

# POWERLINE

NEWSLETTER FOR CO-OP MEMBERS OF CORN BELT ENERGY



## Giving Back is the Cooperative Way

The holiday season brings a spirit of generosity and compassion. It's a time to reflect on our many blessings and uplift those in need. While this is certainly a special time of year, cooperatives like Corn Belt Energy are deeply rooted in giving back to their local communities year-round.

Our mission is reliable power. Our purpose is people—the members we're proud to serve. That's why we organize food, clothing, and supply drives to make a meaningful impact on our community. You help us power that purpose, too.

Corn Belt Energy also gives back by investing in tomorrow's leaders. We aim to empower students for a brighter future through presentations at elementary schools, scholarship opportunities, and the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour program. When we invest in our local youth, we strengthen the fabric of our community.

This same spirit of community is evident in how we respond to severe weather events.



*Even during destruction and hardship in Satilla, Georgia, the community gave our linemen shelter, food, clean clothes, and hospitality. Thank you!*

In anticipation of storms threatening our region, we engage with our sister cooperatives—those in unaffected areas—to mobilize resources and personnel quickly. Through this mutual aid system, we ensure that our community receives the support it needs to restore power efficiently.

Corn Belt Energy also honors the cooperative principle of "cooperation among cooperatives," offering assistance to other

cooperatives in times of need, reinforcing how collaboration helps us overcome significant challenges like power restoration after severe weather.

For example, after Hurricane Helene, Corn Belt Energy dispatched multiple crews to Georgia to aid recovery efforts for over one million customers without power. We are proud of our dedicated lineworkers who represent the power of cooperation and community. Together, we are co-op strong.

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As a not-for-profit electric cooperative, we believe in giving credit where credit is due—to the members who shape our co-op. One of the ways we do this is through capital credits. Because Corn Belt Energy operates at cost, we give cash back to our members rather than outside investors or shareholders.

Here's how capital credits work:

Corn Belt Energy members use the electricity we provide and pay their monthly bills, and we track their business

with the co-op over time. Corn Belt Energy pays all operating expenses throughout the year, and if any operating revenue is leftover, we allocate it as capital credits. When financial conditions permit, the co-op's board of directors votes to pay capital credits back to the members. Corn Belt Energy returned 10 million dollars in capital credits in the Summer of 2024.

Capital credits are just one of the many benefits of co-op membership. Giving back to our local members instead

of outside parties is one of the many aspects that set cooperatives apart from other types of businesses.

Our members guide every decision we make and are the reason our co-op exists. To us, you're more than a customer. We hope you're proud to be part of a community-focused co-op that puts people before profits this holiday season.

From your friends at Corn Belt Energy, we hope you have a bright, blessed holiday season.

## A Look Back at...



# Stay safe and warm: Your winter home readiness guide

Here are top tips to help you prepare before the temperatures drop and a few ways to stay safe if a power outage leaves you snowbound.

## Inspect your heating system

- Have your heating system professionally serviced.
- Replace air filters if needed.
- Ensure vents and radiators are unblocked for efficient heat distribution.

## Prepare pipes and water supply

- Insulate exposed pipes to prevent freezing.
- Drain and shut off outdoor faucets and irrigation systems.
- Know the location of your water shut-off valve in case of emergencies.

## Maintain smoke and carbon monoxide detectors

- Replace batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Test detectors to ensure they are functioning properly.

## Prepare your home's exterior

- Clear gutters and downspouts of leaves and debris to prevent ice dams.
- Trim trees and bushes away from the house to prevent damage from heavy snow.
- Ensure downspouts extend away from your home's foundation.
- Drain and store garden hoses to prevent freezing.
- Service and store outdoor equipment such as lawnmowers and trimmers.
- Gather winter tools such as snow shovels and ice melt.

## Increase home energy efficiency

- Seal gaps and cracks around windows and doors with weatherstripping or caulk.
- Set ceiling fans to rotate clockwise to circulate warm air.

- Lower your thermostat a few degrees to save on heating costs.

## Stock emergency supplies

At home, have enough nonperishable food and water for 72 hours in case of power outages or severe weather. Experts suggest storing one gallon of water per person per day.

Include these essentials in your emergency kit:

- First-aid kit
- Flashlights and batteries
- Warm clothing
- Blankets
- Phone chargers and backup charger sources

Gather important documents, medical supplies/medicines and medical records. Don't forget your pets. Make sure you have enough supplies for them as well.

## What to do if the power goes out

Winter weather is unpredictable, with high winds, whiteouts and ice storms. These conditions can cause hazardous roads and power outages.

If the electricity goes out due to a winter storm, you might be in for a prolonged power outage as crews work through the harsh weather to get the power back on. If this happens, contact your electrical utility as soon as you

can so they know you have lost power.

## Other actions you can take to stay safe are:

- Avoid travel. Stay inside and dress warmly in layered clothing.
- Place a draft block at the bottom of doors to minimize cold drafts from entering the house.
- When using an alternative heat source, follow operating instructions and be sure to ventilate properly.
- Keep grills, camp stoves and generators out of the house, basement and garage.
- Use a tarp and portable canopy when using a portable generator if conditions are damp or wet.
- Move fuel-powered generators at least 20 feet away from the house.
- Keep a close eye on the temperature in your home. Infants and people over the age of 65 are often more susceptible to the cold. You may want to stay with friends or relatives or go to a shelter if you cannot keep your home warm.

For more information on keeping your family safe during and after a winter storm, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



# THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

## Education grants available

Corn Belt Energy is now accepting applications for our 2025 Education Grants Program. Five schools that serve children of Corn Belt Energy electric members will each be awarded a \$1,500 grant and one school will be awarded the \$2,000 Jeff Reeves Memorial Education Grant to fund innovative programs that enrich students' education. Teachers and administrators of public or private K-12 schools

may apply; the facility does not need to receive electricity from Corn Belt Energy, but must serve families within our footprint in Central Illinois. Multiple projects within the same school can be combined to a total of the awarded grant amount.

An impartial panel of judges will review the grant applications and preference will be given to projects and programs that enhance learning and are not

currently being funded through the school's budget.

The application deadline for the 2025 Education Grants is December 31, 2024. Applications and further details can be found online at [cornbeltenergy.com/education-grants-for-schools/](http://cornbeltenergy.com/education-grants-for-schools/)

For more information, contact Megan Marlowe, Manager of Communications at 309-664-9250.

## Scholarships available for high school seniors

The deadline is fast approaching to apply for an IEC Memorial Scholarship. Each scholarship is worth \$2,500!

TEN scholarships will be awarded to co-op students receiving service from the cooperative.

FIVE scholarships will be awarded for co-op students applying to a

community college.

ONE scholarship will be awarded to the child of an electric cooperative employee or director.

ONE scholarship will be the LaVern and Nola McEntire Memorial Lineworker's Scholarship.

The deadline to apply is December 31, 2024.

The deadline for the LaVern and Nola McEntire Memorial Lineworker's Scholarship is April 30, 2025.

More information and to apply can be found at: [https://cornbeltenergy.com/scholarships/](http://cornbeltenergy.com/scholarships/)

## Youth Day and Youth Tour 2025

Students of Corn Belt Energy Cooperative and Corn Belt Energy employees can attend Youth Day in Springfield, IL, and the Youth to Washington Tour. Up to eight students will be chosen for Youth Day, and two students will win an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., in June to see the government in action and explore national sites. To be eligible for the trip, students

must be high school sophomores or juniors residing in a Corn Belt Energy-served home and be available to attend the June trip to Washington, D.C. Home-schooled students can also apply!

**Youth Day- Springfield, IL  
TBD, 2025**

**Youth Tour- Washington, D.C.  
June 16-23, 2025**

**Deadline to apply  
February 7, 2025**

For more information and application, scan the QR code below or contact us at 309-662-5330.



## 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

