

# Ask Your Cooperative: CWEC Answers You



Central Wisconsin  
Electric Cooperative  
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



This month's column is from Kevin Kurtzweil, vice president of operations.

## Meet Kevin Kurtzweil

Started at CWEC: September 2003

**Job Description:** Schedules line crews, orders certain materials, performs in field safety visits, supervises operations employees, performs engineering tasks, deals with vendors, and works closely with CWEC contractors.

**Favorite part of my job:** Working for our membership and the feeling of accomplishment when all scheduled work is safely completed at year end.

## Q

**I received notification from the co-op of a planned outage in my area—why would you plan an outage?**

## CA

Great question and one I'm guessing many of our other members have wondered about. Occasionally, the equipment we use to bring power to your home needs to be replaced, repaired, or updated. When this happens, as a way to keep our crews and you safe, we plan an interruption to electric service. We do our best to plan these outages during times when you will be least inconvenienced, so we often perform planned outages during school and business hours. We also try to avoid planning these outages during winter or summer months. We understand these are peak times of the year when you depend on running your heating and cooling units the most.

While they may sound slightly inconvenient, planned outages are actually beneficial to you, our members. Regular system upgrades are necessary for optimal performance, and they increase reliability. Repairing and upgrading our

equipment is also critical to maintaining public safety. If older lines need to be replaced, we plan for it, repair or replace it, and that keeps everyone safe.

Planned outages also allow us to keep you informed of when and how long you will be without power. We'll do our best to give you plenty of notice before an outage, so you can be prepared.

Here at Central Wisconsin Electric Co-op, we want to make sure we are doing everything we can to keep you safe and to keep our system running smoothly. So, the next time you hear about a planned outage, know that it is one of the best ways we can provide you with quality electric service.

## Do you have a question?

Please submit your question for Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative to [cwecoop.com](http://cwecoop.com) or call 1-800-377-2932 and ask for Brenda. Questions can relate to anything regarding your cooperative. When sending in a question, please include your name and hometown. Unless indicated, names submitted will be printed. Submitting a question gives us permission to print it.

MY CO-OP



**Safety First!**

Area fourth-grade students once again finished their school year with electric safety demonstrations put on by Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative employees. Pictured here, CWEC's Mack Yarbrough and Mark Forseth give Ms Block's Tigerton fourth-grade class an up-close view of a bucket truck. Read more about these electric safety demonstrations on



# RATE STUDY:

## Member Forums

We'd like to thank all of our members who attended one of the four Member Forums we conducted in June. While we were hoping for a little better turnout, the input we received from those who attended will assist us greatly as we move forward in the rate study process.

At the Member Forums we reviewed the **revenue requirement analysis** of the cooperative and the **cost of providing service** to each member classification. Past articles in this magazine focused in detail on those two components of the rate study.

To summarize:

The **revenue requirement analysis** consists of assuring the rates of the cooperative are adequate to meet the revenue requirements. The revenue requirement of the co-op equals operating expenses plus return requirements. Operating expenses include all of the costs associated with the operations of the co-op including power, transmission, and distribution costs. The return requirement of the equation is the level of margins necessary to achieve capital credit retirements, meet loan covenant requirements, and achieve an adequate equity level. The rate study shows our current rates are not adequate enough to meet projected revenue requirements.

The **cost of providing service analysis** is important as it identifies the cost of providing service to each class of consumers based on: member class, service provided, and load characteristics. This analysis identifies the revenue requirement for each rate class with the goal of achieving equity between and within each class.

Always interested in what our members are thinking, we ask those who attended the forums to complete a short survey on a variety of co-op topics. Here are the results of that survey:

- We asked, "How well do you understand the different components of your electric bill?" While most indicated they understand them, there were some that indicated they would like a little more information. We'll explain in detail the billing components in an upcoming issue of this magazine.

- One of the billing components is the Facility Charge. This charge recovers some of the fixed costs that come from serving a member regardless of how much energy is used. The cost-of-service study projected the residential Facility Charge at \$51.27. While we're certainly not going to raise it to that level, we asked: "What is the highest we should change the residential facility charge to?" The average answer was \$35.

- When asked, "How interested would you be in CWEC providing a pre-paid method (purchasing electricity before using it)," most responded that they're either undecided or not interested in us offering it.

