




Member Appreciation Day is October 25th

To celebrate Cooperative Month in October, WIEC will have Member Appreciation Day on the 25th from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Because we are owned by the members we serve, electric cooperatives have strong commitments to the local communities they serve. The better we know you as individuals, the better we can serve you and meet your changing needs. Please stop by the office to say hello or ask questions and have a cookie and some cider. Both sizes of the 2024 pocket calendars should also have arrived so remember to pick one up while you're there!



CO-OPS GROW 

COMMUNITIES

Electric cooperatives are joining co-ops across the U.S. to celebrate National Co-op Month. As your local electric co-op, our services are shaped to meet your specific needs. We love growing with you, the members we are proud to serve.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Did you know using your dishwasher is more energy efficient than washing a load of dishes by hand? To maximize efficiency, wash full loads in the dishwasher and don't block the arms or other parts that move while the appliance is in use.

Source: Dept. of Energy



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. - 4:30 p.m.
Monday - Friday

BUSINESS OFFICE

217-357-3125

TO REPORT AN OUTAGE

800-576-3125

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Mark Burling** —
President, Carthage
- **Dustin Walker** —
Vice President, Burnside
- **Janet Spory** —
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- **Jay Morrison** —
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MANAGEMENT TEAM

- **Todd Grotts** — General Manager
- **Ryan Biery** — Manager
of Operations
- **Wendi Whitaker** — Finance and
Accounting 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.

Spooky energy savings



This spooky season, we're sharing a few energy-saving tricks so you can treat yourself to lower energy bills. Here are four simple ways to summon the spirit of energy efficiency.

Conjure instant savings with a smart thermostat. One of the easiest ways to save energy is through thermostat control, since home heating and cooling account for a large portion of monthly energy use. Smart thermostats can help you manage heating and cooling costs by learning your daily routine and adjusting the temperature settings accordingly. You can control a smart thermostat from anywhere (through your smartphone), which allows you to prevent unnecessary energy consumption while you're away. Sorcery!

Get rid of goosebumps by eliminating ghostly drafts. The winter chill is just around the corner, so now is the time to seal air leaks around your home. Apply caulk and weatherstripping around drafty windows and doors to make your home more comfortable and lower energy use.

Illuminate your lair with energy-efficient lighting. LED bulbs use 75% less energy and last 25 times longer than incandescent light bulbs. Make the switch to reduce energy used for lighting. Remember to use LEDs



LED bulbs use 75% less energy and last 25 times longer than incandescent light bulbs

when it's time to decorate for the upcoming holiday season. LED light strings offer an average of 88% energy savings compared to traditional incandescent light strings.

Stir up savings with countertop cauldrons. Cooler weather summons our favorite soup recipes. Small countertop appliances like slow cookers use less energy than cooking meals on the stovetop. Grab your book of spells (or recipes) and start stirring up savings in the kitchen. **5628-47**

When we look around our homes, there are many opportunities to save energy. So, this spooky season, investigate your space and unlock a different kind of magic — the kind that brings real energy savings.



Smart thermostats can help you manage heating and cooling costs by learning your daily routine and adjusting the temperature settings accordingly.

Memorial Hospital Foundation: Looking Toward the Future

In 2023, Memorial Hospital Foundation has continued raising funds while also focusing on building strong relationships with local communities. The Memorial Hospital Foundation Dining Club and Travel Club were launched in 2023 and serve as opportunities for the community to socialize, network and enjoy a variety of unique experiences and events. The Travel Club, in partnership with Out the Door Travel with David and Leah Zanolla, has already visited Chicago and New York City, with more trips planned for 2024. **485-11** The foundation also looks forward to its next Dining Club event at Warsaw Brewery, in partnership with RePete Candle and Coffee Bar, on Oct. 7.

In addition to building these opportunities for outreach and connection, the foundation has also worked diligently in 2023 to continue to raise funds for the Grow Our Own Scholarship Campaign and the Endowment Fund. The Grow Our Own Campaign provides funds and other needed support to enhance opportunities for staff members to continue their education in the healthcare field. This campaign therefore supports team members at Memorial Hospital, Memorial Medical Clinics and Hancock County Senior & Childcare Services. These scholarship opportunities serve as a recruitment and retention tool and also make it possible for our team members to reach their own personal and professional goals.

The Memorial Hospital Endowment Fund serves as a savings account for the future of local healthcare, providing a dependable, perpetual source of funding for years to come. As healthcare continues to evolve, endowment funds are essential to the growth of Memorial Hospital and the health services it provides. Gifts of any size can be given to the endowment along with property, bequests, life insurance policies, stock gifts, certificates of deposits and planned giving.

Over a half million dollars has been raised between the Grow Our Own Scholarship Fund and the Endowment Fund. While Memorial Hospital Foundation is overwhelmed with gratitude by the community's support of these two campaigns, the foundation continues to look toward the future and strives to reach its next goal: \$2 million total raised. Since the foundation's inception in 2015, over \$1.8 million has been raised to support our communities and local healthcare. Each and every dollar raised by the foundation is directly used to support its mission: "To enhance the health and wellness of our communities through charitable giving."

