



Central Wisconsin  
Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



By Mike Wade,  
President & CEO

## STAY SAFE THIS SPRING

May is Electrical Safety month and I would ask you to consider the potential electrical hazards that may be found around

your home or business. Each of us relies on electricity to power our lives. However, it is important to always be safe around equipment and appliances that operate using electricity. By taking simple precautions, everyone can avoid electrically related fires, fatalities, injuries, and property loss.

Although we may get an April or even May snow from year to year, it is officially spring and I hope you are beginning to enjoy spending time outside. For many of you, spring means planting your favorite flowers and working in the yard after the long winter. If your work involves digging, be reminded that electric, gas, cable, or other utility lines may be lurking beneath the surface. Before you dig that hole or cut that trench, call 8-1-1 to request that these lines be marked. This is a free service that is easy

to use and will help keep you safe.

Once again, we are asking our members to contribute photos for our 2022 co-op calendar. We have an exceptionally talented group of members that take some amazing photographs. It's time to search those photos and enter your best into our calendar contest. We have more information on our calendar contest in this edition of the magazine.

By the time you receive this magazine, we will have held our 83rd annual meeting of our membership. As we did in 2020, this year's meeting will be held online due to the precautions we are taking related to COVID-19. We will have a full report of the meeting in our June edition of the *WECN* magazine.

In honor of Memorial Day, I want to thank all of the men and women who have served in the United States Armed Forces. We are especially thankful for those who gave the ultimate sacrifice so that we can enjoy the freedoms their service affords us in this great country of ours. Please join me in taking a moment to show your appreciation to a veteran—not just this month, but every month.

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Some manufacturers set water heater thermostats at 140 degrees, but most households usually only require them to be set at 120 degrees.

Consider lowering your water heater's temperature to save energy and slow mineral buildup in the heater and pipes.

Source: [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov)

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## BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative was held both in-person and via teleconference on February 25, 2021 at 7:55 a.m. The following is a summary of the meeting activities. The agenda, minutes of the January 28, 2021 meeting, new and terminated memberships, monthly safety and compliance report, and estate capital credit retirements were approved.

### Action Items

- Monthly Financial Statements and Reports were approved. Finance Committee reviewed checks written and the board and CEO expenses.
- The Governance Committee did not meet this month.
- The board reviewed Board Policy 102-Development of Board Policies. The Governance Committee will be reviewing this policy at their March meeting.
- The board approved the capital credit estate retirement discount rate of 4.47%.
- Mr. Kurtzweil, VP of operations, gave a presentation to the board on the 2020 RESAP inspection and safety improvement plan report.

- The board discussed opening the Community Room to public use and agreed it will remain closed at this time due to COVID precautions and the safety of our members and employees.
- The board approved the Resolution to authorize CWEC to apply for a letter of credit with CFC for a REDLG loan.

Operations and Engineering – Mr. Kurtzweil reported crews are continuing to work on the hazard recognition inspections throughout our system. Distractive Driving/ Cooperative Vehicle Accident Training has been completed with all employees. Outages for the month of January were very low.

Accounting and Finance – Financial reports were reviewed. Ms. Shower, VP of accounting and finance, reported a check was sent to Federated Youth Foundation for forfeited capital credits.

Member Services – Ms. Mazemke, manager of member relations, reported that plans are moving forward with CWEC's Annual Meeting and director election.

President and CEO – Mike Wade, CEO, reported on his submitted report.

Meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.



# PLUG INTO SAFETY

## DURING NATIONAL ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

Every day, we rely on electricity to power our homes and offices. But it's important to always be safe around electric appliances, equipment, and power lines.

May in National Electrical Safety Month, and it's a great time to raise awareness on how to avoid potential electrical hazards. By taking simple precautions, everyone can avoid electrically related fires, fatalities, injuries, and property loss. Follow these safety tips.

### ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

Safe Electricity.org



#### Indoors

- Check electrical cords for fraying or cracking. Replace cords that may be damaged, and don't overload electric outlets.
- Remember extension cords are intended to be temporary. They are not intended as permanent household wiring.
- Don't run cords under carpets or rugs and don't tack or nail cords to walls or floors.
- Keep electric appliances and tools away from water. Never reach for or unplug an appliance that has fallen into water.

Instead, turn the power off at the breaker before you unplug the appliance or remove it from the water.

- Never put anything other than an electrical plug in an outlet. Use outlet covers or caps to protect children.
- Keep your home's electrical system in good repair. Contact a licensed electrical contractor if you have flickering lights, sparks, non-functioning outlets, or need wiring repairs or upgrades.

#### Outdoors

- Never touch downed power lines!
- Always call your local utility or 911 if you see lines down.
- Watch for overhead lines every time you use a ladder, work on roofs, trees, or carry long tools or loads. Keep kites, model airplanes, and metallic balloons away from power lines.
- Know what's below before you dig. At least three days before starting any digging or excavating project, call 811, the National One Call Center, to have underground utility lines, pipes, and cables marked for free.
- Avoid planting trees underneath power lines or near utility equipment.

Through electrical safety awareness, we can all play a part in preventing electrical hazards and injuries in the future. Together, let's plug into safety this May.

**MEMORIAL DAY**

*We Will Never Forget*

Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative will be closed Monday, May 31 for the Memorial Day holiday. Regular business will resume on Tuesday, June 1. From everyone here at CWEC, we wish you a safe and enjoyable holiday.

**KEEP POWER POLES FREE AND CLEAR**

We want to remind all our members that nothing should be placed on the Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative power poles. This includes, but is not limited to: posters, flyers, decorations, birdhouses, lights, etc.

The poles need to be clear of items because sometimes CWEC linemen need to climb the poles, and items on the poles can make that task more difficult and dangerous.

# YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONGRESS GOES VIRTUAL IN 2021

Each year Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative (CWEC) sponsors students from area high schools to attend the Youth Leadership Congress held at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. Due to COVID-19, the Congress will be held virtually this year on June 13-14.

This year's Congress is free, and consists of two half-days of events for youth leaders across Wisconsin to develop their leadership skills while learning about the purpose, operation, and scope of cooperative businesses. The Congress is open to high school students with family members who belong to a Wisconsin electric cooperative. Attendance will be limited to 200 students based on a first-come, first-registered basis. Sign up for the virtual Youth Leadership Congress at: <http://bit.ly/2021YLC>

Even though the Congress is virtual this year, CWEC is inviting up to eight (8) students who live within the CWEC service area to "attend" the virtual event at the CWEC headquarters. There will be a limit of two (2) students per area high school. Students would participate in the Congress in the CWEC Community Room while social distancing. Wearing a mask would be required. Students will have to make their own transportation arrangements to and from CWEC headquarters.

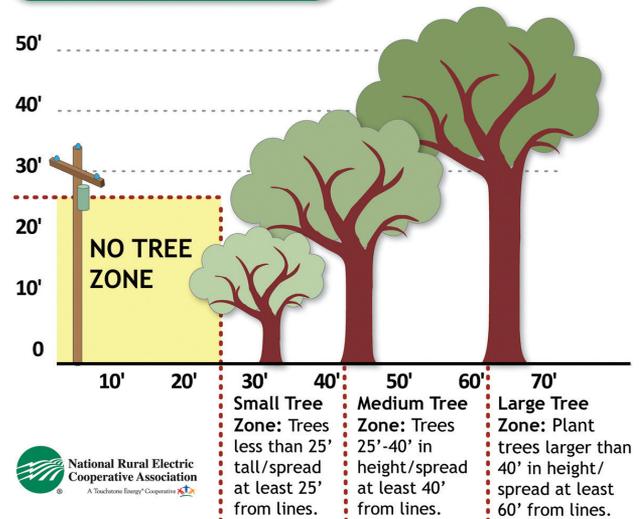
Students who are interested in attending the Congress at the CWEC headquarters should first register for the event at the link above, and then contact Bert Lehman at 715-677-2211 or send an email to [bert.lehman@cwecoop.com](mailto:bert.lehman@cwecoop.com).

