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Kurtzweil  
V.P. of  
Operations



Central Wisconsin  
Electric Cooperative  
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Lila Shower  
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and Finance

## MAY IS ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

If you are a regular reader of *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News*, you know that this space is reserved for the CEO column. With Mike Wade leaving Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative (CWECC) in March, we have been appointed by the CWECC Board of Directors to acting interim co-CEOs until a new CEO is hired.

We have more than 60 years of combined experience working for electric cooperatives. We pledge to use that experience to manage the co-op in the best interest of the co-op, its members, and its employees.

Now that the weather has warmed up and the snow is gone, we hope that you have been able to get outside to enjoy the warmer weather. We know that it seemed like winter would never leave and spring would never arrive, so you may feel rushed to get moving on the outdoor projects you have. When you are working on your projects, we urge you to take precautions and work on those projects in a safe manner.

These precautions are especially important if the projects deal with electricity. May is National Electrical Safety

Month. We all rely on electricity to power our homes and businesses, and we need to remember to be safe around electrical equipment and power lines. This is especially important if you have any yard projects that require digging. If one of your projects involves digging, you must call Diggers Hotline at 811 at least three working days prior to your digging project. State statute requires that Diggers Hotline be called, and the service is free. For more information about Diggers Hotline, see page 18.

By taking simple precautions, everyone can avoid electrical related fires, fatalities, injuries, and property loss. Contact us if you have questions about your electric service or if you see hazardous situations involving our lines and equipment.

We are all aware of the prices for everything increasing, including electricity. If you are having difficulties paying your electric bill, you may qualify for energy assistance programs that may be able to help you pay your electric bill. You can find more information about energy assistance programs by visiting

our website at: [www.cwecoop.com/energy-assistance-programs](http://www.cwecoop.com/energy-assistance-programs).

In honor of Memorial Day, we want to express how thankful we are for those in the United States Armed Forces who gave the ultimate sacrifice so that we can enjoy the freedoms their service affords us in this great country of ours.

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

The location of your thermostat can impact your HVAC system's ability to maintain an ideal indoor temperature. For maximum accuracy, thermostats should be placed in the center of the home, away from air vents, plumbing pipes and exterior doors. Avoid placing items like lamps and televisions near your thermostat, which can cause the HVAC to run longer than necessary. Avoid installing thermostats in rooms that tend to feel warmer or colder than the rest of the home. Do not place furniture in front of the thermostat, which can block air flow and result in inaccurate readings.



## BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

The February regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative was held on February 23, 2023 at 8:00 a.m. The following is a summary of the meeting activities. The agenda, minutes of the January 26, 2023 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 board approved the proposed changes to new Board Policy 110-Legal Representation and Use of Attorneys.
- The board reviewed Board Policy 602-Eliminations of Hazardous Situations and had no recommended changes.
- Kevin Kurtzweil presented a proposal for hiring a full-time facility maintenance technician. The board agreed to table this for now and review again in the future.
- The board approved the proposed rate increases as presented by Nick Nelson of Power System Engineering, with the changes as discussed.
- The board approved the Capital Credit Estate Retirement Discount Rate for 2023 of 4.56% as presented by Lila Shower.
- The board approved sending two operations employees for one week this

year to work on the "Light Up Navajo Nation" project, a program that works with the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority in Utah, Arizona and New Mexico to help bring electricity to families in need.

- The board took no action on the Iola-Scandinavia School District's corporate donation request for the athletic program as presented by Brenda Mazemke.

Operations – Kevin Kurtzweil gave an update on the operations line crews and the work they are doing. The board approved renting a Tannin System from Culligan for two years to help with the water discoloration issue we are having.

Accounting and Finance – Lila Shower updated the board on the recalled AMI meters that are being sent back to Mexico. At this time, we are unsure when they will be returned. IT has received bids for new equipment that is less than the original budgeted amount.

Member Services – Brenda Mazemke reported on the Wittenberg Economic Development meeting she attended on February 10th and updated the board on the development of the 56 housing units they are working on. Ground breaking is scheduled for the spring of 2024.

