoors with family and friends, afternoon walks in the park and simply slowing down a bit to enjoy life.

But spring months can also make conditions right for dangerous storms. These potential weather events can cause destruction to our electrical system, but we want you to know that Corn Belt Energy

crews are ready and standing by to respond should power outages occur in our area.

When major storms knock out power, our line crews take all necessary precautions before they get to work on any downed lines. I would encourage you to also practice safety and preparedness to protect your family during major storms and outages.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends the items below as a starting point for storm and disaster preparedness, but you can visit

www.ready.gov for additional resources.

- Stock your pantry with a three-day supply of non-perishable food, such as canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee, water and other essentials (i.e., diapers and toiletries).
- Confirm that you have adequate sanitation and hygiene supplies including towelettes, soap and hand sanitizer.
- Ensure your First Aid kit is stocked with pain relievers, bandages and other medical essentials, and make sure your prescriptions are current.
- Set aside basic household items you will need, including flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener and portable, battery-powered radio or TV. Organize emergency supplies so they are easily accessible in one location.

In the event of a prolonged power outage, turn off major appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This will help avert damage from a power surge, and will also help prevent overloading the circuits during power restoration. That said, do leave one light on so you will know when power is restored. If you plan to use a small generator, make sure





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it's rated to handle the amount of power you will need, and always review the manufacturer's instructions to operate it safely.

Listen to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio for storm and emergency information.

When an outage occurs, don't forget to report the outage through the SmartHub app or by contacting us at 800-879-0339.

After the storm, avoid downed power lines and walking through flooded areas where power lines could be submerged. Allow ample room for utility crews to safely perform their jobs, including on your property.

Advance planning for severe storms or other emergencies can reduce stress and anxiety caused by the weather event and can lessen the impact of the storm's effects. Sign

up for NOAA emergency alerts and warnings, and download our app to stay abreast of power restoration efforts and other important co-op news and information.

We hope we don't experience severe storms this spring, but we can never predict Mother Nature's plans. At Corn Belt Energy, we recommend that you act today because there is power in planning.

EV chargers in Corn Belt Energy's parking lot

Corn Belt Energy has installed EV chargers, compatible with all EV's with a J-1772 plug (9.85 kW), in both our Central and Northern regions. Simply scan the QR code, download the Juice Pass Enterprise application for payment, or tap to pay (\$.24 per kWh) and charge away.



Help keep our crews safe

National Work Zone Awareness Week, April 17–21, 2023, is a good time to learn more about work zone safety; however, work zone safety should be observed 365 days a year to save lives.

Cars or trucks that speed through a work zone not only endanger workers on the ground. Driving too fast or too close to a work truck can also put an elevated worker in danger by causing their raised bucket to move or sway.

Streets and highways are lined with power poles and electrical equipment, and narrow roadways often require crews like ours to place their equipment in or near traffic lanes. Be alert to utility and other work zone crews for their safety and yours. Besides our crews, you might encounter road workers, other utility crews, tree trimmers or first responders working in or on the side of the road.

According to the National Work Zone Safety Information Clearinghouse, 774 fatal crashes and 857 deaths occurred in work

zone crashes in 2020 (at the writing of this article, data was not available for 2021). Many other work zone crashes result in injuries. In 2020, 102,000 work zone crashes occurred.

To help keep roadside crews safe:

- Keep a safe distance between your vehicle and traffic barriers, trucks, construction equipment and workers.
- Be patient. Traffic delays are sometimes unavoidable, so allow time for unexpected setbacks.
- Obey all signs and road crew flag instructions.
- Merge early and be courteous to other drivers.
- Use your headlights at dusk and during inclement weather.
- Minimize distractions. Avoid activities such as texting, operating a radio, applying makeup or eating.

Remember, slow down when approaching a work zone and move over for first responders and work crews. Do your part to help everyone return home safely at the end of the day.

A tree-mendous day

Arbor Day is April 28th which is a day in which individuals, and groups, are encouraged to plant trees.

Trees beautify our neighborhoods, and when planted in the right spot, can even help lower energy bills. So, if you're planting trees this spring, consider an energy efficient landscaping plan.

Plant deciduous trees, such as Oak, Maple, Birch, Poplar, Willow and Cottonwood, to block heat from the sun in the summer and let sunlight in during the winter.

A six - eight foot deciduous tree planted near your home will start shading windows in the first year.

Don't forget, if you're working on an outdoor project, always call 8-1-1 first, because you never know what's below.

For more tips on smart tree planting in your community contact Corn Belt Energy at 800-879-0339 or visit www.ArborDay.org.

Happy Tree Planting!



Scott Wohlford
Custodian/Repairman

How long have you worked at Corn Belt Energy?
2 months

What is your role at Corn Belt Energy?
Building maintenance

What aspect of your role do you enjoy the most?
Helping others

If there is one piece of advice that you could share with our members, what would it be?
Enjoy life. You only get one chance at it.

Corn Belt Energy puts SAFETY FIRST. What safety tip would you share with our members?
Be aware of your surroundings

What are your hobbies and outside interests?
Spending time with family and fishing

Who or what inspires you?
My whole family

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

Is there anything else that you would like to share with our members?
YOLO



Above and beyond to keep the power on

Electric lineworkers provide an essential service: They install and maintain overhead and underground power lines that keep electricity flowing. These specialized workers are on call 24/7 in case severe storms or other circumstances cause the power to go out.

Lineworkers work with high-voltage electricity, often at great heights, in all kinds of weather conditions. Maintaining the power grid is physically demanding. To become proficient, most lineworkers go through a technical training program and first learn on the job as apprentices under the careful eye of seasoned lineworkers who have earned journeyman status.

Electric power line installers and repairers held approximately 126,600 jobs in 2021, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Nearly half of these employees worked for electric power generation, transmission and distribution utilities.

Safety First

Lineworkers spend numerous hours in safety training each year and must understand and apply crucial safety regulations.

Protective clothing is required to shield lineworkers since they work around high voltages. Collectively, gear components can weigh up to 45 pounds.

According to the U.S. BLS, electric power line installers and repairers typically:

- Install, maintain or repair the power lines that move electricity.
- Identify defective devices, voltage regulators, transformers and switches.
- Inspect and test power lines and auxiliary equipment.
- String (install) power lines between poles, towers and buildings
- Climb poles and transmission towers and use truck-mounted buckets to access equipment.
- Operate power equipment when installing and repairing poles,

towers and lines.

- Know and implement safety standards and procedures.

When a problem is reported, lineworkers must identify the cause and fix it. This usually involves diagnostic testing using specialized equipment and repair work. To work on poles, they usually use bucket trucks to raise themselves to the top of the structure, although all lineworkers must be adept at climbing poles and towers when necessary. Workers use specialized safety equipment to keep them from falling when climbing utility poles and towers.

Storms and other natural disasters can cause extensive damage to power lines. When power is lost, line repairers must work safely and efficiently to restore service. We salute our lineworkers who work around the clock to keep the power on. Their safety, as well as yours, is our top priority.

Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 10th. #ThankALineworker

CONTACT US

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