- If a new member is a renter and has adequate credit, we collect a \$125 refundable deposit. If the member does not have adequate credit, we collect a \$250 refundable deposit. Two-thirds responded these are reasonable amounts.
  - If a member does not pay their electric bill by the due date, they may be assessed a late fee of \$2 plus 2 percent of the bill. Eighty percent indicated the late fees are reasonable.

**As we move forward in the rate study process, your board of directors and management will consider the input we received at the Member Forums...**

At the Member Forums we shared the objectives of our next step in the rate study process—**rate design**. The objectives of a typical rate design, including CWEC's, are that they're fair and equitable, they're financially adequate, they reflect cost causation, they avoid abrupt changes, they're accepted by our members, they promote efficient use, they're comparable with neighboring co-ops, they're easy to understand, and there's continuity between rates. As we move forward in the rate study process, your board of directors and management will consider all of these objectives and the input we received at the Member Forums and from the Member Advisory Group when designing rates. We would also welcome any input from our members on these or any other co-op topics. We'll continue to use this magazine to keep you updated as we complete the rate study and design process.

Once again, thanks to all of our members who attended a Member Forum.

# CWEC DEMONSTRATES ELECTRICAL SAFETY TO FOURTH-GRADERS

Every year employees from the Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative visit grade schools throughout our service area to put on electrical safety demonstrations for the students. Demonstrations were held in the Tigerton, Birnamwood, Wittenberg, Iola-Scandinavia, and Rosholt school districts.

Mack Yarbrough, lineman, and Mark Forseth, vice-president of member relations, were in Tigerton with Ms. Block's fourth-grade class on Tuesday, May 3. They were in Birnamwood with Mr. Ebert and Ms. Brewer's fourth-grade classes and Wittenberg with Ms. Rades and Mr. Shankland's

on Wednesday, May 4. Forseth, along with lineman John Bestul, were in Iola-Scandinavia on Tuesday, May 10, with Mrs. Bonikowske and Mrs. Wester's fourth-grade classes. Brenda Mazemke, member relations coordinator, with the help of linemen John Bestul and Gabe Pospychalla, were in Rosholt with Mr. Smith and Ms. Tierney-Ley's students on Monday, May 23. CWEC appreciates the teachers and students for taking time out their busy day to let us come to give our safe electricity presentation. They are a great group of students.

The interactive display demonstrates how important it is to treat electricity with respect. Students saw firsthand

what happens to a kite when it comes in contact with a power line during a hot line demonstration. They discussed the dangers when contact is made with power lines and electrical equipment, farm electrical hazards, and how to safely emerge from a vehicle following accidental contact causing power lines to fall on or near the vehicle.

"Our main area of focus is to inform and instruct students about potential hazards that are around us every day, and how to recognize and react to these situations," said Forseth. "This display is well designed to create a fun, but serious experience students will remember for a long time."



1. Mark Forseth and John Bestul explain and demonstrate what happens when you come in contact with a live wire at the Iola-Scandinavia demonstration. 2. At the Wittenberg demonstration, Mack Yarbrough explained to the students about his truck, what a lineman uses the truck for, and how to safely climb into the back of the truck. 3. Mr. Smith and Ms. Tierney-Ley along with their students at Rosholt. 4. Ms. Brewer demonstrates how much work it is to create electricity by pedaling a bicycle at the Birnamwood demonstration. When she pedals fast, enough power is generated and all of the light bulbs light up.



## DATES TO REMEMBER IN AUGUST

### Iola Thursday Night on Main

Thursday, August 4

Art Stevenson & Highwater. 6–8 p.m. Downtown Iola. Live music, food, raffle tickets, and more. Farmers Market at Vidar of Iola carving. Bring a lawn chair. Sponsored by the Iola-Scandinavia Chamber and the Waupaca Foundry.

### 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Scandinavia Corn Roast Weekend

August 5–7

Music, food, kids' petting zoo, softball tournament, chainsaw wood sculpting, truck pull, tractor pull, and more. Friday gates open at noon, Highfield Drive performing 8 p.m.–midnight, presented by Scandinavia Volunteer Fire Dept. Parade Saturday at 10:30 a.m.; Ask Your Mother performing 8 p.m.–midnight. Free corn Sunday only, starts at 11 a.m.; music all day. Ellison Memorial Park, Scandinavia. Sponsored by the Scandinavia Booster Club. For more information call 715-467-2366 or go to [www.comroast.net](http://www.comroast.net).

