

# WIEC NEWS

P.O. Box 338 ■ Carthage, Illinois 62321 ■ [www.wiec.net](http://www.wiec.net) ■ 800/576-3125

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



## Reminder ...

The Youth to Washington essays are due at the WIEC office by February 17th

For additional information, see your high school guidance counselor, call the WIEC office or go to the WIEC website at [www.wiec.net](http://www.wiec.net). (under program tab)

## Why do electric bills go up in the winter?

That's a good question. Even if you do not have electric heat, you may notice that your bills are higher during the colder months. It is important to remember that your electric bill is calculated based on usage. When you use more electricity, your bill goes up. In the winter, heating is a large pie of the usage "pie". Even if you have a gas or LP furnace, electricity is still needed to run the blower and fans.

Here are some things to consider when pinpointing where the extra usage came from.

- Warm baths or showers feel great on cold days – and heat-

ing extra water can increase your consumption and your electric bill. Be sure your water heater is properly insulated if it is an unheated space, and have it checked for leaks.

- Christmas can mean company who may not always turn off the lights. Was there any extra baking and cooking over the holiday season?
- Christmas lights ('nuf said ...)
- Shorter days and longer nights mean that we use our lights more both inside and out.
- Space heaters feel great in basements, garages and bathrooms,

but remember they can use a lot of electricity.

- Engine block heaters can be necessary to make sure vehicles and (7512-17) equipment start, but can impact your light bill.

Remember, it is your electric bill and it reflects the amount of electricity used in your home. It is not wise to compare your bill to your neighbors as they may have a different lifestyle, different-sized home, older/newer appliances, a different number of people in the household and many, many other factors.



**Western Illinois**  
ELECTRICAL COOP.  
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

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**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.

## The hot facts on space heaters

- Electric space heaters typically use coils of resistance wire to generate heat, like toasters.
- Some have fans to spread (8611-2) heat around the room.
- Others use ceramic pieces or oil-filled radiators to store heat.
- Usually not the most economical or efficient solution for home heating.
- Even a small one can use 1500 watts of electricity (same as 20 standard 75-watt light bulbs).
- Running a 1500 watt heater, 8 hours a day at \$.1275/kWh can add \$45 to your monthly energy bill.
- Cool or drafty rooms usually need better sealing, not space heaters.
- Don't place space heaters where young children or pets may touch hot areas.
- Keep them away from paper and other combustible materials, too.
- Many non-electric space heaters are not safe for indoor use without ventilation.
- For WIEC members who already have a separate meter for their electric heat, space heaters will use kilowatts at the basic rate of 12.75 cents NOT the reduced rate of 7 cents or 7.5 cents.








## Energy Efficiency *Tip of the Month*

Air is drawn into your home from low areas, so inspect your foundation for potential air-infiltration points. Fixing these leaks makes a bigger impact on your electric bill than sealing doors and windows! Caulk all cracks and gaps around your home including spaces around wires for telephone, electrical, cable, and gas lines, water spigots, and dryer vents. Don't know what type of caulk to use? Look at page 16c for the different types and their uses. For more ways to be energy efficient, go to TogetherWeSave.com.

