

WIEC NEWS

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

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

Consolidation update:

Over the past few months, members have been informed about the consolidation discussions between Adams Electric Cooperative (AEC) and Western Illinois Electrical Coop. (WIEC). The first step was for both co-ops to submit their financial data to National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) who analyzed the information and made an independent assessment of the information.

A joint meeting was held between both cooperatives' board of directors at the end of May. A representative from CFC was there to explain how CFC made their analysis. CFC created financial models for each co-op's future expenditures, looking at operations, maintenance, administrative and other costs five and ten years in

the future. Finally, a model was made showing the combined costs during the same time span and illustrated projected savings by combining the two cooperatives. CFC's analysis indicates the combined cooperatives could save \$401,074 in the base year and \$5,238,059 over a ten year period at a 2% inflation rate and \$6,138,941 at a 5.0% inflation rate.

During the meeting, both boards had the opportunity to speak with Randy Price, CEO of Carroll-White REMC in Indiana which finalized a consolidation of two cooperatives on January 1. Each board had the opportunity to ask questions on their consolidation process. Randy indicated that their cooperatives also had an analysis prepared by CFC and, so far, their savings looks to be more

significant than indicated. With the information exchanged at the joint meeting, both boards felt good about the discussions. Both boards take their responsibility to their members seriously with the long term goal of keeping electricity reliable and affordable. In June, WIEC will hold its annual meeting for members to learn more about the consolidation process. Committees are being formed that will focus on issues such as bylaw development, wages and benefits for employees, integrating financial statements and rate consolidation. A Gantt chart (timeline) has been established to keep both cooperatives on track. A special committee has also been formed that will continue to keep employees and members informed of the consolidation process.

**WIEC's office will be closed
on July 4th in observance
of Independence Day.**

Happy Birthday America!

Welcome New Members

Thomas Bough, Blandinsville
Robert K & Jean E Doran Trust, Carman
Neil T & Jessica E Kohlmorgan, Hamilton
Shuhart Creek Whitetails, Inc., Buffalo
Grove IL
Tracy Snowden, Nauvoo
Thomas Family Campground, Carthage
Tyler Ufkes, Carthage
Angela Willdrick, Lomax



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

**DURING OFFICE HOURS,
OR AFTER HOURS
TO REPORT OUTAGE**

217-357-3125
800-576-3125

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Rob Gronewold** —
President, Carthage
- **Jay Morrison** —
Vice President, Niota
- **Janet Spory** —
Secretary/Treasurer, Sutter
- **William R. Newton** —
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer,
Burnside
- **Dave Biery** — Director,
Carthage
- **Calvin Baumann** —
Director, Basco
- **Mike Ford** — Director, Lomax

STAFF

- **Paul Dion** — Manager
- **Tommie Long** —
Manager of Operations
- **Becky Dickinson** —
Office Manager

MAP LOCATION CONTEST

Every month we are printing four member's 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.

Celebrate smart

Mylar balloons are a festive way to celebrate birthdays, graduations and convey get well wishes. They have even become a way to mark the way to parties and festivities. If you celebrate with Mylar balloons, remember to keep them tethered at all times and dispose of them properly. Proper handling and disposal keeps them from drifting into power lines and causing a power outage.

When a Mylar balloon touches a power line or floats into substation equipment its metallic properties cause a surge of electricity. This can cause equipment to short circuit and lead to power outages, fires and possible injuries. Each year, hundreds of thousands of consumers experience power outages caused by Mylar balloons con-

tacting electrical equipment. To reduce these outages and help keep customers' lights on, keep the following tips in mind: **(10529-54)**

Keep balloons tethered at all times and attached to a weight.

When disposing of Mylar balloons, make sure to puncture them to ensure lingering helium doesn't cause them to float and blow around if the garbage container is overturned.

If a balloon or another toy becomes entangled in an overhead power line, don't attempt to retrieve it. Call your utility for assistance.

Always assume power lines are live, and keep yourself, your equipment and all other items at least 10 feet away from power lines.

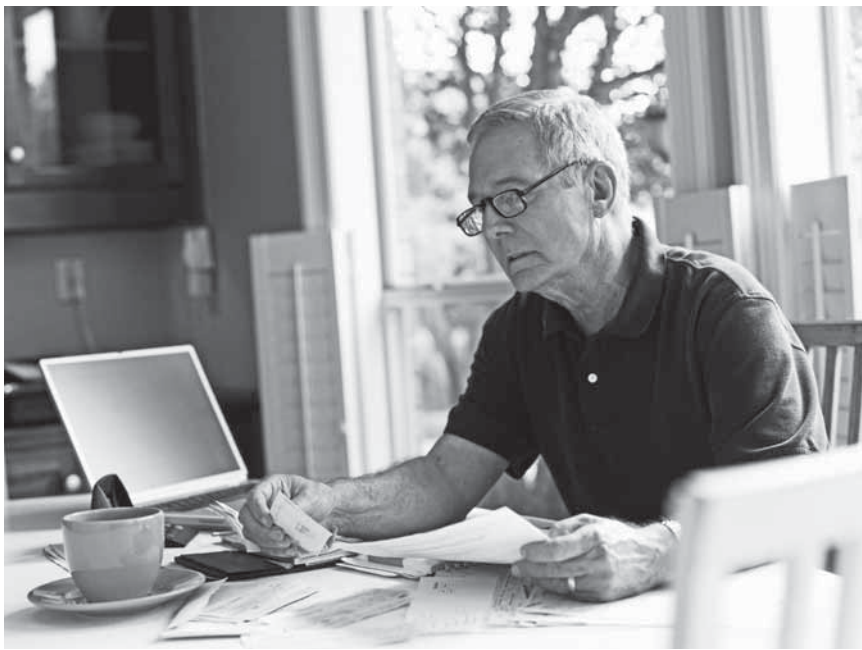


Are you smarter than a 5th grader?