### 3rd Annual Artisan Beverage Celebration

Saturday, August 6

Mass at 4 p.m.; craft and traditional beer tents open 5–11 p.m.; music by Garrett Ross 5–7 p.m.; music by Rick N'Barry Acoustic Show 7–11 p.m. Food tent open 5:30–11 p.m. Featuring beverages from Kozy Yak Brewery & Winery. St. Adalbert Parish, Rosholt.

### St Adalbert Parish Picnic

Sunday, August 7

Outdoor Polka Mass 10 a.m., all-you-can-eat family-style dinner 11 a.m.–2 p.m., polka music, raffles, bingo, Country Store, kids' games, more. Rain or shine. Rosholt.

### Iola Lioness Brat Fry

Saturday, August 6

10:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

Iola Sentry Foods



### Iola Lion/Lioness Stuff the Bus

Saturday, August 6

9 a.m.–3 p.m. School supply drive. School supplies can be dropped off at Iola Sentry Foods up to August 8. Iola Sentry Foods.

### 25th Annual Iola Vintage Military Show with Vintage Tractors and Equipment "featuring planting and drilling machines"

August 13–14

Show vehicles include military vehicles, equipment, tractors, machines and professional vehicle exhibit, gun show, battle re-enactments, swap meet, speakers, camping, and parade of vehicles. For more information call 715-445-4005 or go to [www.iolavms.com](http://www.iolavms.com).

### 10th Annual "Drive your Tractor to Church"

Sunday, August 14

North New Hope and Faith Lutheran Churches invite all their friends and neighbors. New Hope Church, Junction Hwy T and MM or 845 Hwy T North. 8 a.m. early bird tractor parking and registration; 9:30 a.m. music, 10 a.m. outdoor church service, 11 a.m. auction, noon pig roast picnic lunch, 1 p.m. hay wagon rides and tractor displays.

With good weather everything will be outdoors; if not there is room inside, please bring lawn chairs.



### Iola Thursday Night on Main-Comedy, Corks & Cheese

Thursday, August 11

Roger Radley performing, winetasting with Lil Ole Winemakers, and cheese with Dupont Cheese. 6–8 p.m. Must be 21 or older to attend. At the Iola Millstone.

### Sacred Heart Parish Church Picnic

Sunday, August 21

10 a.m. Mass with polka music by Smokey Express, followed by a chicken and roast beef dinner from 11 a.m.–2 p.m., in an air-conditioned dining room. Noon–7 p.m. music by The Ampol Aires from Chicago and Rich Raclawski and The Keepers of Honky. Food and refreshments, ice cream parlor, cherry tree, basket raffle, country store, cake spin, children's games, mini raffle and many more games. Bingo starts at 1 p.m.; huge rummage sale and furniture sale auction starts at 11 a.m. Softball and horseshoe tournaments, double elimination. \$4,000 cash raffle drawing at 7 p.m., Polonia. For more information call 715-592-4221.

### "3rd Thursday" Summer Concert

Thursday, August 18

6–8 p.m. Featuring The Dovers. No admission, but donations always gratefully accepted. Bring a picnic lunch and lawn chair, free ice cream at intermission. Rain or shine. WOWSPACE, 114 Vinal St Wittenberg. For more information call 715-253-2737 or [www.wallsofwittenberg.com](http://www.wallsofwittenberg.com).

### Tigerton Lumberjack Days

August 27–28

Saturday – corn roast, music and bike give-away. Sunday – parade at 1 p.m., amateur lumberjack contest, chainsaw and crosscut events. Bingo both days, lots of food and pies. Tigerton Community Park. For more information call Diane at 715-535-3300 or Wally at 715-445-3165 or 715-459-6115.

### Hatch Lake Association Brat Fry

Saturday, September 3

10:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

Iola Sentry Foods

### Big Falls Bowhunters Free Corn Roast

Sunday, September 4

Parade at noon. Food stands, raffles, free corn games. Live music throughout the day. For more information call 715-754-2359.



### Portage County Fair

September 2–5

Parade on Main Street at noon on Saturday. Rosholt Fair Park. For more information go to [www.rosholtfair.com](http://www.rosholtfair.com).

### Office Closed Monday, September 5

in honor of Labor Day

To submit your community events email [brenda.mazemke@cwecoop.com](mailto:brenda.mazemke@cwecoop.com) or call Brenda at 715-677-2211.

## Mike Wade, President & CEO

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