**Source: U.S. Department of Energy**

## Common Caulking Compounds

| Caulk Type   | Recommended Uses  | Cleanup   | Shrinkage                 | Adhesion          | Comments  |
|--|---|---|---------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Silicone<br>                            | Seals most dissimilar building materials such as wood, stone, vinyl, metal flashing and brick   | Immediately with dry cloth and mineral spirits or naphtha | Little or none            | Good to excellent | Permits joints to stretch or compress. Will stick to painted surfaces, but paint will not adhere to most cured silicones.   |
| Polyurethane, expandable spray foam<br> | Expands when curing. Good for larger cracks. Use in non-friction areas, because foam becomes dry and powdery over time.                   | Immediately with solvent such as lacquer thinner          | None; expands quite a bit | Good to excellent | Quickly expands to fit larger, irregularly shaped gaps. Flexible. Can be applied at variable temperatures. Must be painted for exterior use to protect from ultraviolet radiation.  |
| Water-based spray foam<br>              | Around window and door frames in new construction or remodeling projects; smaller cracks  | Water   | None; expands only 25%    | Good to excellent | Takes 24 hours to cure to a soft consistency. Will not overexpand to bend window frames. Must be exposed to air to dry. Not useful for larger gaps, as curing becomes difficult.  |
| Butyl rubber<br>                       | Seals most dissimilar materials such as glass, metal, plastic, wood and concrete. Seals around windows and flashing; bonds loose shingles | Mineral spirits or naphtha                                | 5%-30%                    | Good              | Lasts 10 or more years. Resilient, but not brittle. Can be painted after one week. Variable shrinkage may require two applications. Does not adhere well to painted surfaces.   |
| Oil or resin-based<br>                | Seals exterior seams and joints on almost all building materials  | Mineral spirits or naphtha                                | 10%-20%                   | Good              | Low cost. Rope and tube forms available. Oils dry out and cause material to harden and fall out. Low durability; lasts 1-4 years. Poor adhesion to porous surfaces such as masonry. Should be painted. Limited temperature range. |

## Welcome New Members

Sharon A Annegers, Stronghurst  
John L & Amy K Briggs, Carthage  
Brian Capito, Hamilton  
Kelly Clem, Bowen  
Michael E Coates, Hamilton  
Joshua D Dooley, Niota  
Scott Foresman, Chicago  
Tim & Ashley Fowler, Basco

Kristopher R Kelly, Carthage  
Darick Lappegaard, Mendon  
Charles Link, Media  
Ronald Nagel, Basco  
Gregg Ritz, Portsmouth NH  
Ron Stewart & Cynthia Huffman, Warsaw  
William P Suminski & Kristin McDowell, Hamilton  
Dixie M & Jack L Todd, Lomax

# Take a smart approach to social networking for kids

You can't escape social networking these days: Facebook, LinkedIn, Google Plus and all their online cousins are everywhere. If you've got kids, chances are they're eager to join all their friends in cyberspace.

Worrying about their safety is natural, but hoping social networks will go away isn't very realistic. You're better off working with your children so they don't hide their online activities from you. Take these steps to help them enjoy social networking safely:

Start with kid-friendly sites.

Facebook is far from the only place for people to go. A quick Internet search will help you locate lots of sites just for children. You'll want to investigate them thoroughly, of course, but they can serve as a good introduction for your children to the world of online networking.

Talk about privacy. Have a serious discussion with your kids about guarding their personal information online. They should understand that data like their full names, address, phone number, school and birth date should be kept private for their own protection. Emphasize that once something is



posted online (a message **(7713-31)** or a photo) they can't remove it entirely even if they delete the information from their profile.

Choose a secure password. A password that your child can remember easily may be simple for a hacker to guess. Come up with a password that includes a mix of letters, numbers and capitalization so it's less vulnerable to attack.

Encourage children to talk to you. Tell your children to let you know if someone online does anything to make them feel uncomfortable. If necessary, report the person to your site's administrator. At the same time, talk about the need for your children to **(7815-13)** treat everyone with respect online, as well as in the real world.

## Is it time to replace your HVAC system?

Do you have questions about the type or size of the system or things to consider when choosing a contractor? If any of these questions have been on your mind lately, WIEC has a booklet that can help answer that question. This free booklet has tips about maintaining your current system and what to consider when replacing the existing system. Call our office and we can mail it to you.

### 101 Low-Cost / No-Cost Home Energy-Saving Measures



Western Illinois Electrical Coop. has available an energy saving booklet entitled "101 Low-Cost/No-Cost Home Energy-Savings Measures." This booklet was produced by Touchstone Energy and contains a list of low-cost/no-cost energy saving tips to help you better manage your home's energy costs. Be sure to pick one up at the WIEC office in Carthage.