

# WIEC NEWS

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

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Director nomination and election process

In accordance with Article IV, Section 4, of your cooperative's by-laws, a nominating committee must be appointed between 30 and 120 days prior to the Annual Meeting of Members (June 23, 2011).

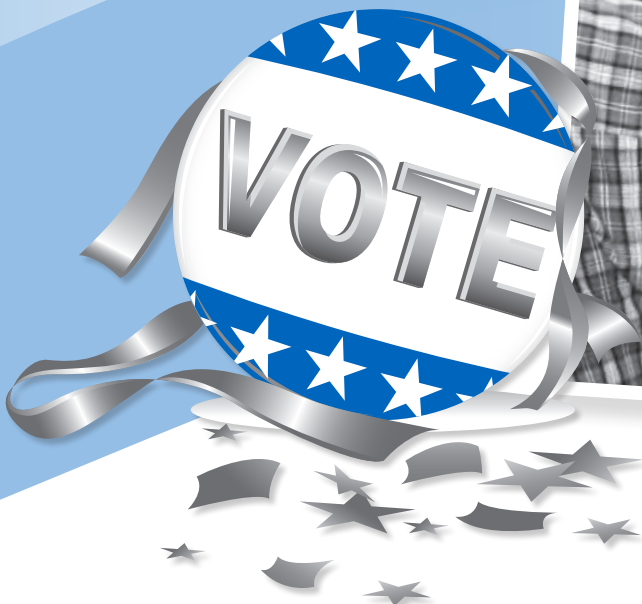
Directors shall be elected by and from the membership by ballot and shall serve for a term of three years, or until their successors shall have been elected and qualified. The terms of directors from Districts #6 and #7 will expire this year.

District No. 6, currently represented by Robert Gronewold, is Augusta, St. Mary's, Hancock, and Harmony Townships in Hancock County, Illinois.

District No. 7, currently represented by Janet Spory, is Wythe, Wilcox, Rocky Run, and Walker Townships in Hancock County, Illinois.

The nominating committee must post a list of nominations at the cooperative office at least 20 days before the annual meeting. Any 15 cooperative members may act together and nominate another member by petition. **(3913-12)** These nominations will be posted with those made by the nominating committee. Nominations made

by petition at least 10 days before the annual meeting will be included on the official ballot. Later nominations by petition shall be treated as nominations from the floor. The chairman shall call for additional nominations from the floor. No member may nominate more than one candidate.





**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

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- **Rob Gronewold** — President, Carthage
  - **Jay Morrison** — Vice President, Niota
  - **Janet Spory** — Secretary/Treasurer, Sutter
  - **William R. Newton** — Assistant Secretary/Treasurer, Burnside
  - **Dave Biery** — Director, Carthage
  - **Calvin Baumann** — Director, Basco
  - **Mike Ford** — Director, Lomax
- STAFF**
- **Paul Dion** — Manager
  - **Tommie Long** — Manager of Operations
  - **Becky Dickinson** — Office Manager

**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.

# Generator Use

*These tips will keep your family and linemen safe*

Many rely on backup electric generators for emergency power when the electricity goes out. If you are considering purchasing a backup generator, Safe Electricity and Western Illinois Electrical Coop. want you to know how to take proper safety steps before operating an electric generator in your home or business.

Properly connecting the generator into the system is a critical step for safe and effective use. A qualified electrician should install a permanent, standby electric generator to be sure of electrical grounding requirements, circuit overload protections and local codes are met.

An electric generator wired directly into a building's electrical system must have a transfer safety switch to prevent electricity from traveling back through the power lines, or what's known as "back feed."

"Our linemen work around the clock in bad weather to restore your power during an outage. Improper use of generators can make that work unsafe and the electricity flowing through lines that we think are safe can seriously injure or kill those linemen," warns Paul Dion, WIEC manager.

Follow these tips for safe use of portable generators (3814-22) used to power essential electrical equipment during outages. Keep this list posted by your generator.

- Read and follow all manufacturer operating instructions.
- Make sure the generator is properly grounded.
- Never plug a portable electric generator into a wall outlet or connect directly to a home's wiring. This can energize utility power lines and injure you or others working nearby. Electrical back feed also can damage the generator and home electrical equipment.

- Don't overload the generator and plug in more appliances than the generator is rated to handle.
- Use only safety-tested, shop-type electrical cords designed and rated for heavier, outdoor use to connect appliances. Many generators are equipped with twist-lock connects to reduce the chance of accidental disconnections due to vibrations.
- Always keep the generator outside in a dry, protected area, away from windows or air intakes where deadly exhaust fumes can enter living spaces. Equip homes with Carbon Monoxide (CO) alarms with battery backup.
- Turn off generator and allow to cool before refueling.
- Before shutting down a generator, turn off and unplug all appliances and equipment being powered by the generator.

For additional electrical generator and safety information, visit [www.SafeElectricity.org](http://www.SafeElectricity.org).

**How to Operate A Portable Generator Safely**

You can use a portable generator to supply electricity to your appliances if an emergency arises during a power outage. But if used improperly, they can kill you and the people who are receiving power to your building. They also can damage the appliances you connect.

Generator size varies. Connect only what is rated for it in horsepower and capable of handling from 1,000 to 14,000 watts (including starting surge requirements). Prices may range from \$300 to \$3,000.

