



Electric Line Newsletter

Farming Safety

With spring planting under way, it is important for our members in the farming industry to keep their focus on safety. Power is an important part of farming, and without electricity, it would be much more difficult to maintain daily operations. Irrigation, air conditioning, refrigeration, and hosts of other electricity powered services make farming much easier than ever before. While these advancements have made life much easier, it also makes it much more dangerous for your crops, livestock, and employees.

As a general rule, farmers and their equipment should remain ten feet away from overhead power lines at all times. When handling large equipment, make sure to move between lines with caution. Furthermore, as lines age, they begin to sag. This could lead to lines coming into accidental contact with equipment; which may energize them, causing an almost certain fatal shock.

If you're transporting equipment with a vehicle and come into contact with a line, it is imperative that you stay inside and call for help. The ground becomes energized and could provide a fatal shock if contact is made. If a fire breaks out and you must exit, jump from the vehicle with both feet together and shuffle to safety. Remember, stay away from the vehicle and equipment until your cooperative disconnects the powerline. Stay at least forty feet from the downed line.

With these tips in mind, understand that overhead powerlines are only half of the danger. Below your farm, there is a chance that electrical ground wiring lay throughout your fields. When planning your crops and fields, it is important to know where these lines are located before you start digging. To do this, call Diggers Hotline at 811.

As you begin to ready your fields and plant your crops, keep safety in mind. The dangers are not only above you on powerlines, but below you in ground wiring as well. While you may be eager to get a head start this growing season, stay alert, stay safe and stay alive.

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Payment Options

For our member's convenience, we have a variety of different methods to pay your electric bill. Our members have the option of paying via any of the following:

- Paying online using SmartHub
- Recurring credit card payment
- Automatic payment via checking card
- Pay by phone using checking, credit card, or savings account
- Budget billing (for those who qualify)
- Night deposit sites (one at the west side of the co-op, one next to the gas pump at the Cenex Convenience Store in Iola)
- Non-Sufficient Funds Policy: All NSF checks received will be accessed a \$25 charge and have a week to pay via cash or money order

Conservation Tips

As the snow continues to thaw and temperatures rise, we're beginning to inch our way closer to summer. While this time of year can be exciting, it can also be costly for your electric bill. However, your local cooperative has compiled some tips and tricks to make sure that you're staying cool while saving money this summer.

First and foremost, by leaving the drapes and blinds closed during the day, you are effectively keeping heat from entering your home. Simply put, the less heat that comes in, the less you'll have to activate your cooling unit.

Sometimes people choose to close doors and vents in their homes when they leave for the day. Instead of closing them, leave them open. If you leave your vents and doors open, it will allow better central air flow and will reduce strain on your system, lowering costs of operation.

Another simple change you can make is switching your air conditioning fan from "on" to "auto". When your air conditioning unit is "on", it continuously runs until it is shut off. By doing this, your air conditioning unit will self-regulate when to cool your home. When temperatures get a bit too high, it will turn on and run till temperatures are back down.

One sneaky thing might be contributing to higher costs involves your appliances and their proximity to your thermostat. If you have appliances that emit heat, whether it be a television or a lamp near your thermostat, your air conditioning unit will run longer since it is registering higher temperatures. If you keep your appliances away from your thermostat, it is likely that your bill will be lower.

Lastly, by setting your thermostat to 78 degrees (or higher) when you leave home for the day, you'll cut down on costs dramatically. By keeping your house warmer while you're away, you are reducing the cooling that is done in your home, leaving your wallet a bit heavier.

Summer is one of the best times of the year. Don't let high electric bills ruin it for you. By following these few simple tricks, you can save some extra cash and enjoy a few more trips to the beach.



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Distracted Driving

The single most ground breaking advancement in human history has arguably been the cell phone. Everywhere we go, we keep our phones with us. Our phones literally connect us to the rest of the world, and at the push of a button, we can keep up to date with news, hobbies, sports, and anything else we are interested in.

Unfortunately, one of man's great inventions has also become one of man's biggest eradicators. Distracted driving rates are at an all-time high. When driving distracted, there are risks of crashing into power lines. Power lines are typically located on the sides of our roads, and when coupled with distracted driving, can lead to almost certain fatality.

After a crash involving a power line, the last thing you should do, is exit the vehicle. Chances are the power lines will be sagging and will come into contact with your vehicle or the area nearby. The ground outside your vehicle may become energized, and by stepping onto it, you could experience a fatal shock. The best course of action is to stay in your car and call for help. If you need to exit your car for any circumstance at all, jump clear of the vehicle without touching it and the ground at the same time. When you land, shuffle away with feet together to ensure that there's no difference of voltage between your feet. If you witness an accident with a powerline, do not approach it, and instead call the authorities right away.

It is truly a shame that one of man's greatest inventions is one of the biggest causes of death. Driving alone is dangerous enough as is. Every year, vehicle accidents claim the majority of deaths in our country. When you mix power lines with distracted driving actions such as texting, the chances for a life threatening injury sky rocket. If a power line is involved with an auto wreck, stay in your car and call 911 immediately. Remember, no text is worth more than a life.

Annual Meeting Update

Wisconsin is always subject to crazy weather, and that was no different during our annual meeting last month.

As many of you are aware, Wisconsin was coated with around two feet of snow on April 14th, and driving conditions were less than ideal. Unfortunately, we had to cancel our annual meeting.

However, a new meeting has been scheduled for the evening of Tuesday, May 22nd. This meeting will be strictly about business, and there will be no additional services.

We look forward to seeing you on the 22nd. Keep up to date with our Facebook and website for more details.

What Makes up your Electric Bill?

