



NEWS

P.O. Box 338 ■ Carthage, Illinois 62321 ■ www.wiec.net ■ 800/576-3125

How we're special

The cooperative principles guide co-ops to be stewards of their communities.

Every October since 1930, not-for-profit cooperatives of all kinds have recognized National Cooperative Month as a way to educate the public about how co-ops work and to appreciate their many members.

This year, Western Illinois Electrical Coop. highlights the philosophies that guide all co-ops: the seven cooperative principles. This way of thinking leads electric cooperatives like WIEC to do business in a better way every single day. (7512-42) Here are real-life examples of how the principles affect your cooperative.

No. 1: Voluntary and Open Membership/ No. 2: Democratic Member Control

Co-ops are open to anyone who is able to use its services, which means any person who moves onto WIEC lines is allowed membership. Members exercise their control at annual meetings, which serve as a way for members to get to know the people who run their co-op, and it's where members are updated on business matters. Each June, WIEC convenes for its annual membership meeting. Last year at Annual Meeting, members learned about the financial condition of WIEC, learned of pending EPA rules that could impact their cooperative and enjoyed a pulled pork sandwich while visiting with friends and neighbors.

"Democratic member control" means members vote for a director who represents them on a board, which governs the cooperative. Every year, members who attend annual meeting can elect directors who will serve on the board that will represent them. Those directors serve as their voice in shaping WIEC.

We're proud to support our communities by putting money back into the local economy – and into the pockets of those we serve.

No. 3: Members' Economic Participation

Because electric cooperatives are owned by its members, they do not create profits for distant shareholders. Any excess revenue—called "margins"—is allocated back to the membership in the form of capital credits, or patronage capital. Capital credits are "retired" and then paid back to members each year based on their purchases (in the case of electric

cooperatives, electricity) from the cooperative. Margins are used by the co-op as working capital for a period of time, and then paid back to individual members.

WIEC has retired over (7710-24) \$1 million in capital credits to members since 1938. At this year's Annual Meeting, members learned that WIEC will retire capital credits to members who were on our lines in 1981 and 1982. For more details, see page 16c.

"Allocating and retiring excess revenue to members helps distinguish cooperatives," points out WIEC Manager, Tommie Long. "We're proud to support our communities by putting money back into the local economy—and into the pockets of those we serve."

Nationally, electric cooperatives have retired \$11 billion in capital credits since 1988—\$768 million in 2012 alone.

No. 4: Autonomy and Independence

Electric cooperatives form a vast network across America. They're found in 47 states, and cooperative-owned electric lines cover 75 percent of the nation's land mass. But what's unique is that each cooperative is an autonomous, independent business.

"We work with our co-op neighbors,

Continued on 16c ►



Western Illinois
ELECTRICAL COOP.
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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OFFICE HOURS

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Monday - Friday

BUSINESS OFFICE

217-357-3125

TO REPORT AN OUTAGE

800-576-3125

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

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.

Don't shiver through another winter Stay warm with geothermal

WIIEC has known for over thirty years that geothermal heating and air conditioning has been a smart decision when replacing or installing a HVAC system. It's clean, dependable and super-efficient. Evidently, some of our members know this too, as WIEC has over 420 WIEC members that have installed geothermal heating and cooling in their homes and businesses.

WIEC offers the following incentives to members who install geothermal on our lines:

- ✓ special rates (7 1/2 cent per kilowatt hour - all year long)
- ✓ rebates (\$1,000 for initial unit)
- ✓ loan programs (up to \$15,000 for 5 years at a 5% rate)
- ✓ trenching for horizontal loops is available (we work with your installer to do the trenching at \$1 per foot-plus labor)

Don't shiver through another Illinois winter, consider geothermal.

Member Appreciation Day

Cookies, cider and coffee
★ will be served. ★

★ **All registered members will receive**
a free gift. ★

★ **Five lucky Attendees will win**
a \$10 bill credit. ★

Monday October 27
10-2 at the WIEC Office





All fifteen WIEC employees live here, too. We're friends and neighbors first.

but WIEC members are the sole governors of WIEC,” Manager Long explains. “Our member-elected board of directors approves policies and resolutions that inform the way we do business.”

