

# POWERLINE

NEWSLETTER FOR CO-OP MEMBERS OF CORN BELT ENERGY



EDITION: FEBRUARY 2024

## The Dangers of Galloping Lines

Galloping power lines are typically caused when ice and high winds occur at the same time. Freezing rain creates icicles and odd-shaped ice formations on power lines and conductors. The ice buildup changes how wind and air impact the now misshapen, ice-covered line. This change in airflow can cause the power line to start to bounce.

Once the lines get going, they can bounce and buck enough to hit another line, damage themselves enough to cause a power outage or even fall to the ground.

There is not much a power company can do to alleviate galloping lines since the wild motion is caused by Mother Nature. To help prevent this, many power lines have special mechanisms, such as twisted wire or round or angular pieces of metal, attached to the line. While they can help, sometimes they are no match for severe ice and whipping wind.

Aside from ice storms, year-round storms can cause damaging winds, which can knock down power lines and blow trees and limbs onto power lines. Keep the following safety tips in mind:

- When you see power lines on the ground, stay away, warn others to stay away and contact the electric utility or 911. Lines do not have to be arcing or sparking to be live.
- Any utility wire, including



- telephone or cable lines that are sagging or down, could be in contact with an energized power line, also making it dangerous. Do not try to guess the types of lines—stay away from all lines.
- Be alert to the possibility that tree limbs or debris may hide electrical hazards. Downed power lines can energize objects around them, such as chain-link fences and metal culverts.
  - Keep in mind that a dead line could become energized during power restoration efforts or improper use of generators.
  - Never drive over a downed line. It could start a chain reaction and cause additional

- poles or other equipment to collapse.
- If you are in a car that has contacted or is near a downed power line, stay in your vehicle. Wait until the utility crew has arrived and deenergized the line. Warn others not to approach the car.
  - Only exit a car or cab near or on downed lines if there is a fire. If this happens, cross your arms over your chest and make a solid jump out and away from the car with both feet together. Then hop away at least 50 feet or more while continuing to keep both feet together.

For more electrical safety information, visit [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org)

# Time to ditch your old space heater?

If you can't remember when you purchased your space heater, it might be time to replace it. Just like the flip phones of yesteryear have progressed into today's modern cell phone, portable space heaters have come a long way too. Most of today's models have built-in safety features, such as non-exposed coils and sensors that detect overheating or touch, as well as an automatic shut-off feature in case it gets tipped over.

Regardless of whether your space heater is fresh out of the box or several years old, it should be used safely, since most home heating fire deaths (86%) involve using one, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). In fact, heating equipment is the second-leading cause of U.S. home fires,

right behind cooking.

Along with using a unit that is in good working order, be sure to keep clothing, papers, rugs and other flammable items at least 3 feet away from a space heater. More than half of the heating-related home fires start when items are too close to the heat source, according to the NFPA, including upholstered furniture, clothing, a mattress or bedding.

Safe Electricity and Corn Belt Energy recommend these additional space heater safety tips:

1. Read all instructions and only use as recommended.
2. Do not leave a space heater unattended.
3. Plug it directly into an outlet;

most power strips and extension cords are not equipped to handle the energy spikes caused by a space heater cycling on and off.

4. Unplug any other item from the outlet you are using; also try to use a dedicated circuit to avoid overload.
5. Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
6. Turn them off before you leave the room or go to sleep.
7. Do not use a heater in disrepair or with a frayed cord or damaged plug.
8. Place them on flat, level surfaces and never place on furniture, counters or carpet, which can overheat.

Remember to always use a space heater with care.

BEST BETS FOR

## Winter Savings

Energy consumption spikes during winter months as we spend more time indoors and heating systems work overtime. You can help reduce demand and strain on the electric grid by conserving during peak energy times. Reducing energy use will also help lower your energy bills.

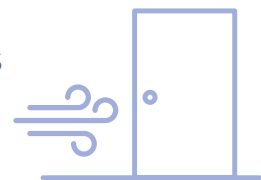
### UNPLUG WHEN POSSIBLE



Turn off unnecessary lights and electronics when you aren't using them.

### ELIMINATE DRAFTS AND AIR LEAKS

Seal air leaks and drafts around windows and exterior doors.



### USE APPLIANCES WHEN ENERGY DEMAND IS LOWER

Run large appliances like clothes washers, dryers and dishwashers early in the morning or before you go to bed.



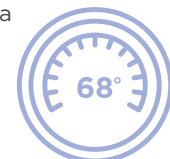
### MAINTAIN HEATING EQUIPMENT

Maintain your heating system by replacing dirty, clogged filters and scheduling an annual inspection for necessary maintenance.



### LOWER THE THERMOSTAT

Home heating accounts for a large portion of energy consumption. Adjust your thermostat to the lowest comfortable setting (68 degrees or lower).



