



**Western Illinois**  
**ELECTRICAL COOP.**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

# NEWS

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



## From the Manager:



*Tommie Long,  
Manager,  
Western Illinois  
Electrical Coop..*

Last April, WIEC introduced the Formulary Rate Adjustment as a way to insure adequate revenues for WIEC. A cost of service study was initiated to determine what our true costs were and what rates should be going forward. The cost of service study was completed and presented to the board along with our 2015 year-end financial reports at the January Board Meeting.

The existing FRP amount was calculated based on 2014 sales revenues. However, we did not foresee a 6% decline (4 million kWh) in sales for the year 2015. Declining sales were the result of many factors. Our summer was cool and wet, so WIEC did not have the air conditioning or



irrigation sales we traditionally have. (9612-18-1) Our fall was dry, so grain drying sales were less than we have had in the past. Although this is great for our members, WIEC had almost \$500,000 less in sales, which had a significant impact on our bottom line.

Although having lower sales also meant having fewer kilowatts to purchase from PPI, our wholesale power provider, it did not reduce our



other costs. WIEC still has the same physical material, such as poles, wires, transformers, and other equipment on our lines. These need to be replaced periodically due to weather, auto accidents or just normal use. WIEC still has the same number of employees who drive the vehicles that need fuel, tires and other maintenance expenses. They are needed to patrol, build and maintain WIEC's system. Tree trimming and brush spraying are still performed, which is critical to insure reliable service. Overhead expenses, such as depreciation, interest

and insurance, are still incurred. All these components are necessary to keep the lights on and keep the same level of service our members have come to expect and (8520-18-1) deserve.

One of the findings of the cost of service study was that WIEC has been under collecting on the facility charge portion of our bill. Remember, the facility charge is the portion of the bill that collects the costs mentioned above. This charge is found on all accounts, regardless of how many kWh, if any, is used at the location.

The WIEC Board heard this information, and wisely decided, that a rate adjustment was needed. The existing FRP adder will be rolled over into the Facility Charge. A new FRP is being calculated and will appear on bills beginning April 1, 2016. (Due to the advanced printing of the WIEC News, we do not have the exact amount at this time.) Without adjustments, WIEC could not cover

A letter will be sent with the February bills, that explains in more detail all the changes.

our fixed costs while maintaining the appropriate level of margins required by our lenders.

Continued on 16b ►



524 North Madison | P.O. Box 338  
Carthage, IL 62321  
www.wiec.net | 800/576-3125

#### OFFICE HOURS

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

#### BUSINESS OFFICE

217-357-3125

#### TO REPORT AN OUTAGE

800-576-3125

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Rob Gronewold** —  
President, Carthage
- **Jay Morrison** —  
Vice President, Burnside
- **Janet Spory** —  
Secretary/Treasurer, Sutter
- **William Newton** —  
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer,  
Burnside
- **Mark Burling** —  
Director, Carthage
- **Kent Flesner** —  
Director, West Point
- **Kim Gullberg** —  
Director, Stronghurst

#### STAFF

- **Tommie Long** — Manager
- **Todd Grotts** — Manager  
of Operations
- **Becky Dickinson** — Office  
Manager

#### 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.

#### "From the Manager" Continued from 16a ►

The board also decided to keep the Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) component on the bill. This is a way to share in the fluctuations of our wholesale power costs. During some months in 2015, members were charged when the wholesale power cost was higher than the budgeted amount. In other months, members were given a credit when the wholesale power cost was lower than budgeted.

A letter will be sent with the February bills which explains the changes in more detail. Members

should receive the letter around March 10. The adjustments will appear on the April bill, mailed around May 10. We ask our members to read it and if they have any questions, please contact our office.

As a cooperative, we are not driven by profits and making a return for a stockholder. We are service-driven and operate at cost. Our focus is on keeping your cooperative financially strong, so we can continue to provide safe, reliable service at the lowest practical cost.

## Know what's below before you dig

### *Make sure utility lines aren't in the way*

**P**lanning a home improvement project? Always remember that working near electrical wires or equipment can be dangerous. Keep an eye out for overhead lines when moving ladders or working on your roof. If you need to work near an electric line, ask WIEC to disconnect service wires so you can work nearby safely.

