

Youth to Washington contest announced

Students encouraged to learn more about their government

As a way to encourage high school students to learn more about government and their role in it with a chance to get an up-close look at their government, we are announcing our “Youth to Washington” and “Youth to Springfield” programs this spring. WIEC and our sister cooperatives across the state have sponsored these programs for 57 years in an attempt to introduce students to government and the political process. Today, many “alumni” of these programs work in state or federal government or have gone on to serve as elected officials. Two retired members of the Illinois General Assembly are “alumni” of our programs.

This contest enables a high school sophomore, junior or senior to win an all-expense paid trip to Washington D.C. Western Illinois Electrical Coop. will award one son or daughter of a WIEC member an all-expense paid eight-day trip to our nation’s capital. To enter the contest, students must complete a Web quiz that consists of multiple-choice, short answer and short essay questions.

The WIEC winner will join about 50 other Illinois high school students in Washington during the week of June 10, 2016. During the time in D.C., students will learn about American and rural electric history, as well as state and federal government.

In past years, students met with representatives in the House and Senate, visited Arlington National Cemetery, the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, Mt. Vernon, the World War II Memorial, the U.S. Memorial Holocaust Museum, and even danced the night away on a river boat cruise on the Potomac River.

As part of the contest, WIEC will award the top six entrants an all-expense paid trip to Springfield, as part of the Youth Day in Springfield to visit the Illinois State Capitol on April 13, 2016 and see state government in action. (5510-48) One of those six students will be awarded the trip to Washington, D.C.

For entry information: visit our website at wiec.net, contact Becky Dickinson at Western Illinois Electrical Coop. or see your high school guidance counselor.





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OFFICE HOURS

8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
 Monday - Friday

BUSINESS OFFICE

217-357-3125

TO REPORT AN OUTAGE

800-576-3125

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MAP LOCATION CONTEST

Every month we are printing four members' 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.

Keeping the power on

Last November, Mother Nature sent several storms our way that affected our service territory. Both resulted in power outages and other power anomalies for our members.

The first storm blew through on Veteran's Day with strong winds and torrential rains. The winds blew down several transmission poles, which resulted in WIEC losing feed to four of our six substations. Since WIEC does not own the transmission lines that deliver the power to our substations, we had to wait until our power supplier could repair the problem or switch to alternative feeds. Losing transmission feed to four of our substations impacted over 2,800 WIEC meters.

Once we had the transmission feed restored, we were able to determine the damage done to our lines and which members were out of power. We found that the storm had broken 27 poles. Our next task was to get the poles temporarily repaired and get power restored to our members. Our linemen worked through the night and all day (5816-24) the next day. By 5 p.m. the next day, all WIEC members had their power restored.

The second storm, a week later, also brought high winds, but this time, it caused galloping lines which caused blinks of electricity for our members. Another problem due to the wind was that the Carthage Substation lost part of its feed out and onto the distribution lines. This caused a brownout situation for some of our members, while others had an outage.

Crews were out all day during this storm too, restoring power to our members.

During any storm, our crews do what they need to do to get power restored as safely and quickly as possible. After the storm, the cleanup work



begins, such as replacing the broken poles and restoring our system. It may take two to three weeks to rebuild our system back to the way it was before a storm rolls through.

WIEC members need to know that we will restore your electricity as soon as we can. We have a supervisor and two linemen on call at all times, just in case they are needed. Additional crews are always called out to assist restoring power during storms with multiple outages. We understand how important electricity is to our members. We thank you for your patience.



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<http://www.facebook.com/westernillinoiselectricalcoop>



Source: Chris Kirk TECA 2009

Power outage safety tips

Western Illinois Electrical Coop. makes every effort to keep the power on. Sometimes, despite our best efforts, the power goes out. When that happens, there are a few things you can do to keep yourself and your home safe.

- Check your meter. If there is not a display, contact WIEC. The problem is on WIEC and we will come and fix the problem. Please have your account number ready to give the on call person when asked.
- If there is a display or the display is blinking, the problem may be in your breaker or fuse box.
- Try to reset the main breaker. This may be located at the meter pole, below the meter and/or at your main breaker box. If you have a pedestal, the main breaker is probably still under the meter. Flip the main breaker to the “OFF” position, then back to “ON”. In many cases, this is all you need to do to restore power.
- If the power doesn’t come back on, turn all the branch breakers that control individual circuits to the “OFF” position. Reset the main breaker and slowly turn the branch breakers on one at a time until power is restored. If you have fuses, check for burnt ones and replace with new ones. Be sure to use the same size of amperage as the old fuse.
- If your main breaker or branch circuit breaker will not reset, you may need to **(6613-20)** contact an electrician.
- However, if your breakers will reset and your power is not restored, it’s time to call WIEC and report your outage.
- It’s a good idea to turn off all appliances, heating and cooling systems, lights, and other electric equipment to avoid overloading the system when power is restored. This is especially important if the lights “browned” or dimmed before going completely out. Leave on one light so you’ll know when the power is restored.
- If you notice that your neighbors’ power was restored and yours wasn’t, let WIEC know. You may have an individual outage due to downed wires or other defective

equipment. No matter what the reason, we need to know.

- Keep a power outage kit handy that includes a flashlight, a portable radio, extra batteries, a manual can opener, candle, and matches. Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed so foods will stay colder longer.
- NEVER cook or generate heat indoors with a camp stove or charcoal grill! They both emit fumes that can be deadly.



NO DISPLAY? Call WIEC!



Check here for a display. If there is a display, Check your breakers and fuses - CALL WIEC



Electric terms 101

Blinks: Blinking lights indicate the operation of equipment that protects the lines and keeps the power from going off for more than just a moment. The OCR or Oil Circuit Recloser senses that there is a problem on the line and operates. When the problem clears itself, the recloser permits power to continue flowing through the line with only a brief interruption of service or a blink. When the lights blink, it means that the OCR is operating properly.

A blink doesn't do much harm; it is more of a nuisance. We notice blinks more today than we did ten or twenty years ago because of the popularity of digital clocks, VCRs and other electronic wonders. In the past blinks happened, but the mechanical clock (with hands) just stopped and then continued on. It didn't have to be reset like its digital cousins.

Galloping: Condition occurring when the wind causes energized conductors, or wires, coming into (571-16) contact with each other that can

cause blinks or temporary interruption of power.

Brownout: A brownout is a temporary interruption of the power service where the power to your residence is reduced, rather than being cut as is the case with an outage. Consider a brownout the opposite of a power

surge, where there is a sudden burst of power that enters the system.

During a brownout, it's a good idea to turn off any motor driven appliances or electronics, such as furnaces, refrigerators, and computers, in your home as the irregular power supply can damage them.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



If you only want to heat or supplement inadequate heating in one room, small space heaters can be less expensive to use than your central heating system.

Source: energy.gov

Welcome New Members

Jordan Brecount, Ft Madison IA
Keith Bruns, Carthage
Danny & Kenny Buckert,
Warsaw
Carroll Family Farm Partnership,
Carthage

Ryan Cramer, LaHarpe
Raina Gilbert, Niota
Michael Ross Hale, Burlington
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