

Don't mess around with power lines—even if they're down



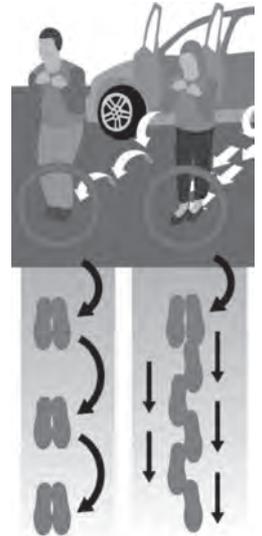
Jim Kidd

Downed power lines can look relatively harmless, but don't be fooled. They likely carry an electric current strong enough to cause serious injury or possibly death. These tips can help you stay safe around downed lines:

- If you see a downed power line, move away from the line and anything touching it.
- The proper way to move away from the line is to shuffle with small steps, keeping your feet together and on the ground at all times or keeping your feet completely together and bunny-hopping away from the power line. This will minimize the potential for a strong electric shock. Electricity wants to move from a high voltage zone to a low voltage one—and it could do that through your body.
- If you see someone who is in direct or indirect contact with the downed line, do not touch the person. You could become the next victim. Call 911 instead.

• Do not attempt to move a downed power line or anything in contact with the line by using another object such as a broom or stick. Even normally non-conductive materials like wood or cloth, if slightly wet, can conduct electricity and electrocute you.

- Be careful not to put your feet near water where a downed power line is located.
- Do not drive over downed lines.
- If you are in a vehicle that is in contact with a downed line, stay in the vehicle. Honk your horn for help and tell others to stay away from your vehicle.
- If you must leave your vehicle because it's on fire, jump out of the vehicle with both feet together and avoid making contact with the energized vehicle and the ground at the same time. This way you avoid being the path of electricity from the vehicle to the earth.



--Jim Kidd, General Manager

WIN

ONE OF TWO MONTHLY \$5 BILL CREDITS

THIS MONTH'S CONTEST:

With spring cleaning right around the corner, many of you will be working near poles, wires, and transformers outside as well as cords and outlets inside. It is important to work safely when you are near all electrical components.

What questions do you have about working around electrical components inside and outside your home?

Winners for the month of December:

Carla & David Young, Rhodes
Keslie Muhlenbruch, 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*.

February 2019

Dates To Remember:

February

- 1 Read Meters
- 2 Groundhog Day
- 3 Bills Due
- 4 Automatic Payments Deducted
- 8 Email/Mail Bills
- 14 Valentine's Day
- 18 Presidents' Day
- 25 Automatic Payments Deducted

March

- 1 Read Meters
- 3 Bills Due
- 4 Automatic Payments Deducted

BUDGET BILLING RECALCULATION

Members who participate in Budget Billing:

Budget Billing amounts have been 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: 1		Payment Drop-Off Locations	
 2074 242nd Street Marshalltown, IA 50158-0110 A Consumers Group Cooperative		Nevada Outpost 919 SW 3rd Street Nevada, IA 50201	Hy-Vee 802 S. Center Street Marshalltown, IA 50158
Providing Our Members With Safe And Reliable Electric Service		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	
View or Pay Your Bill Online www.consumersenergy.coop		Billing Date: 02/08/2018	
5312 1 AV 0.370 ANY PERSON 888 S STREET MARSHALLTOWN IA 50158-8832	4 5312 C-15 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		ACCOUNT SUMMARY	
This Month: 24	Previous Balance		-207.87
Last Month: 23	Payment Received - Thank You		-224.00
Last Year: 20	Balance Forward		-431.87
	Total Electric Charges		349.92
	Account Balance		-81.95
Master Account Number 11111		Total Budget Amount Due	
		224.00	



Groundhog Day

WORD SCRAMBLE AND CROSS: Unscramble each of the words on the left and write them in the grid. When the puzzle is complete, the shaded letters going down will spell out what goes on in the Groundhog's den all winter long.

