



*From the Desk of the Manager*

## Shift timing, shift savings



Todd Grotts  
General Manager  
WIEC

As we settle into the heat of July, our homes naturally use more electricity. Air conditioners run longer, refrigerators work harder, and daily routines — from cooking dinner

to doing laundry — often overlap during the warmest parts of the day. That's also when the demand for electricity across our community is at its highest.

At Western Illinois Electrical Coop., our top priority is delivering safe, reliable and affordable power whenever you need it. But during peak energy hours — 6 to 8 a.m. and 5 to 8 p.m. daily — there's added pressure on the grid as homes and businesses require larger amounts of electricity, all at the same time. On the hottest days, that strain can be significant.

The good news is that small changes at home can make a meaningful difference. **4813-9**

Think of our electric grid like a highway system. During rush hour, traffic is heavy, congestion builds and everything slows down. But when drivers adjust their schedules, even slightly, it helps ease the bottleneck. The same principle applies to energy use.

By shifting some of your high-energy activities to off-peak hours

— like doing laundry later in the evening, running the dishwasher before you go to bed, or cooking meals earlier in the day — you're helping spread out demand. That reduces pressure on the grid during those critical peak hours.

Here are a few simple steps you can take to lower energy use during peak hours.

Smart technology can be a valuable partner in saving energy. A programmable or smart thermostat can automatically adjust your home's temperature when demand is highest, helping you stay comfortable while using energy more efficiently. Even a small adjustment of a few degrees during peak hours can make a difference.

In the kitchen, simple swaps can help, too. Using a slow cooker, air fryer or outdoor grill instead of the oven keeps your home more comfortable and reduces the need for additional cooling during the warmer parts of the day. And when it comes to laundry, air-drying clothes or spacing out loads can cut down on both energy use and indoor heat.

Don't overlook the power of ceiling fans, either. They can make you feel several degrees cooler, allowing you to raise your

thermostat setting without sacrificing comfort.

These actions may seem small on their own, but together, they add up. When many members make mindful choices about when and how they use electricity, it helps reduce peak demand, eases strain on the grid and supports more stable energy costs for our local communities.

That's the cooperative difference. As a member, you're not just a customer — you're part of a community working together to power our future. Every effort you make contributes to a stronger, more resilient system.

This summer, I encourage you to take a closer look at your daily routines. A few simple shifts can go a long way in keeping your home comfortable, your energy use efficient, and our grid running smoothly — no matter how high the temperatures climb.





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#### 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

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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.



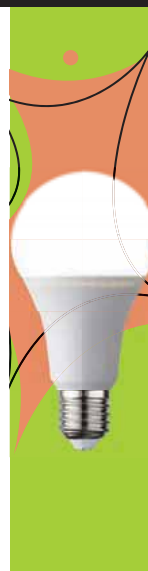
Map Location Winners – May issue

Tim Farniok

*Congratulations!*

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Running multiple major appliances at the same time—like your dishwasher, laundry machines and oven—can spike energy demand and strain the electric grid, especially during peak hours (typically late afternoon to early evening). Instead of stacking appliance use, spread it out throughout the day or shift chores to off-peak hours when energy demand is lower. This not only helps improve overall efficiency but can also reduce your energy costs. A simple habit change, like doing laundry in the morning and running the dishwasher overnight, can make a meaningful difference for both your wallet and energy reliability. 5531-8



## Welcome new members

April 2026

- |                     |                       |                     |
|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Beeler, Susan J     | Hoenes, Matt          | Plowman, Taylor     |
| Campbell, Malachi D | Levi-Smith, Kayla     | Ufkes, Brittany N & |
| Harrison, Wesley D  | Mckeown, Justin Allen | Plant, Dustin M     |



## Budget Billing enrollment begins July 15th

**W**IEC's Budget Billing program gives members a sure-fire way to anticipate the amount of their next payment for electrical service and plan ahead for it. It's the perfect way to avoid large monthly fluctuations in the amount you pay. The program is designed to keep your electric payments consistent every month of the year, as long as you remain on the plan and your overall annual usage does not change drastically. It's the ideal way to accurately predict your monthly expense, which makes managing your money simpler than ever. **5816-8-2**

When you sign up for Budget Billing, our billing coordinator takes a look at your electric usage for the past 12 months. She determines your average monthly kilowatt hour usage, then calculates what the bill for that amount of electricity would be at current rates to determine your monthly

payment amount. Agreeing to pay for your average usage each month with this program allows you to plan ahead for a consistent expense, even in very cold or hot months when actual usage may be significantly higher.

Enrollment in WIEC's Budget Billing program is free. It is offered to members who have accounts in good standing with at least 12 months of service history to review. After enrolling, a member may opt back out of the Budget Billing program at any time by contacting WIEC's billing coordinator. If a member on Budget Billing becomes delinquent, they are typically removed from the Budget Billing program, and any actual balance owed the co-op becomes due immediately.

For members who remain on the program, there is an annual "true-up" in July. The billing coordinator compares the total of the budget billing

payments received from each member, which were based on an estimated average monthly usage amount, to the actual total kWh usage and charges for the most recent 12-month period. The difference in these dollar amounts is refunded via a bill credit for any member who has overpaid. However, it is owed, along with the usual June usage charges payable in July, by any member who has underpaid over the course of the previous year.

**Enrollment for Budget Billing this year begins on July 15. For more information on the program, or other billing-related questions, please contact our office at 217-357-3125 or 800-576-3125.**



# Electrical Safety *around* Water

*Prevent*  
shocks around  
pools, hot tubs and  
spas before  
they happen.



- Use a qualified electrician for any new pool, hot tub or spa wiring.
- Use covered outdoor outlets.
- Make sure outlets are GFCI-protected and tested monthly.
- Keep cords away from water. Don't use extension cords for pool equipment.
- Replace cracked outlet covers, frayed cords, loose plugs or damaged equipment.
- Choose battery-operated and waterproof TVs, radios and speakers. **5722-51**
- Don't handle phones, tablets, laptops or charging cords when you're wet, and keep them away from pools, spas and sinks.
- Check power line clearance with an electrician or your utility when installing pools, spas and structures like diving boards; and have utilities marked before digging.
- Schedule periodic electrical inspections and upgrades for your equipment.
- Have an electrician show you how to shut off all power in an emergency and make sure the shut-off switch is labeled.

**Know the risks: Wet skin + wet surfaces = increased risk when electricity is present.**

#### Warning signs of shock in the water:

- Tingling sensation.
- Muscle cramps.
- Restricted movement.

#### If you suspect electrical shock:

- Turn off all power immediately.
- Do NOT enter the water to rescue anyone.
- Use a non-conductive rescue tool (such as fiberglass).
- Call 911.

**If you feel a shock in the water, move away from the source and get out.**

 Learn more at:  
**Safe Electricity.org**<sup>®</sup>