If you will be digging for new trees or footings for a new deck, make sure there aren't any underground utility lines, water lines or telephone cable in the way. Even when digging down only a few inches, it's important to know what's there. Many utilities are buried just inches below the surface.

✓ Call WIEC (800-576-3125) to locate any underground utility lines on either side of the meter. We ask for 24-hour notice.

✓ Be sure to call JULIE at 8-1-1 or go to [illinois1call.com](http://illinois1call.com) and fill out an e-request. They will locate water, sewer, phone, gas, cable and other utility lines.

State law requires the person actually doing the digging to call

JULIE with the following information at least two working days (excluding weekends and holidays) before the start of the project.

Checklist for a JULIE Locate Request

✓ Your name, address, a phone number at which you can be reached, an email address and a fax and/or pager number, if available

✓ The location of the excavation will take place, including county, city or unincorporated township, section and quarter section numbers if available, address, cross street (within 1/4 mile), subdivision name, etc.

✓ Start date and time of planned excavation

✓ Type and extent of excavation involved

✓ Whether the dig area has been outlined with white paint, flags or stakes

You will be provided with a dig number that identifies specific information about your locate request.

Both services are free.

**Henderson County WIEC Members:  
You're invited to a**

**Member Appreciation Day**

**Monday, March 21st  
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.  
At the Pink Tavern  
Lomax**

Come and enjoy light refreshments and talk with WIEC employees. They will be there to answer any questions or concerns.

See you there!

## 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, 2016).

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 #4 and #5 will expire this year.

District No. 4, currently represented by Kent Flesner, is St. Albans, Chili, Bear Creek, and Prairie Townships in Hancock County, Illinois, and the cooperative's service area in Adams County, Illinois, lying south of St. Albans and Chili Townships.

District No. 5, currently represented by Mark Burling, is Carthage, Pilot Grove, and (3910-16) Fountain Green Townships in Hancock County, Illinois, and the cooperative's service area in Hire Township in McDonough 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



2016 WIEC Board of Directors

cooperative members may act together and nominate another member by petition. 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.



# Electric terms 201

When discussing charges on electric bills, there are several different terms that may be on a member's bill – depending on the rate schedule they are on. Below are a few of the most common.

**Facility Charge:** This charge reflects the cost of having your electrical service energized and available when the member wants it. It is charged regardless of how much, if any, electricity is consumed at the site. This recovers a variety of expenses including the physical line material, such as poles, conductor, transformers, meters and also other reoccurring costs such as accounting, billing, and insurance.

**Formulary Rate Plan (FRP):** This line item is reviewed annually and charged on a per meter basis. The FRP collects additional revenue necessary to cover our fixed costs while maintaining the appropriate level of margins required by our lenders.

**Power Cost Adjustment:** This can appear as a charge or a credit on a member's bill. It is calculated by comparing what our actual wholesale power cost is for that month against the budgeted amount. If the wholesale power cost WIEC is billed is less than budgeted, members will see a credit on their bill. If the wholesale power cost WIEC is billed is more than

budgeted, members will see a charge on their bill.

**Water Heater Credit:** This is a credit for members who have electric water heaters. A credit of 2 cents per kWh is given for members who use between 500 and 900 kWh in a month. The maximum credit is \$8 per month.

**Illinois Tax:** The State of Illinois charges \$.0032 per kWh of electricity.

**Net:** This is the amount due if paid by the due date. Usually, it is the 25th of the month (or next business day).

**Gross:** This is the amount due if paid after the due date. It is the net amount plus 5% penalty.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Consider purchasing rechargeable batteries and an ENERGY STAR charger for them which are more cost effective than disposable batteries. In the U.S. alone, more energy-efficient battery chargers could save families **(3811-3)** more than \$170 million annually.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)

## Welcome New Members

Travis & Hilary Carter, Hamilton  
Anthony Interrial, Galva, IL  
Gwen Kelly, Niota  
Limkemann Swine, By Dustin  
Limkemann, West Point

Connie J. & Larry A.  
Montgomery, Havana  
SBA Towers IV, Boco Raton, FL  
Wendell E. Shaner, Stronghurst

