



WINTER IS A PERFECT TIME FOR ELECTRIC LINE MAINTENANCE

Lila Shower, President & CEO

Whether we have snow or not, our linemen are out working to keep electricity flowing to our members. You may notice line crews in the field performing a visual inspection of our overhead lines. They are identifying hazards that have the potential to cause an outage in the future.

Winter is the perfect time for us to perform this type of work before the leaves are back on the trees and the busy summer construction schedule has begun. We have been doing these inspections for the last 8 years and it really helps us keep our lines maintained and helps reduce outages.

Our line crews are also changing out damaged utility poles. We have a contractor inspect our poles every year, and then we change out the poles based on their findings. We have 70 poles to change out this year. We also continue to do maintenance on our automated metering system. With the leaves gone for the winter, our system is reading meters very

well and we are working on “trouble” spots in our system that are not reading as well as they should be.

I encourage all of our members to be courteous to our line crews and contractors as they work on our system. If you have any questions about the work being done, do not hesitate to contact our office to get answers. Safety is our number one priority so let’s all do our part to keep our employees safe on the job.

Our Toys for Tots event concluded for 2025 and I cannot thank you enough for your tremendous support. We appreciate the help of our community businesses that participated and the support of our members who donated toys. This was one of our best years yet. Cooperatives support their communities and it is a pleasure for CWEC to support our members in the communities in which they live. See the article on page 17 in this months magazine.

At the December CWEC Board meeting, the Board of Directors approved our

capital and operating budget for 2026. Included in the budget are projects to replace portions of underground primary cable as well as overhead lines that have reached the end of their useful life. These upgrades will help improve reliability and keep outages to a minimum. Vegetation management clearing will be performed along our right-of-way’s in parts of Portage, Shawano, Waupaca and Marathon counties. As always, our focus will be to make improvements that enable us to better serve our membership and provide you with safe and reliable electric energy.

As you are reading this we are having our annual financial audit. We are audited every year by an independent Certified Public Accounting (CPA) firm to ensure we are recording all the co-op’s activities correctly and in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practices (GAAP). The audit firm reports to the Board of Directors at their April board meeting each year.

Thanks everyone, have a great month!

BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative was held at 7:47 a.m. on December 18, 2025. The following is a summary of the meeting activities. The agenda, minutes of the November 24, 2025, meeting, new and terminated memberships, and the monthly safety and compliance report were approved.

Action Items

- a. Monthly Financial Statements and Reports were reviewed by the Finance Committee.
- b. ATC first capital call was approved in the amount of \$171,375 to American Transmission Company.
- c. Bad debt write-offs in the amount of \$18,600.65 were approved. Capital credits were applied to the electric write-offs.
- d. Board Policy 202 – Director Fees and Expenses was reviewed and updated with Board approval. Board Policy 603 – Member Advisory Group was reviewed and updated with Board approval.

Operations and Engineering – Mr. Kurtzweil submitted a written report. American Transmission Company (ATC) connected their new Y-71 line and energized it on December 11, 2025. Jolma Utilities will hold off on the Wittenberg/Groenier Grant Project until spring 2026.

Accounting and Finance – Financial reports were presented by Ms. Claussen. The PCA for October was \$0.00. The Audit will take place the first week of February 2026.

Member Services – Mr. LaValley submitted a written report. Collection for The Toys for Tots program wrapped up for 2025.

President and CEO – Lila Shower, CEO, reported on her submitted report. The meeting was adjourned at 10:34 a.m.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Mid-winter is a great time to ensure you’re making the most of your home heating system. Replace or clean filters to keep your furnace or heat pump running efficiently. Listen for strange noises and check for uneven heating—these signs indicate that the system may need servicing. Ensure vents and radiators aren’t blocked by furniture or rugs as proper airflow helps your system work less and saves energy. A little maintenance along the way can prevent costly repairs and keep your home cozy through winter.



OPERATION ROUND UP CONTINUES TO HELP AREA COMMUNITIES

WHAT IS OPERATION ROUND UP?



Operation Round Up provides funds for worthwhile causes, including member hardship cases, educational purposes including scholarships, and charitable organizations. It is funded by volunteer donations from CWEC co-op members, allowing them the opportunity to give back to our local communities, a few cents each month. Electric bills are simply “rounded up” to the next whole dollar amount. The monthly “round up” could be as little as a single penny, but never more than ninety-nine cents. The average donation is \$6 annually, which is tax deductible. Operation Round Up is an opt-out program.

The funds are held separately from any Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative funds and are administered by a member Board of Trustees. Applications are made for grants and these are reviewed quarterly for disbursement of funds.

FOURTH QUARTER DONATION RECIPIENTS:

- \$1,000 – Individual Medical Hardship donation.
- \$650 – Stevens Point Firefighter Charitable Foundation to purchase 26 new winter coats needed for students in the Rosholt Elementary School.
- \$500 – Toys for Tots donation to purchase toys for the CWEC Toys for Tots campaign.
- \$500 – To each of nine area food pantries to help them purchase food to be given to those in need.
- \$300 – Sunset Stars 4-H Club to help support its upcoming educational projects for the 2025-26 program.
- \$250 – Iola Community Garden to replace deteriorating wooden raised beds with galvanized steel raised beds.
- \$250 – Boys & Girls Club of Portage County-Rosholt Extension to help with its Taste of Rosholt Fundraiser, which benefits the boys and girls attending the Rosholt Extension.
- \$200 – Chet Krause Legacy Park to help cover the costs of the final stages of the Legacy Park Development.
- \$100 – Walls of Wittenberg to help support the Art of the Quilter XII quilt show.