For over fifteen years, local fifth graders who have attended the WIEC Safety Fair have been told how Mylar balloons and electric lines are a dangerous combination. Kyle Finley with his Live Line Demo is a regular at the WIEC Safety Fair and he has been demonstrating this to 5th graders each year. The picture shows dramati-



cally, that balloons can become energized causing a dangerous situation.



Trying to budget your money?

Use WIEC's Budget Billing Program to help make it easier

When there are so many expenses in life that can't be controlled, wouldn't it be nice to have one bill that you could prepare for? WIEC has a program that can level out the highs and lows of your electrical usage and make your electric bill easier to manage. It's called budget billing.

This plan will average your electric payment for the next 12 months, based on your previous 12 months usage. Assuming your usage remains consistent with the previous years,

your electric bill will be the same until July 2013. That month will be catch-up month where the amount due is the actual balance remaining or no payment will be due if there is a credit balance. The credit balance will be carried forward to the next year.

The new Budget Billing program begins on July 23. Call our office for more information. **(850-18)** Life is full of unexpected expenses, don't let your electric bill be one of them.



Energy Efficiency *Tip of the Month*

Water heating ranks as one of the top three energy-related expenses in your home. Save energy and money by installing a water heater blanket, using low-flow showerheads **(3813-1)** and faucets, and lowering the thermostat on your water heater to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Learn more at EnergySavers.gov.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

Clean up your air with the right houseplants

Clean air is essential to good health at home and in the workplace. One simple way to keep the air you breathe fresh and free of odors and chemicals is to keep a few houseplants around. They'll clean the atmosphere and make your surroundings more pleasant and relaxing.

Pick up some of these:

- **English ivy.** This climbing vine grows in hanging baskets and low planters, and it helps clear away formaldehyde. (Be aware that it requires regular misting, especially during the winter months.)
- **Peace lily.** A flowering plant, the peace lily will eradicate toxins like acetone, benzene, and ammonia from the air. Remember to wash the leaves every once in a while.
- **Rubber plant.** This plant is hardy enough to survive cool temperatures and low light, making it ideal even if you're not particularly good with plants. Like the English ivy, it acts to reduce formaldehyde in the air as long as it gets plenty of water.

If you can see it, flee it if you can hear it, clear it.

Summer activities can take us outdoors for things like organized athletic events. Maybe it's watching your favorite team, watching your child play, or taking the field yourself. If you are participating in an outdoor sport, the game is at the mercy of Mother Nature. One of Mother Nature's most frequent weather hazards is lightning. Baseball, football, lacrosse, skiing, swimming, soccer, tennis, track and field events...all of these and other outdoor sports have been visited by lightning.

The National Lightning Safety Institute (NLSI) says education is the single most important means to achieve lightning safety. A lightning safety program should be implemented at every facility and the NLSI suggests the following steps:

- A responsible person should be designated to monitor weather conditions. Local weather forecasts - from The Weather Channel, NOAA Weather Radio, or local TV stations - should be observed 24 hours prior to athletic events.

Many smart phones can have weather information available.

- A plan for the suspension and resumption of athletic activities should be in place before games begin. The availability of SAFE shelters is essential. **(3914-56)**
 - SAFE evacuation sites include: fully enclosed metal vehicles with windows up, substantial buildings and areas of low ground.
 - UNSAFE shelter areas include open pavilions, and all outdoor metal objects like flag poles, fences and gates, light poles, metal bleachers, golf carts, machinery, etc. You should also avoid trees, water, open fields and areas of high ground.
- Lightning's distance from you is easy to calculate: if you hear thunder, the associated lightning is within striking distance. The rule of thumb: when thunder roars, go indoors. Another good lightning

safety motto is: "If you can see it (lightning) flee it; if you can hear it (thunder), clear it."

- If you feel your hair standing on end, and/or hear "crackling noises" - you are in lightning's electric field. Immediately drop to a crouching position. Remove metal objects (including baseball cap) and with feet together, duck your head, and crouch down low in baseball catcher's stance with your hands on your knees.

Wait a minimum of 30 minutes from the last observed lightning or thunder before resuming activities.

If someone is struck by lightning, apply first aid immediately if you are qualified to do so and get emergency help promptly. People who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge and are safe to handle.

Remember, "If you can see it, flee it; if you can hear it, clear it" and have a safe game!

Source: safeelectricity.com

Independence Day Trivia & Facts

- In 1941, Congress declared 4th of July a federal legal holiday. It is one of the few federal holidays that have not been moved to the nearest Friday or Monday.
- Thirty places nationwide have "liberty" in their name. Liberty, Missouri boasts the highest population of the 30 at 26,232. Iowa has more of these places than any other state at four: Libertyville,

New Liberty, North Liberty and West Liberty.

- Eleven places have "independence" in their name. The most populous of these is Independence, Missouri, with 113,288 residents.
- Five places adopted the name "freedom." Freedom, California, with 6,000 residents, has the largest population among these.

- There is one place named "patriot" - Patriot, Indiana, with a population of 202.

- And what could be more fitting than spending the day in a place called "America"? There are five such places in the country, with the most populous being American Fork, Utah, with 21,941 residents.

Source: [American FactFinder](http://AmericanFactFinder.com) <www.census.gov>