Administrative Services – Lori Patoka reviewed her submitted report and indicated she will not be attending the NRECA Interact Conference in July that was previously budgeted for. Work has begun on the Annual Meeting script.

Interim CEO's – Kevin Kurtzweil and Lila Shower reviewed their submitted report.

Meeting adjourned at 2:53 p.m.

# TAUTGES REPRESENTS WISCONSIN AT POWERXCHANGE IN NASHVILLE

It's a rare opportunity when someone has the chance to represent their entire state at a national event, but that's exactly the opportunity Tyler Tautges had when he represented the state of Wisconsin at PowerXChange in Nashville, Tennessee.

PowerXchange, held in early March, is the annual meeting for NRECA.

Tautges' journey to Nashville began in 2019 when Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative (CWECC) sponsored his attendance at Youth Leadership Conference (YLC), which is an annual event youth can attend to learn more about co-ops and to gain leadership skills. While at YLC Tautges ran for a position on the WECA Youth Board. He was elected to the Youth Board by his peers. As a member of Youth Board, Tautges helped plan the YLC event the following year, and it put him on a path to represent the state of Wisconsin at PowerXchange.

Also, in 2019, Tautges applied to be the state representative. The application process included Tautges submitting a short video in which he explained why he wanted to be the state representative.

Prior to leaving for Nashville, Tautges said he was excited for the opportunity, adding he had been attending Webex meetings with representatives from other states.

"We're separated into groups and we brainstorm ideas once in a while, so it'll be nice to see those people in person and talk to them," Tautges said.

Tautges said he knows it is a privilege to be able to represent Wisconsin.

"It feels pretty great to be chosen from all of the kids who were on the board and to be asked to come back this year again," he said.

## PowerXchange Experience

Tautges said he was involved in two events during PowerXchange. The first day he and the other representatives opened the event.

"We came running out at the cameras and threw ducks into the crowd wearing cowboy hats because it was Nashville," Tautges said. "The second day we introduced ourselves and where we were from and our sponsored co-ops."

Being in front of around 10,000 people was exciting for Tautges. When introducing himself and the state he was representing, he shared the Wisconsin "W" with his hands.



"I was very honored," he said. "It felt amazing. Being the only one from Wisconsin and representing the state in front of so many people."

In addition to participating in PowerXchange, the youth state representatives got to visit the Country Music Hall of Fame, participate in a scavenger hunt throughout the city of Nashville, and help put up a hot air balloon in front of the Music City Center, among other activities.

Tautges said the highlight of the trip was meeting new people and visiting with representatives from other states from as far away as Hawaii and New York.

"Just to be in one place because we are all part of the cooperative world," Tautges said. "That's pretty amazing."

Looking back, Tautges said he is glad that he attended YLC in 2019. In addition to ultimately being able to attend PowerXchange, Tautges said attending YLC helped him improve his speaking skills, meet new people, make new friends, and learn more about co-ops.

The knowledge of co-ops helped Tautges obtain a summer job at CWECC in June 2022, which led to a part-time job while he attends secondary school.



## 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 CWECC linemen need to climb the poles, and items on the poles can make that task more difficult and dangerous.





## BUSS DAIRY FARM RECEIVES ENERGY CONSERVATION REBATES

With the lighting deteriorating in one of the buildings that houses cows on his farm, William Buss knew he had to do something to improve the lighting. One of the options was to replace the fluorescent light fixtures with LED light fixtures.

The decision was easy once he found out that his farm would qualify for energy conservation rebates from Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative (CWECC) if he made the switch the LED lights.

"It made the project make sense," Buss said. "Without the energy conservation rebates, we probably would have just stuck money into new lightbulbs."

Buss has been farming since 1982, and is a third-generation farmer.

"It started with my grandpa, then my dad," Buss said. "I farmed with my dad for a few years. He retired and the family and I have been farming ever since."

Buss said his grandpa settled in the



area and started farming after arriving from Germany in the late 1880s.

The farm currently has around 500 milking cows. It also has around 400 heifers and calves. The total acreage of the farm is around 1,600 acres.

The process of obtaining the energy conservation rebates was easy, Buss said.

