

THE CONNECTION

Making “Cents” Out of Tax Reform Policies

Tax policy can be complicated. If you’ve ever done your own federal and state income taxes or if you own a business, you understand firsthand how every detail matters in compliance, especially when it comes to profits.

Because Consumers Energy is a not-for-profit business entity there is sometimes confusion about whether we pay taxes. The answer is: yes, we pay taxes. We pay property taxes, employee taxes, replacement taxes, and taxes on materials and supplies to name a few. However, we don’t pay taxes on business profits, because we are not a profit-based organization.

Because electric cooperatives are not-for-profit organizations – operating at cost to deliver affordable and reliable power across all of Iowa’s 99 counties – we don’t have operating profits. Since our rates are based on the cost of acquiring and delivering electricity, we don’t make money on the services we provide. If we receive a cost reduction from our suppliers, those savings are passed along to our members. If we have excess funds – commonly called margins – from providing our members with safe, reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible electricity, we return those funds to you in the form of patronage capital credits. Since our inception, operating at cost has been a cornerstone of the cooperative business model.



Taxes on profits are in the news. You may have heard or read that the tax reform bill is now law, meaning that

continued on page 8-B ►

WIN

ONE OF TWO MONTHLY \$5 BILL CREDITS

THIS MONTH’S CONTEST:

Send the answer to the question posed in the St. Patrick’s Day Word Scramble in this issue of The Connection!



Winners for the month of January:
Gary & Judith Engeltjes, Alleman
Daniel Dadisman, Nevada

Here’s how to enter:

1. Answer the question or challenge posed each month.
2. Send answers to Consumers Energy with:
 - Name
 - Service address
 - Account number
 - Phone number
 - Email address

Email to: kglenney@consumersenergy.coop
Subject line: Contest

Mail to: Consumers Energy
2074 242nd Street
Marshalltown, IA 50158
3. Winners’ names will be drawn at random and published in upcoming issues of *The Connection*.

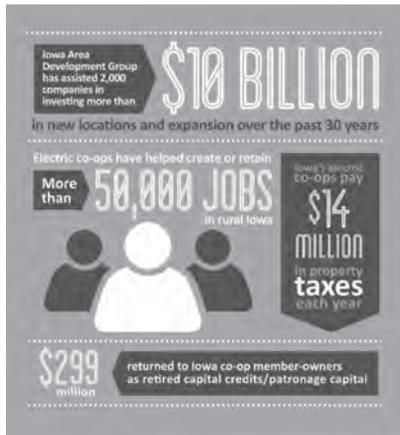
March 2018

– *Your Source for Power and Information*

Dates To Remember:

- March 1 Read Meters
- March 3 Bills Due
- March 5 Automatic Payments Deducted
- March 9 Mail Bills
- March 11 Daylight Saving Time Begins
- March 17 St. Patrick’s Day
- March 26 Automatic Payments Deducted
- April 2 Read Meters
- April 3 Bills Due
- April 3 Automatic Payments Deducted

Making “Cents” Out of Tax Reform Policies *(continued)*



as of January 1 the corporate tax rate dropped to 21 percent. This is good news for many businesses. Lawmakers suggested the extra profits – once paid to the federal government in the form of taxes – could now be used for improving products, lowering prices, and generally boosting the economy. However, some critics of the new law believe the extra money will line the pockets of shareholders.

Commissions across the country are looking at what this means for various types of profit-making corporations, some of which are utilities. Like other regulatory bodies across the country, the Iowa Utilities Board has opened an investigation into how the new federal tax reform bill might impact Iowa’s customers, and if the result would change Iowans’ energy rates.

Because electric cooperatives aren’t profit-making corporations, the new tax bill does not change our tax status. We won’t pay any more or any less in taxes based on the electricity we are distributing to our members.

Taxes come in many forms and are an important part of a thriving economy. Each year, Iowa’s electric cooperatives pay \$14 million in property taxes. Since the late 1980s, the Iowa Area Development Group has assisted 2,000 companies in investing more than \$10 billion in new business locations and expansions. Those efforts have led to Iowa’s electric cooperatives creating or retaining more than 50,000 tax-paying jobs in rural Iowa.

– Jim Kidd, General Manager

Changes to Payments Made Over the Phone

Safety is our number one priority – with the linemen, the office staff, and with our members. We want to make sure your information is as safe as possible.

The Secure Payments system that Consumers Energy will implement in the next few months is an automated pay-by-telephone system to process debit/credit card and check payments. This system is being used in order to increase security for our members.