Answers on page 8-H.

LHOE	.....	→	■			
DIPERCT	.....	→				■
RYAEBURF	.....	→			■	
EDN	.....	→			■	
RWORBU	.....	→			■	
PGRNSI	.....	→			■	
WHDOSA	.....	→			■	
THWERAE	.....	→			■	
HINUENSS	.....	→			■	
UYLODC	.....	→			■	
IRNWTE	.....	→			■	



Annual Pole Inspection and Treatment Program for Continued Reliable Service and Safety in 2019

Consumers Energy has partnered with Ameripole Inspection Company/Mi-Tech to inspect and treat approximately 1,700 poles this year for the cooperative. The annual pole maintenance program will be in Marshall County in the Ferguson, Marshalltown, and Albion areas.



Ameripole
INSPECTION COMPANY

Ameripole/Mi-Tech crews will be performing maintenance on meter poles, transformer poles, and line poles. The treatment helps extend the life of the poles in the cooperative's system. The inspection process also determines the poles that cannot be saved with treatment. These poles are marked and will be replaced by Consumers Energy crews.

MI-TECH

The Ameripole Inspection Company/Mi-Tech will use their service trucks with the company logos to perform the pole inspections.

Do you know the hidden electrical dangers in the bathroom?



ANSWERS

1. Electricity and water are a deadly combination.
 True or False

2. It's OK to go near water with hair dryers, flat irons, and other bathroom appliances.
True or False

3. Water _____ electricity.

- A. repels
- B. conducts
- C. insulates
- D. plays a game of Twister with

4. You should test your GFCI outlets monthly.
 True or False

5. Water heaters should be set at _____°F so hot water does not cause severe burns.

- A. 130
- B. 350
- C. 100
- D. 120

6. Uncovered lightbulbs exposed to water or steam can lead to electrocution or fire.

True or False

7. Your risk of shock does not increase with a small amount of water from damp skin after a shower.

True or False

Dry hands completely before using electric appliances. Keep appliances away from water, and unplug when not in use.

Water reduces the body's resistance to electricity, thereby increasing the risk of electric shock.

This quiz was included in the January issue of The Connection. Check the answers above to see how well you did!

ENERGY EFFICIENCY QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Members were asked: “What energy efficient products are you most interested in learning about?” The cooperative’s Energy Advisor Jeff Lanning has provided information to answer these member questions.

If you have more questions on these topics or others, contact the Member Services Department at 800-696-6552.

I would like to know more about energy efficient generators. Also outdoor lights.

GENERATORS

According to Energy Advisor Jeff Lanning, when it comes to deciding on the most fuel efficient generator to buy, don’t skimp! Buy a generator with enough wattage to power the things that mean the most to you. If noise is a concern for your generator, Honda has consistently made the quietest generator available. Even if you choose another brand, Honda’s website has a nice tool to help choose the right size generator for your needs.



OUTDOOR LIGHTS

Most stores carry a wide range of options when it comes to lighting. Most lights and fixtures purchased today meet many energy efficiency guidelines.

If you are interested in finding out what rebates are available before you purchase, visit the cooperative’s Website or speak with our Energy Advisor. Important note about lighting rebates offered by Consumers Energy: only new LED fixtures (not bulbs) that are ENERGY STAR® or DesignLights Consortium approved will qualify for the cooperative’s lighting rebate.



When choosing lights, consider the color and the brightness desired for your lighting needs.

- Light color, or color temperature, is measured using the Kelvin (k) scale. LEDs are available in warm colors (low k) to match the yellowish light of incandescent bulbs, but you can also choose cooler colors (high k) with white or bluer light.
- Lumens is a measurement of total light output – the brightness of the bulb. More lumens means it’s a brighter light; fewer lumens means it’s a dimmer light.

	BRIGHTNESS IN LUMENS	220+	400+	700+	900+	1300+
	STANDARD	25W	40W	60W	75W	100W
	HALOGEN	18W	28W	42W	53W	70W
	CFL	6W	9W	12W	15W	20W
	LED	4W	6W	10W	13W	18W

More information on Rebates and Outdoor Lighting can be found at www.consumersenergy.coop under the Programs/Services tab or by calling Jeff Lanning, Energy Advisor, at 800-696-6552 or 641-752-1593.

Opportunities for HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS:

**WIN A WEEK-LONG TRIP
TO WASHINGTON D.C.**



NEXT YOUTH TOUR · June 14-20, 2019

DEADLINE TO APPLY FOR
YOUTH TOUR:
MARCH 9, 2019

DEADLINE TO APPLY FOR
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MARCH 15, 2019

2019 SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

CONSUMERS ENERGY OFFERS
\$1,000 SCHOLARSHIPS FOR
ACADEMIC AND LINEWORKER
STUDENTS.



Questions?

Contact Tami Kerwood at 800-696-6552 or tkerwood@consumersenergy.coop.

Applications are available at www.consumersenergy.coop.
Click the Community tab, then Youth Tour or Scholarship.

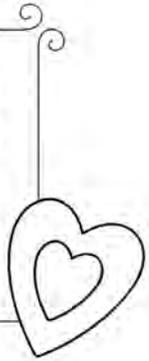
Valentine Jokes!

Decode each one for the answers to the jokes.

CODE



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26



Who would say "you light up my life" to their Valentine?

1 6 9 18 5 6 12 25

What did the map say to the globe on Valentine's Day?

25 15 21 13 5 1 14

20 8 5 23 15 18 12 4

20 15 13 5

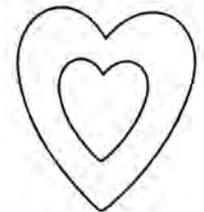
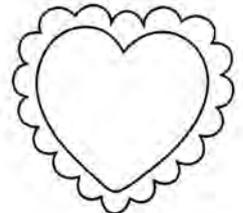
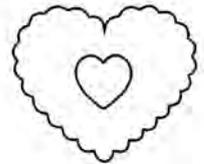
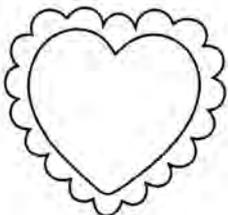
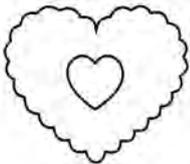
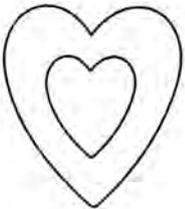
What kind of flower do you never give on Valentine's Day?

3 1 21 12 9 6 12 15 23 5 18

What did the rope say to the ball of string?

2 5 13 25

22 1 12 5 14 20 23 9 14 5



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info@consumersenergy.coop

OFFICE HOURS

7:30 AM - 4:00 PM

MONDAY - FRIDAY

Energy Efficiency Cost per kWh: \$0.001232

WAYS TO PAY YOUR CONSUMERS ENERGY BILL

Automatic recurring
monthly payments



By dropbox



By mail



In person

By phone 24/7
844-201-7196



Online or the app
www.consumersenergy.coop

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

ANSWER KEY:

Groundhog Day Activity

Word Scramble:

hole • predict • February • den • burrow • spring
• shadow • weather • sunshine • cloudy • winter

Cross: HIBERNATION

Valentine Jokes!

Who would say "you light up my life" to their Valentine?

A firefly

What did the map say to the globe on Valentine's Day?

You mean the world to me

What kind of flower do you never give on Valentine's Day?

Cauliflower

What did the rope say to the ball of string? *Be my Valen-twine*



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- conveniently access accounts
- schedule payments
- communicate with co-op staff
- check & compare usage
- receive account alerts & notifications
- go PAPERLESS!

For more information, contact the
Member Services Department at
800-696-6552
or sign up for SmartHub at
www.consumersenergy.coop.

Click *Pay My Bill* on the homepage or from the
My Account drop down menu.