"The supplier did all the work," he said. "I mainly just gave him the information and he took care of it. It was no problem at all."

If you have an energy savings project in mind for your business, please call John LaValley at CWECC to determine what rebates may be available to you.

### CALLING ALL THIRD-GRADERS:

You're invited to participate in Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association's

### ELECTRICAL SAFETY POSTER CONTEST

Submit an original poster supporting electrical safety to your local electric cooperative by **May 31, 2023**, for a chance to win a **\$25 gift card**! The top three posters will be entered into the statewide poster contest for a chance to win one of three great prizes:

- 1st place – Chromebook**
- 2nd place – \$100 Gift Card**
- 3rd place – \$75 Gift Card**

Visit [www.weca.coop](http://www.weca.coop) for details and an entry form.

Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative (CWECC) will also offer a \$25 check to one local winner, a \$15 check to a local second place poster, and a \$10 check to a local third place poster. Registration forms and eligibility details can also be found on the CWECC website at [www.cwecoop.com](http://www.cwecoop.com) under the "News" tab.

### 2023 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 2024 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 25, 2023; however, submitted photos can be taken during anytime of the year.

#### Photo Contest Entry Options:

**Email:** Bert Lehman at [bert.lehman@cwecoop.com](mailto: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](http://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).

# YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE SET FOR JULY 11-13

This three-day, all-expense paid program is jammed with fun, hands-on activities and seminars designed to help you identify and develop your leadership skills. It is planned by high school students just like you and features nationally recognized speakers.

This year's event, scheduled for July 11-13, will once again be held at UW-Stout in Menomonie.

If you are interested in being a sponsored representative of CWEC, please contact your high school guidance counselor or Bert Lehman at 715-677-2220 or by email at [bert.lehman@cwecoop.com](mailto:bert.lehman@cwecoop.com).



## CALL 811 BEFORE YOU DIG

Now that the weather has finally warmed up, it's time to get moving on the yardwork that needs to be done. Some of this yardwork may include the need for digging on your property. If that is the case, property owners need to take proper safety steps.

The first step to ensure safe digging is to call Diggers Hotline at 811. Diggers Hotline is a free service that must be used if you plan on doing any kind of digging in order to avoid damaging underground lines. A property owner must call Diggers Hotline at least three working days before they start digging.

Wisconsin Statute 182.0175 requires that property owners notify Diggers Hotline before they excavate, grade, trench, dig, drill, augur, tunnel, scrape, plow cable or pipe.

When a property owner calls Diggers Hotline, they will need to provide the following information: your name, mailing address, phone number, email address, as well as the name of the person who will be doing the digging and their phone number. Diggers Hotline will also need to know the city, township, or village your work will take

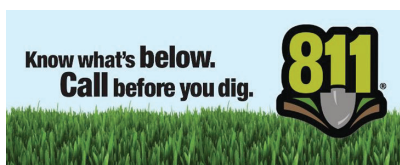
place in, the address of the dig site, and the name of the side street your dig site is on and the nearest intersecting road.

Dig site information will also need to be provided. This includes the start date of the project, the type of project you are doing that requires digging, as well as marking instructions on how you will mark the area in which underground lines need to be located in.

After the call to Diggers Hotline is completed, they will coordinate between excavators and the owners of the buried lines on the property. The owners of the lines will mark

the locations near your job site with paint and/or flags. Property owners need to be aware that private lines are considered the responsibility of the landowner and will not be marked by Diggers Hotline. A locating company can be hired to mark private lines.

Since locating underground lines is not an exact science, the actual location of the lines could vary from the position of the marks. Because of that, state law mandates an 18-inch buffer zone on each side of the marks indicating an underground line.



## MEMORIAL DAY

### We Will Never Forget

Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative will be closed Monday, May 29 for the Memorial Day holiday. Regular business will resume on Tuesday, May 30. From everyone here at CWEC, we wish you a safe and enjoyable holiday.



**Central Wisconsin  
Electric Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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**Lila Shower, Interim co-CEO**  
**Bert Lehman, Editor**

## Board of Directors

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Michael Schultz  
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### District 3

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Allen Zander  
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## Our Mission

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