With Secure Payments, you will be able to check your account balance, make payments, and store card or electronic check information for future payments. This system is automated with all personal information entered by you. This service is FREE and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week!



More details to come in future editions of *The Connection*.



For Consumers Energy's 80th Anniversary, the cooperative is considering publishing a cookbook, but we need your help!

Email recipes to:

kglenney@consumersenergy.coop

Subject line RECIPLE.

Mail recipes to:

Consumers Energy
Attn: RECIPLE
2074 242nd Street
Marshalltown, IA



Directors to Appoint Nominating Committee and Election & Credentials Committee

The Consumers Energy Board of Directors will be appointing members to the Nominating Committee and the Election & Credentials Committee. The Articles of Incorporation of Consumers Energy state that the Board of Directors must appoint a Nominating Committee to select names as director candidates to be placed on the ballot and voted on at the Annual Business Meeting on Saturday, August 25, 2018, at the cooperative's office located at 2074 242nd Street, Marshalltown. The Nominating Committee's initial meeting will be held in May.

The Nominating Committee also serves as the Election & Credentials Committee that oversees the voting and director election process before and during the Annual Business Meeting. The Election & Credentials Committee shall have available to it the advice of legal counsel provided by the cooperative. The committee's decision on any voting process issue is final, as reflected by a majority vote of the committee members present and voting.

Consumers Energy's directors whose terms expire in 2018 are:

District No. 1 for Marshall and Tama Counties:

Jeff Edler

District No. 2 for Story County:

Bob Meimann

District No. 3 for Jasper and Polk Counties:

John Ripley

Members wishing to submit nominees for director candidates are encouraged to send their suggestions to arrive at the cooperative office by May 1, 2018, to:

Consumers Energy

Attn: Nominating Committee

2074 242nd Street

Marshalltown, IA 50158

OR

info@consumersenergy.coop

Subject line: *Nominee*



Consumers Energy Board of Directors

Being a member of a cooperative means that every member has a voice and the right to vote. Attend the Annual Business Meeting on Saturday, August 25, 2018, to vote in person or vote by mail using the ballot you will receive in August with your Notice of the Annual Business Meeting of Members.

Familiar Face in a New Role



Elliot Mayland began new job responsibilities as Operations Area Supervisor for the Nevada crew on January 9. Mayland originally began his employment with Consumers Energy as an Assistant Foreman for the Nevada crew in 2010. Elliot resides in rural Maxwell with his wife and daughter.

Congratulations, Elliot!

Powering



THE FUTURE

LAST CHANCE!

Scholarship application deadline:

MARCH 9

Academic - \$1,000 for full-time students who are dependents of Consumers Energy members.

Lineworker/Powerline - \$1,000 for a full-time student pursuing a career in the power industry. This scholarship is limited to Iowa residents.

For applications or more information, contact Tami Kerwood at Consumers Energy at tkerwood@consumersenergy.coop or 800-696-6552, or visit www.consumersenergy.coop.

Operation Round-Up® Program Allows Co-op Members to Assist Those in Need



Operation Round-Up is a program designed for members who wish to donate small change each month to cooperative members who need economic assistance with their electric bills. Members who sign up for this program can have their monthly electric bills rounded up. The co-op then annually distributes the Operation Round-Up funds to local community action agencies within Consumers Energy's service territory to assist low-income families with winter heating bills and winterization of homes.

How Does the Operation Round-Up Program Work?

There are two options for participating in Operation Round-Up. The commitment chosen would take effect with the month's bill following receipt of the Operation Round-Up Authorization Form.

- Each month Consumers Energy "rounds up" the electric bills of participating members to the next highest dollar. For example, a member's monthly bill of \$160.27 would automatically be rounded up to \$161 with the additional 73 cents going to the Operation Round-Up Program.
- Another option available for this program allows members to specify an exact dollar amount to be contributed each month.

Submit Your Authorization Form to Participate in Operation Round-Up!

Interested in donating funds to Operation Round-Up to help others in need of assistance with electric bills? To enroll in Operation Round-Up, complete

Authorization Form

Choose only one option:

- Yes, I would like to participate in the Operation Round-Up Program. I wish to have my monthly electric bill rounded up to the next highest dollar.
- Yes, I would like to participate in the Operation Round-Up Program. I wish to contribute \$ _____ per month to the Operation Round-Up Program, and the amount will be added to my monthly electric bill.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Account Number _____

Please return to: Consumers Energy
2074 242nd Street
Marshalltown, IA 50158

the Operation Round-Up Authorization Form in this newsletter and return it to the cooperative office, or fill one out and submit online at www.consumersenergy.coop under the *Programs/Services* dropdown tab.