The goal of \$2 million raised can be achieved through "150 for \$1,000;" a \$1,000 donation by just 150 individuals or businesses will accomplish this incredible achievement. By investing in the Grow Our Own Scholarship Campaign or the Endowment Fund, you are investing in the future of quality local healthcare. 100% of any funds received will benefit the cause of the donor's choice.

For more information on how you can participate in giving to Memorial Hospital Foundation, please contact a member of our team: Greta Wilson Wetzel, Executive Director, at 217-357-8502 or gwetzel@mhtlc.org; Colleen Wildrick, **5818-16** Director of Development, at 217-357-8504 or cwildrick@mhtlc.org; or Katelyn Murphy, Communications Coordinator, at 217-357-8568 or kmurphy@mhtlc.org. Memorial Hospital Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation and a subsidiary of Memorial Hospital, supporting Memorial Hospital, Memorial Medical Clinics, Hancock Village and the communities they serve. We encourage you to consult with your tax adviser or attorney when giving to a charitable organization for the best outcomes related to estate planning.



This photo was taken during Memorial Hospital Foundation's Travel Club recent trip to New York City in July. From left to right: (Back row) Connie Flesner, Kent Flesner, Becky Dickinson, Jonah Zanolla, Matt Dickinson, Diana McClintock and Donna Newton. (Front row) Julie Ferguson, Jen Wagoner, Greta Wilson Wetzel and David Zanolla



This is a photo of the Memorial Hospital Foundation Team at their most recent Dining Club at Mid-Mile Barn in Nauvoo in June. From left to right: Greta Wilson Wetzel, Terri Twaddle, Katelyn Murphy and Colleen Wildrick

Share information that saves lives during Teen Driver Safety Week

Eight people die in distracted-related crashes on American roads each day, according to the National Safety Council (NSC). National Teen Driver Safety Week is observed the third week of each October (Oct. 15-21, 2023), which is a good time to talk to the teens in your life about safety on the open road, including the hazards of distracted driving and downed power lines.

Distracted driving

There were 3,522 people killed by distracted driving in 2021*, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety

Administration. Lead by example and, as the NSC touts, “Just Drive.”

Texting while driving is the most alarming distraction behind the wheel, since sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for approximately 5 seconds. Other distractions include sifting through music, checking social media, using navigation, eating, talking on the phone, taking selfies, drinking a beverage or using an app.

Distracted driving is preventable. Teens and adults alike can follow these five easy tips to help them concentrate on just driving:

1. That text can wait. Do not text while driving.
2. Make responding less tempting by blocking texts while behind the wheel.
3. Do not eat while you drive.
4. Rely on playlists instead of searching for music.
5. Set up navigation before you leave or have a passenger navigate.

Downed power lines

Although no one wants to think about teens being in car accidents, it does happen. Severe storms can damage utility equipment, such as power lines/ poles and padmount transformers (green boxes). Have discussions with teens about what to do if there is a downed power line or damaged equipment.

Here is how the ground or objects can become energized without any visual indication:

- The energy spreads like ripples on a pond.
- If you walk or run from one voltage “ripple” to another, your feet experience a difference in voltage (this is called step potential).
- If you touch something at one voltage and step on or touch something at a different voltage, your hands (or your hand and foot) experience a difference in voltage (called touch potential).
- Your body becomes electricity’s path to ground when electrical current enters your body at one point and exits at another.

What to do

If you are in a car accident, stay inside your vehicle, call 911 and report that there is damaged electric utility equipment. If you are a bystander, do not approach the scene to help. Stay at least 50 feet away and do not lean on or touch anything.

Downed lines or other damaged utility equipment can look lifeless and harmless and still be live. **571-42** Downed lines and other damaged electrical apparatuses do not have to be sparking, moving, sizzling or giving off flames to be energized.

Learn other electrical safety tips at SafeElectricity.org.

**2022 statistics not available as of the writing of this article.*

4 SAFETY TIPS TEEN DRIVERS NEED TO KNOW

1 THAT TEXT CAN WAIT
When texting while driving, the shortest amount of time a person takes his or her eyes off the road is five seconds. At 55 mph, that is like driving the length of a football field with your eyes closed.

2 don't get out
If you are in a car accident involving a power line or padmount transformer (“green box”), stay inside the vehicle and call 9-1-1. Unless the car is on fire or giving off smoke, do not get out. If there is a fire, make a solid jump from the vehicle without touching it and hop with your feet together as far away as you can.

3 respect work zones
One work zone crash occurs every 5.4 minutes. Remind teen drivers to consider anyone doing their job in or near the road as someone they know and love. Encourage them to move over and slow down for workers.

4 Don't Drive Distracted
Texting is not the only form of distracted driving. Driving and doing anything else is multitasking. Eight deaths occur EVERY DAY due to drivers who drive distracted.

Learn more: SafeElectricity.org

Welcome new members **July 2023**

Duane and Tara Glasgow	Sawyer Pence
Health and Leah Knowles	Taia Russell
Scott Link	Ben Schafer
Dianne McEntee	Henry Sutton and Alana Dennis
Jay McHugh	Village of Pontoosuc