# 2024 Nominating Committee meeting scheduled

The Nominating Committee will meet at the Corn Belt Energy office, in Bloomington, at 10:00 AM on Thursday, February 8, 2024.

Any cooperative member who is interested in being nominated to the Board of Directors should contact a committee member prior to the meeting. The committee can nominate no more than two individuals for each expired Directorship.

As an alternative, any active cooperative member may also be nominated for election by petition. Any fifty active members of the Cooperative, by their petition, may propose the name of any qualified member as an additional nominee.

The nominated person must have active service in the Board district

of the vacancy, and no other Directors can live in the same township.

Petitions to nominate Directors must be filed at Corn Belt Energy's office no later than Monday, April 15, 2024. The election to fill the Director seats will occur at the Annual Meeting, scheduled for Friday, June 14, 2024, at Normal Community High School in Normal.

The Board of Directors is comprised of 11 active members who represent the membership in the operation of the Cooperative. The detailed procedure for choosing a Director is stated in our cooperative bylaws, which can be found at [www.cornbeltenergy.com](http://www.cornbeltenergy.com).

# Now accepting Director nominations

The terms of the following Corn Belt Energy Directors will expire at the 2024 Annual Meeting on June 14:

- Jan Reimer, District 1
- Denise Mayes, District 1
- Kay Werts, District 4
- Barbara Metzger, District 6

The Board of Directors has appointed the following persons to the Nominating Committee. If you are interested in a district seat currently up for re-election, contact one of these persons or an existing Director with your credentials by February 8:

- Bruce Thomas, 3011 Clearwater Ave. Bloomington, IL 61704
- Todd West, 2273 Knox Rd 2250 E Victoria, IL 61485
- Albert Hagenbuch, 3438 E. 11th Rd. Utica, IL 61373
- Darrin Schertz, 485 County Rd 2570 E. El Paso, IL 61738
- Ken Schertz, 14025 Lara Trace Bloomington, IL 61705
- Lora Warren, 17303 Backbone Rd West, Princeton, IL 61356
- Bart Bittner, 19754 E 1300 North Rd. Bloomington, IL 61705
- Stanley Otto, 6938 E 1700 North Rd. Danvers, IL 61732
- Wayne Cremeens, 26863 Wildfire Dr. Hopedale, IL 61747
- Mark Young, 27126 Golden Acres Dr. LeRoy, IL 61752
- Rachel Torbert, 13325 Autumn Rd. Wapella, IL 61777

<b>SAVE</b>	<b>86TH ANNUAL MEETING</b>
<b>JUNE 14 2024</b>	<b>THE</b>
<b>DATE</b>	 <b>NORMAL COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL</b> 3900 E Raab Rd, Normal



## Be prepared for winter storms

When winter temperatures drop and storms hit, it can be challenging to stay safe and warm. Winter storm severity varies depending on where you live, but nearly all Americans are affected by extreme winter storms at some point. Corn Belt Energy cares about your safety, and we want you to be prepared.

Heavy snow and ice can lead to downed power lines, leaving co-op members without power. During extremely low temperatures, this can be dangerous. During a power outage, our crews will continue to work as quickly and safely as possible to restore power, but there are a few things you can do to prepare yourself.

- Stay warm – Plan to use a safe alternate heating source, such as a fireplace or wood-burning stove during a power outage. These are great options to keep you

and your loved ones warm, but exercise caution when using, and never leave the heating source unattended. If you are using gasoline-, propane- or natural gas-burning devices to stay warm, never use them indoors. Remember that fuel- and wood-burning sources of heat should always be properly ventilated. Always read the manufacturer's directions before using.




- Stay fed – The CDC recommends having several days' supply of food that does not need to be cooked handy. Crackers, cereal, canned goods and bread are good options. Five gallons of water per person should also be available in the event of an extended power outage.

- Stay safe – When an outage occurs, it usually means power lines are down. It is best not to travel during winter storms, but if you

must, bring a survival kit along, and do not travel alone. If you encounter downed lines, always assume they are live. Stay as far away from the downed lines as possible, and report the situation to our dispatchers by calling 309-662-5330. If you should experience an outage, call us or report the outage through your SmartHub app.

Winter weather can be unpredictable and dangerous, and planning ahead can often be the difference between life and death. Corn Belt Energy is ready for what Mother Nature has in store, and we want you to be ready, too. For more winter safety tips, visit [www.cornbeltenergy.com](http://www.cornbeltenergy.com) OR [www.ready.gov/winter-weather](http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather).

## CONTACT US

309-662-5330 | [cbec@cornbeltenergy.com](mailto:cbec@cornbeltenergy.com) | [www.cornbeltenergy.com](http://www.cornbeltenergy.com) |     
1 Energy Way, Bloomington, IL 61705 | Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM

