

## Celebrate National Lineman Appreciation Day

Like many electric cooperatives, Western Illinois Electrical Coop. will celebrate National Lineman Appreciation Day on Monday, April 11. This is a day set aside to honor the hard-working men and women who often work in challenging conditions to keep the lights on.

We are recognizing our linemen for the work they do around the clock, often in dangerous conditions, to keep the lights on and keep our members safe. WIEC is proud of the work our linemen do, from routine line maintenance to answering outage and trouble calls – linemen are ready to serve our members any time, day or night. Last year, our linemen worked over 1,000 hours of overtime to restore power to

our members. They work smart, safely and efficiently – sometimes wearing thick rubber gloves in a bucket 40 feet in the air.

The caliber of our line employees is top notch. They have won many safety awards recognizing their attention to safety, including this year. Each and every member of our line crew is to be commended for his hard work in delivering safe and reliable power to our 3,600-plus members throughout Hancock and Henderson counties.

The next time you see one of our linemen, buy them a cup of coffee, or shake their hand. If you see them on the road in a WIEC truck, give them a friendly wave. We all should take a moment to thank a lineman.



## WIEC line crew earns safety award



Western Illinois Electrical Coop. was honored with a safety award recently during the Safety/Supervisory Technical Conference held in Springfield. It received the best Three-Year Safety Record for the years 2013, 2014 and 2015.

The conference is sponsored annually by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC). Shown with the award are from left: Tyler Neally, Mark Kissinger, Cody Grainger, Andy Lafeber, Tim Shumate, Eric Johnson, Scott Carle, Eric Belshaw, Greg Bolton and Operations Manager, Todd Grotts.



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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

### 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.

## Nominating committee appointed

WIEC's board of directors recently appointed the following members to serve on the 2016 nominating committee:

- District No. 1 – Mark Lefler,  
Stronghurst
- District No. 2 – Spencer Berry,  
Nauvoo
- District No. 3 – Matt Dallas,  
Dallas City
- District No. 4 – Jeremy Kerr,  
Carthage and  
Dennis Willard,  
West Point
- District No. 5 – Jonathan Fecht,  
and Dave Biery,  
both of Carthage
- District No. 6 – Robert Menn,  
Plymouth

District No. 7 – Max Roskamp,  
Sutter.

Two members are appointed from the districts whose board terms expire each year, with one being appointed from remaining districts. These members will nominate at least one member for a three-year term (4522-22) to represent Districts 4 and 5.

Currently, Kent Flesner represents District 4 and Mark Burling represents District 5.

The first Nominating Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 22 at the Carthage WIEC office beginning at 7 p.m.

## Ways to pay your WIEC Bill

- ✓ Pay your bill online through our website [www.wiec.net](http://www.wiec.net). Members can also view past bills and see historical usage from the website.
- ✓ Call our office and give your credit card number over the phone.
- ✓ Mail your bill. Bills will be considered "on time" if the postmark is the due date or before.
- ✓ Have your bill paid automatically each month by using "Auto Pay". This free service will automatically pay your bill from either your bank account or your favorite credit card on the due date each month.
- ✓ Use the drive up box in the WIEC driveway.
- ✓ Or Come into our office in Carthage and say hello.

# Think before pulling the plug

By John Pulley

You may have seen a new marketing initiative by the propane industry that encourages homeowners to dump their electric water heaters in favor of water heaters fueled by propane gas. The multimedia campaign, called “Pull the Plug on Electric Water Heaters,” makes its case with brochures, flyers, print advertisements, videos, radio spots, fact sheets, webinars, an e-book and even endorsements by a celebrity home-improvement expert. But make no mistake – the intent of the campaign is simply to sell a lot more propane.

At WIEC, we believe electricity is the smart energy choice. It is safe, reliable, clean, predictably priced and adaptable to many uses, from the exotic to the mundane. Electricity powers everything from cars, cell phones and laptop computers to air conditioners, dishwashers, refrigerators, clothes washers and lighting. More than ever, America runs on electricity.

The campaign also resorts to scare tactics. Installation of propane water heaters is often a laborious process that requires running propane lines and exhaust vents. Turning reality on its head, the pro-propane campaign would have you believe that replacing an electric water heater can take days longer, days you’ll spend taking icy cold showers.

At WIEC, we believe electric water heaters are the smart choice for many reasons:

- High-efficiency electric water heaters are readily available. WIEC tries to keep them in stock.
- Electric water heaters are safe. They produce no carbon monoxide, and they pose no threat of combustion or explosion.
- Electric water heaters can run on power generated from a range of energy sources, including



- solar, wind, hydro and other renewables.
- Electric heaters don’t lose energy from exhaust or the replacement air that circulates into and out of a house. Propane heaters require on-site storage tanks.
- Electric water heaters are easy to install. They require no expensive gas lines or exhaust flues. WIEC even has our own electrician that can install water heaters for our members.
- The cost of electricity is less volatile than it is for other fuels. The cost of propane tends to fluctuate wildly.
- WIEC has 40 and 50-gallon water heaters that we offer to members at a reduced price. Water heaters must be installed in a residence or business on WIEC lines. Members can pick

up or have it installed by our electrician. **(4611-49)**

- WIEC offers a 2-cent bill credit (Depending on usage - maximum \$8 per month) to members who have electric water heaters.

Touchstone Energy has produced three fact sheets on water heating choices, water heater efficiency, and hot water distribution that are part of the Home Efficiency Analysis Tool – see <http://homeefficiency.touchstoneenergy.com/>. To access these fact sheets, enter information about your home and go to the “systems” tab for the water heater sheets.

*John Pulley writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation’s 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Earth Day is April 22. Give back to the environment by planting a deciduous tree near your home. Deciduous trees lose their leaves during the fall, allowing sunlight to warm your home. The extra **(478-59)** shade during summer months will keep your home cooler and give your AC a much needed break.



## Vegetation management schedule

We plan to have crews performing routine brush spraying this spring and summer in all or parts of the following townships:

### In Hancock County:

Wythe, Prairie, Montebello, Sonora, Durham, Pontoosuc and Appanoose

Vegetation management—including brush spraying—is an important aspect of WIEC’s goal of delivering power to you that is safe, reliable, and environmentally-responsible. In fact, our vegetation management program can help reduce outages caused by things such as branches falling on lines during storms, shrubbery interfering with voltage **(3715-49)** levels, or weeds in right-of-way areas making access to equipment difficult.

Due to the advanced printing of this issue of the WIEC News, these plans are subject to change. If there are questions or concerns, please contact our office during normal business hours at 217-357-3125 or 800-576-3125.



*An example of a well maintained right-of-way.*

## Welcome New Members

Erin Blakewell, Dallas City

John C. Bone, Nauvoo

Dennis J Charles Cecil,  
LaHarpe

Fermina D. Charles, Niota

Nicole Dochterman, Nauvoo

M. Jane Hamma, Nauvoo

Jeremy Smeltser, Waxhaw, NC

Teressa B Veith, Hamilton

Elizabeth Walls, Niota