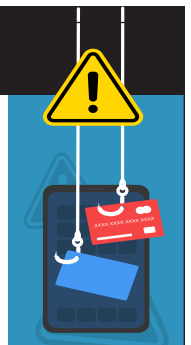
**TOTAL
OPERATION
ROUND UP FUNDS
DONATED:
\$738,964**



Left to right: Iola Food Pantry, Rosholt Food Pantry, and Tomorrow River Food Pantry.

TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS

Enrolling in autodraft payments with your utility provider can help prevent certain types of utility bill scams. If a scammer contacts you with fake disconnection threats, you can rest easy knowing your bill is paid automatically through a pre-arranged, secure channel. Autodraft payments also eliminate the risk of exposing checks and personal banking info through the mail. If your utility offers autodraft payments, consider enrolling to stay on track and avoid certain scams. *Source: AARP*

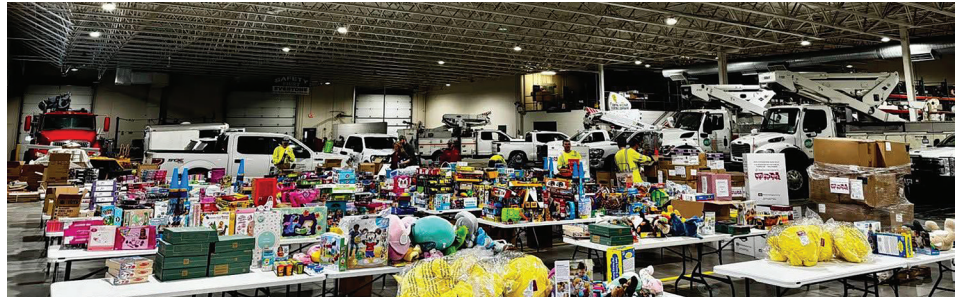


TOYS FOR TOTS CAMPAIGN REACHES MORE THAN 1,000 AREA CHILDREN

With the help of local businesses and residents, the 2025 Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative (CWEC) Toys for Tots campaign helped bring joy this Christmas to more than 1,000 area children.

For more than 20 years CWEC has partnered with the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve to organize a Toys for Tots campaign in the CWEC service area. Through the campaign, CWEC provides help to area families in need by supplying donated toys to the families, so they can give their children Christmas gifts.

Toy donations were collected at more than 30 area businesses in the



A portion of the Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative shop was filled with a bountiful of toys to be distributed to area children prior to Christmas.

CWEC service area. Monetary donations were also collected, which were used to purchase toys. With those donations, roughly 3,000 toys, 500 books, and 450 stocking stuffers were distributed to area children.

“Everyone really came together this year to help make many children in our communities Christmas special,” said Jonathan LaValley, acting Toys for Tots coordinator for 2025, and Energy Specialist for CWEC. “The success of the

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Top, l-r: Donated monetary funds for the CWEC Toys for Tots campaign are used to purchase toys, with some of that shopping taking place at Fleet Farm in Waupaca. Employees of Associated Bank with toys collected at their Wittenberg branch. RE/MAX Lyons Real Estate in Waupaca collected a plethora of toys for the 2025 Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Toys for Tots campaign. Bottom, l-r: Employees of the I-S Aquatic Center in Iola with the toys collected at its location. Employees at Nueske’s in Wittenberg with the toys collected at their location. Employees at Bank First in Iola with the many donated toys that their customers donated to the CWEC Toys for Tots campaign. Employees of Premier Community Bank in Iola with the toys collected at its branch.

campaign came down to the generosity of our community members, businesses and the hard work of those at CWEC.”

Children in need in western Waupaca County (including Iola-Scandinavia and Manawa school districts), northern Portage County (including Rosholt School District), southern Marathon County (including Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District), and western Shawano County (in-

cluding Tigerton and Bowler school districts) were part of the campaign.

The campaign’s success was also aided by the involvement of employees at the co-op.

“With the help of our campaign and the generosity and efforts of our communities, Christmas for families in our service area was a little brighter,” LaValley said. “That makes all of the effort worth it.”



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Our Mission

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

Christmas Coloring Contest Winners

The following children were randomly chosen for the top prizes for the Christmas Coloring contest hosted by Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative.



First Prize:
Sydney Galbraith



Second Prize:
Kinley Neimuth



Third Prize:
Cade Wojciechowski

Why is the Demand for Electricity Rising?

Demand for electricity in the U.S. is booming. Recent data shows that power consumption nationwide is set to increase by at least 38 gigawatts (enough electricity to power 3,600 homes for one year) between now and 2028. Meeting this new demand will require a combination of new power plants, grid upgrades and energy storage technology advancements. Here are the key factors that are driving increased demand.

- 1 Increased Electrification:** Electric vehicle adoption, electrification of home heating and industrial electrification are increasing overall U.S. energy consumption.
- 2 Data Centers:** Driven by explosions in AI, cryptocurrency and cloud computing, total U.S. data center load is projected to increase by 65% by 2050.
- 3 Economic Growth:** Residential power consumption is expected to increase by 14% to 22% through 2050 due to increases in population and steady economic growth.
- 4 Manufacturing Growth/Onshoring:** New, expanding and “onshored/reshored” manufacturing capacity driven by federal incentives is expected to increase industrial demand by 13,000 GWh per year.