For more information, please contact the co-op's Member Services Department at 800-696-6552 or info@consumersenergy.coop.

Don't let vampires suck the life out of your energy efficiency efforts!

Unplugging unused electronics – otherwise known as “energy vampires” – can save you as much as 10 percent on your electric bill.



CONSUMERS ENERGY
Your Source for Power and Information

BUDGET BILLING RECALCULATION

Members who participate in the Budget Billing Program will have budget billing amounts recalculated. A message appeared on the February electric bill similar to the one pictured here. The new amount takes effect on the March billing statement.

The Budget Billing Program allows members to equalize monthly payments. The cooperative recalculates this average two times a year in order to keep the members' averages in line with actual use. The monthly budget billing amount is based on members' average electric use, and the recalculation is based on a rolling 12-month average and the current account balance.

For more information on this and how to combine Budget Billing with automatic payments, contact the Member Services Department at 800-696-6552, or visit the cooperative's Website at www.consumersenergy.coop and click *Payment Options/Arrangements* under the *My Account* dropdown.

0000011111 Invoice: 



2074 242nd Street
Marshalltown, IA 50158-9137
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

Providing Our Members With Safe And Reliable Electric Service

View or Pay Your Bill Online
www.consumersenergy.coop

Payment Drop-Off Locations

Nevada Outpost
919 SW 3rd Street
Nevada, IA 50201

Hy-Vee
802 S. Center Street
Marshalltown, IA
50158

Main Office

2074 242nd Street
Marshalltown, IA 50158
7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday
800-696-6552 or 641-752-1593

Billing Date: 02/08/2018

***New monthly budget payment amount**

C-15 5312 P-20

Page 1 of 2



Message Center

Youth Tour - An Opportunity of a Lifetime! Apply for a FREE trip to Washington D.C. High school sophomores, juniors, and seniors are eligible. Application deadline is 2/23/2018!

Your monthly budget payment has been recalculated. Beginning next month your monthly budget payment will be \$238.00.

Average Temperatures

This Month: 24
Last Month: 23
Last Year: 20

ACCOUNT SUMMARY

Previous Balance	-207.87
Payment Received - Thank You	-224.00
Balance Forward	-431.87
Total Electric Charges	349.92
Account Balance	-81.95

Master Account Number 11111

Total Budget Amount Due

224.00

Consumers Energy Participates in Conference to Promote Energy Efficiency

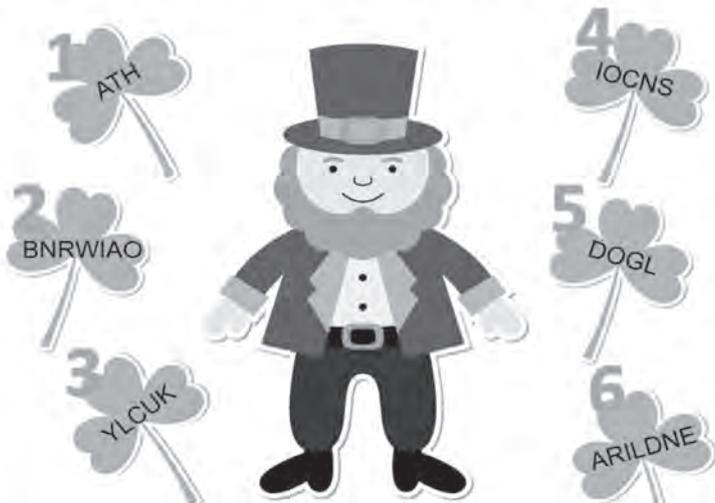
Consumers Energy joined other Iowa Touchstone Energy Cooperatives to sponsor the annual Momentum Is Building conference held in West Des Moines on February 8-9.



Since the conference began in 1993, its mission has been to provide a forum for energy efficiency and electric technology education. Momentum Is Building continues to offer up-to-date building science information, practical hands-on details, and new technology displays for building trades. Several sessions offered continuing education units (CEUs) including up to six electrical and six HVAC CEUs. Consumers Energy sponsored four local contractors to attend the event along with co-op Energy Advisor C.D. Kendall. For more information on how to attend the event next year, contact the Member Services Department at 800-696-6552 or info@consumersenergy.coop.

Saint Patrick's Day Scramble

Ginger McNugget mixed up his favorite words. Can you help the leprechaun unscramble the words, then put the numbered letters in order to answer the riddle?