Local students can also attend the Youth Leadership Congress from their own home. They just need to register for the event at the above link.

## GIVE TREES A CHANCE

Trees planted too close to power lines grow into a big problem. Follow this guide when choosing trees that will be planted near power lines and you can prevent power outages, safety hazards, and additional costs that are incurred when trees are planted too close to the power lines and eventually require trimming or removal. Don't forget to call Digger's Hotline at 811 at least three business days before planting any trees or shrubs so that any underground lines can be located.

### Tree Planting Guide



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# 5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Always call 8-1-1 first, because you never know what's below.

Here are five easy steps for safe digging:

Source: call811.com

### 1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before you start.



### 2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for a response to your request. Affected utilities will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.



### 3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded by comparing the markers to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



### 4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. They are your guide for the duration of your project.



### 5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project.





# 2021 MEMBER PHOTO CONTEST

*"Life in Rural Wisconsin"*

Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative is holding our annual photo contest for members' photos to be featured in our 2022 calendar. Winning photos may be used in future newsletters or cooperative publications.

- Photos must be taken within the Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative service area.
- Photos should capture life in rural Wisconsin (seasons, wildlife, landscape, people, etc.)
- Photos must have a horizontal (landscape) orientation.
- Photos can be in color or black and white.
- Contest will run until August 23, 2021; however, submitted photos can be taken during anytime of the year.



## Photo Contest Entry Options:

**Email:** Bert Lehman at bert.lehman@cwecoop.com

**Mail:** PO Box 100, Rosholt, WI 54473. (Photo(s) must be 8"x10" in size)

**Online:** www.cwecoop.com/member-photo-contest

**Drop Off:** Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Office – 10401 Lystul Road, Rosholt. (Photo(s) must be 8"x10" in size)

*For a complete set of rules as well as entry forms and photo release forms, visit our website at: [www.cwecoop.com](http://www.cwecoop.com)*



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10401 Lystul Rd., P.O. Box 100,  
Rosholt, WI 54473  
715-677-2211 • 800-377-2932

[www.cwecoop.com](http://www.cwecoop.com)

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**Mike Wade, President & CEO**  
**Bert Lehman, Editor**

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715-701-1358

Tom Smith  
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920-851-4545  
715-677-3850

Leonard Oppor  
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Michael Schultz  
715-370-1378

### District 3

Elaine Eckendorf  
Secretary-Treasurer  
715-701-2052

Sue Rombalski  
715-701-2053

## Our Mission

We are your trusted energy partner and provider of valued community support.



## BEWARE OF SCAM PHONE CALLS

Over the past several months several CWEC members have informed us about phone calls they have received which have turned out to be scams. One of these phone call scams involved a recorded message impersonating CWEC, and offered the person a refund check and a 30% off coupon if they pressed 1.

CWEC will never call, email, or text members asking for personal information. If you receive such a request, do not give out your personal information. The information below will help you recognize a scam and how to avoid a scam.

### Four signs a call is a scam

1. Scammers pretend to be from an organization you know. In some cases, they use technology to change the phone number that appears on your caller ID, so the name and number you see might not be real.
2. Scammers say there's a problem or offer a prize.
3. Scammers pressure you to act immediately because they want you to act before you have time to think.
4. Scammers tell you to pay in a specific way.

### What you can do to avoid a scam

- Block unwanted calls and text messages.
- Don't give your personal or financial information in response to a request that you didn't expect. If you receive an email or text message from a company you do business with, it's best not to click on any links. Instead, contact the company via their website that you know is trustworthy, or look up their number to verify the email or text message. Don't call a number in the email or the number from the caller ID.
- Know how scammers tell you to pay. Never pay someone who insists you pay with a gift card or by using a money transfer service. And never deposit a check and send money back to someone.
- Stop and talk to someone you trust. Talking about it could help you realize it's a scam.