Connecting a generator to the main electrical supply by your house requires the services of a qualified, qualified electrician. Handling the connections and wiring (or repaired outlet) can cost \$300 to \$1,000.

Before connecting the generator to your household (and to your generator), consult your generator's manual.

Western Illinois Electrical Coop. has available brochures on how to operate a portable generator safely. Be sure to pick one up at our office.

# Professional home energy audits make sense

*WIEC offers audits at a reduced rate*

What would you do if you saw someone take a \$20 bill and light it on fire? It is shocking to even think that someone would just waste a \$20 bill like that. However, do you feel a draft by windows on a windy day? Has your weather-stripping by the back door seen better days? If so, you are doing the same thing - burning money. Precious warm air is sneaking out and taking your money with it. By plugging those leaks and stopping those drafts, your energy consumption should be reduced and the comfort level of your home improved.

As part of the HomeE program, 35 WIEC members signed up to have a professional energy audit at their home done by GreenUP Technology. They learned specifics on how to make their home more (8515-4) energy efficient.

Since the HomeE program is coming to a close, WIEC has decided to continue to offer the home audits done by GreenUP Technology at a reduced rate of \$50 per audit as a service to our members. The rate for the audit is more than this; however, WIEC is

picking up the difference in hopes that members will take advantage of this limited offer.

To set up an energy audit, call WIEC office and we can get the process started. A professional from GreenUP Technology will call and make an appointment with you to walk through your home. After the audit, members are sent specific rec-

ommendations where their home needs additional insulation or sealing.

Remember, audits alone will not make your home more energy efficient. The recommendations must actually be done to notice a reduction in your energy consumption and to improve the comfort of your home.

Call our office for more information or to set up an appointment.



## Energy Efficiency

### *Tip of the Month*



By replacing your five most-used light bulbs with ENERGY STAR-qualified bulbs, you could save \$70 a year.

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

## Welcome New Members

JANUARY, 2011

Chris Avise, Bowen  
Century 21 Property/  
Cindy Miller, Burlington, IA  
Al & Marge Claasen,  
Burlington, IA  
Clearview Tower Co., LLC,  
Edison, NJ  
Carol Lester & Seth Flynn,  
Colchester  
Matthew B Schaer, Carthage  
TMP Corp., Quincy

# Allergy alert

## Protect yourself from springtime allergy attacks

The arrival of spring brings sunlight and flowers and green leaves on the trees — and seasonal allergies. Tree pollens and mold spores can wreak havoc on the 35 million Americans who suffer itchy eyes, runny noses, scratchy throats, and fatigue due to allergies.

Beyond the many over-the-counter and prescription medications available, you can take some simple steps to reduce your misery:

### 1. Limit your exposure.

After months of cabin fever, staying inside with the windows shut tight may seem a shame on a lovely day, but consider the alternative: sneezing and wheezing and rubbing your eyes non-stop. Stay indoors when conditions are ripe for an allergy attack.

### 2. Plan your outings.

Rainy and non-windy days are best for keeping pollen at bay. Remember,

too, that pollen counts peak in the midday hours. Avoid grassy and wooded areas. Check your local news source for pollen counts.

### 3. Park strategically.

Pollen can coat your car on heavy days. Keep your car in the garage as much as possible. When you park outside, try to avoid parking under a tree. Your car may be cooler when you get into it, (8611-3) but you'll be less likely to get a nose full of pollen in the process of opening the door.

### 4. Scrub up.

When you come back into your home, remove your shoes, or at least do a thorough job of wiping residual pollen from them. And wash your hands (you may even want to shower and get into some pollen-free duds). When you wash your clothes, use a dryer, rather than an outdoor clothesline.



### 5. Avoid "pollen magnets."

Pollen can cling to carpets and linens, so vacuum your rugs and change your sheets more frequently than at other times of the year. That goes for bath towels, too. An in-home air filtration system can help remove irritating particulates.

## Five ways to spring into energy efficiency

Spring marks a perfect time of year to make your home more energy efficient. Here are five quick tips that will save both energy and money:

### 1. Seal cracks and gaps around your home

As you put away your storm windows consider adding weather stripping around leaky doors and caulking around window frames.

Need more ideas about where to caulk? See article on page 16c about WIEC's energy audits.

### 2. Change filters regularly.

Change filters regularly. Change furnace and air conditioner filters monthly. Dirty filters restrict air flow and reduce the overall efficiency of your heating

and cooling system by making it work harder on hot summer days.

### 3. Clean the refrigerator inside and out.

Now's a good time to not only throw out that leftover fruitcake from the holidays but check the temperature settings on your refrigerator. Ideally, a refrigerator's temperature should be between 37 and 40 degrees for maximum operating efficiency.

When it's time to replace that old refrigerator, be sure to buy one that's ENERGY STAR rated.

### 4. Think sun block.

TogetherWeSave.com points out that by pulling down the shades on your windows this spring and sum-

mer, you could save about \$35 a year. Your local hardware store likely carries lots of inexpensive window coverings. Best of all, by blocking the sun, your house will stay cool and comfortable year-round.

### 4. Enjoy spring breezes.

Use a clothesline during warmer months and let sunlight and breezes dry clothes naturally. This will reduce your electric bill by not running a dryer, and add a genuine clean scent to your family's laundry.

You can learn more about ways to lower your monthly energy bill by visiting TogetherWeSave.com.