1. _ _ _ 7
2. 12 3 5 _ _ _ _
3. _ _ _ _ 13
4. 6 _ _ 8 2 _
5. _ 9 _ 4
6. 1 _ _ _ 11 10 _

Where can you always find gold?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 !

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KNOW WHAT TO DO



if in an Auto Accident with Power Lines



If the car you are in hits a utility pole, your vehicle and the surrounding area can become energized.

Even if you do not touch lines or equipment, you can still be killed or seriously injured.



1. Do **NOT** leave the car, and warn others to stay away.

2. Call **911** to have the utility notified.



3. **Wait** until a utility professional has told you it is safe.



The **only** reason to exit the vehicle is if it's on fire.

If the car is on fire, jump clear of the vehicle: with feet together, and without touching the car and the ground at the same time.



Continue to **hop away** with your **feet together** as far as you can.



Learn more at

Safe Electricity.org

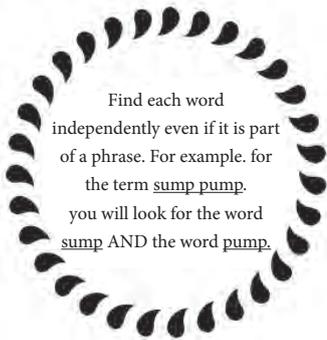
STAY OUT of deep water!

E I R W A R N I N G Y C H H E
 E A M U I G I N N V O A I I O
 E S R E R N A H A R Z G H C E
 E A H V E I R E D A H U E F S
 I P R A T T H S R E R L L G S
 A P R C A L T D R R E L L T L
 D L R U W E A H I C S O E Y S
 O I I A O M C C T G W L T U R
 O A A T L T A R N L T E M K E
 L N M E A N I I A U F P C F V
 F C N W E C D N O A S O P L I
 E E A S I O D N S C H A M A R
 A S I T O O W O N S S P U S L
 A A Y L D O G R O U N D P H O
 A L F I A T T B A S E M E N T



Search for these words related to floods and flooding hazards:

- BASEMENT
- CORDS
- APPLIANCES
- ELECTRICITY
- EVACUATE
- FLASH FLOOD
- FLOODING
- GFCI
- HEAVY RAIN
- HIGHER GROUND
- HURRICANES
- LOWLAND
- MELTING SNOW
- OUTLETS
- RIVERS
- SAFETY
- SHOCK HAZARD
- SUMP PUMP
- WATCH
- WATER
- WARNING



Find each word independently even if it is part of a phrase. For example, for the term sump pump, you will look for the word sump AND the word pump.



Answers

L N E W E S V L L V I E T V
 O H A D N N O R O O O D I A V V
 T S U F S S N O M O O L I S V
 H V M V H C S N D O I S V E E
 I T I B O S A V O N D C E M N C E
 A F C E E U A I I N A E M N N T
 E K M E T N V V T I V A V O O
 R U R T M G C C M O A I I O O
 S Y I C S O S I H A E R U W T R D
 T L T L E R R D T L T V C H P A
 S G T E R I S H T L T A R A I P I
 S E B E D A H U E I R E V H A H E
 R C H G Z R A H A N R E S R E S
 I O I A I N N I N I G I U M U E A
 E H H C H Y G I N N I N V M V E I





Office Hours
7:30 am — 4:30 pm
Monday through Friday

Contact Us

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Fax: 641-752-5738 • E-mail: info@consumersenergy.coop

www.consumersenergy.coop

Directors:

Bill Hobson, President
Mark Wampler, Vice President
Pat VonAhnen, Secretary-Treasurer
Allan Armbrrecht, Asst. Secretary-Treasurer
Terry Benskin
Jeff Edler
Arden Greiner
Bob Meimann
John Ripley

If you have an idea for a topic for The Connection, please contact Kippen Glenney at 800-696-6552 or kglenney@consumersenergy.coop.

March 11

Daylight Saving Time Begins



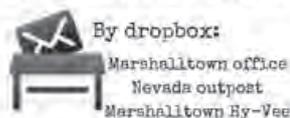
ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS WHO QUALIFIED FOR LIHEAP: WINTER MORATORIUM'S END IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER.

What does this mean to members?

Any members who qualified for LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) and were protected from disconnection November 1st to April 1st need to have accounts caught up before April 1st to avoid disconnection.

Consumers Energy wants to help our members avoid additional fees & disconnection.
Don't wait until the last minute to check the status of your account.

You can pay your bills the following ways:



**Please call the Member Services Department at 800-696-6552
to see what options are available.**