No. 5: Education, Training, and Information

Cooperatives have a charge to keep their members informed—not just about cooperative business, but also about topics like energy efficiency, safety, and community contribution. For example, the WIEC News is one way WIEC keeps its members up on relevant news.

You can also stay informed via our webpage at www.wiec.net and follow us on Facebook.

No. 6: Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Even though co-ops are independent entities, they still rely on one

another to share resources, information, and, in some cases, manpower.

Electric co-ops have long relied on one another to get power restored more quickly after severe weather emergencies. Called “mutual-aid agreements,” it works just as it sounds: if WIEC would need extra hands after a tornado or ice storm, neighboring co-ops across Illinois would help out. And when neighboring co-ops need help, WIEC offers to send crews to them.

“We realize our members rely on electricity, we we try to get power restored as quickly and safely as possible,” says Long.

No. 7: Concern for Community

Possibly the most visible of all the cooperative principles, the last is what drives electric co-ops to be good stewards of the communities they serve.

WIEC undertakes a variety of projects, such as farm safe demonstration and our annual Safety Fair designed for 5th graders in Hancock County.

We also have assisting in several local businesses applying for and receiving several USDA loan and grants. Retail and manufacturing jobs have been leaving our area the last few years and we are committed to see that trend come to an end.

“While our first priority is delivering safe, affordable, reliable electricity to those we serve, we also feel strongly about supporting and contributing to the development of our communities,” Manager Long stresses. “Even if there were no ‘concern for community’ principle, all fifteen WIEC employees live here, too. We’re friends and neighbors first.”

Capital Credit checks to be mailed

This fall, members who were on our lines in 1981 and 1982 will receive a check in the mail for capital credits, reflecting their portion of margins earned made and invested during that time period. The checks represent 100% of 1981 capital credits and 50% of capital credits earned in 1982. The total retirement will exceed \$315,000. The balance of the 1982 capital credits will be paid back to members at a later date.

By using these funds over the years, it has helped WIEC keep rates as low as possible, reduced the amount of money we needed to borrow from outside lenders to build, maintain, and expand a reliable electric distribution system, and covered emergency expenses.

These checks will be mailed around November 1.

Biery named treasurer of state board of directors

The Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) recently held its annual meeting at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield. During the Board of Directors reorganizational meeting, Western Illinois Electrical Coop. Director Dave Biery, of Carthage, was elected for a two-year term as Treasurer of the AIEC Board of Directors.



AIEC provides legal, engineering, communications, (681-16) safety training, legislative and other services to 29 Illinois electric cooperatives, including WIEC.

Biery was elected to the WIEC Board in 2004, serving for the past two years as WIEC Board President and has served as the WIEC representative on the AIEC board since 2007.



WIEC partners with Air Evac

Western Illinois Electrical Coop. has joined with Air Evac Lifeteam to allow our residential members the opportunity to join the Air Evac Lifeteam Membership program through an affordable billing plan. This is an easy and affordable way to get the fast air transportation you and your family may need someday in an emergency.

Members have the option to choose the convenience of paying a monthly fee or an annual fee. Each plan is offered at a discounted rate to members of WIEC.

Options are:

- Option 1 – The monthly fee of \$5 per household will appear right on your monthly WIEC bill. Members can pay for their Air Evac Lifeteam membership when they pay their electric bill. Non-WIEC members would pay \$6 per month.
- Option 2 – WIEC members can enroll annually and pay an annual fee of \$55 directly to Air Evac. This gives WIEC members a \$10 annual discount.

Air Evac is known as providing air medical services to medically underserved areas of rural America. And WIEC is known for providing our members with the best customer service.

They have joined together to improve the quality of life to those they serve. Call the WIEC office for more details.

Welcome New Members

James H Hubbard, West Point
Jacob Nicol & Kathryn
Waddell, Niota



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Fall is here, and that means colder months will be here before we know it. Is your home prepared for the drafts that may enter? Tight-fitting insulating drapes or (8620-54) shades are a perfect way to keep the heat in and the cold out.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy