



HOW EXTREME WINTER WEATHER IMPACTS RELIABILITY

When outdoor temperatures drop, our electricity use increases. That's because we're doing more activities inside, and our heating systems are running longer and more often to counteract colder outdoor temperatures. Factor in that we all tend to use electricity at the same times—in the morning and early evenings—and that equals a lot of strain on our electric grid.

At Consumers Energy, we work closely with our local generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative in resource and infrastructure planning to ensure you have the power you need whenever you flip a switch, but the electric grid is much larger than your local co-op and G&T.

In winter months, when even more electricity is being used simultaneously across the country, it is possible for electricity demand to exceed supply, especially if an unexpected event like a sudden snow or ice storm or equipment malfunction occurs. If this happens, which is rare, the grid operator for our region of the country may call for rolling power outages to relieve pressure on the grid, and Consumers Energy will inform you about the situation.

Consumers Energy and our G&T take proactive steps to create a resilient portion of the grid and ensure electric reliability in extreme weather, including regular system maintenance, grid modernization efforts, and disaster response planning; but it takes everyone to keep the grid reliable.

To help keep the heat on for you, your family, and neighbors, here are a few things you can do to relieve pressure on the grid (and save a little money along the way):

continued on page 8-B ►

WIN

ONE OF TWO MONTHLY \$5 BILL CREDITS

THIS MONTH'S CONTEST:

Submit your answers to the Valentine Emoji Pictionary on page 8-D. The solutions will be published in the March newsletter.

◆ ◆ ◆

Winners for the month of December:
 Alan Aukes, Baxter
 Dave Duit, 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

Submit via email or mail:
 Email to: kglenney@consumersenergy.coop
 Subject line: Contest

Mail to: Consumers Energy
 Attn: Contest
 2074 242nd Street
 Marshalltown, IA 50158

3. Winners' names will be drawn at random and published in upcoming issues of *The Connection*.

February 2024

Dates To Remember:

FEBRUARY

- 1 Read Meters
- 2 Groundhog Day
- 3 Bills Due
- 5 Automatic Payments Deducted
- 10 Email / Mail Bills
- 14 Valentine's Day
- 19 Presidents' Day
- 26 Automatic Payments Deducted

MARCH

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

How Extreme Winter Weather Impacts Reliability *(continued)*

- Select the lowest comfortable thermostat setting, and turn it down several degrees whenever possible. Your heating system must run longer to make up the difference between the thermostat temp and the outdoor temp.
 - ⇒ Pro tip: Seal air leaks around windows and exterior doors with caulk and weatherstripping. Air leaks and drafts force your heating system to work harder than necessary.
- Stagger your use of major appliances such as dishwashers, ovens, and dryers.
 - ⇒ Pro tip: Start the dishwasher before you go to bed, and use smaller countertop appliances like slow cookers and air fryers to save energy.
- Ensure that your heating system is optimized for efficiency with regular maintenance and proper insulation.
 - ⇒ Pro tip: Make sure your furnace filter isn't clogged and dirty. Replace it as needed.
- When possible, use cold water to reduce water heating costs.
 - ⇒ Pro tip: Setting your water heater thermostat to 120 degrees can help you save energy and reduce mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes.
- Unplug devices when not in use to eliminate unnecessary energy use. Even when turned off, electronics in standby mode consume energy.
 - ⇒ Pro tip: Plug devices into a power strip so you can turn them all off at once with the push of a button.

As we face the challenges posed by winter weather, understanding its impact on energy demand is crucial for maintaining a reliable power supply. By adopting energy conservation practices during periods of extreme cold, not only can you save money on your electric bills, but you can also each contribute to the resilience of the power grid, keeping our local community warm and connected.

Bridget Itzen

Bridget Itzen,
CEO/General Manager

BEST BETS FOR Winter Savings

Energy consumption spikes during winter months as we spend more time indoors and heating systems work overtime. You can help reduce demand and strain on the electric grid by conserving during peak energy times. Reducing energy use will also help lower your energy bills.

- UNPLUG WHEN POSSIBLE**
Turn off unnecessary lights and electronics when you aren't using them.
- ELIMINATE DRAFTS AND AIR LEAKS**
Seal air leaks and drafts around windows and exterior doors.
- USE APPLIANCES WHEN ENERGY DEMAND IS LOWER**
Run large appliances like clothes washers, dryers and dishwashers early in the morning or before you go to bed.
- MAINTAIN HEATING EQUIPMENT**
Maintain your heating system by replacing dirty, clogged filters and scheduling an annual inspection for necessary maintenance.
- LOWER THE THERMOSTAT**
Home heating accounts for a large portion of energy consumption. Adjust your thermostat to the lowest comfortable setting (68 degrees or lower).

SCAM ALERT

Utility scams happen every day in the United States.

Learn how to protect yourself by visiting the co-op's website! Type the address here

← or scan this QR code:

WWW.CONSUMENERGY.COOP/UTILITY-SCAMS

Directors to Appoint Nominating Committee and Election & Credentials Committee

The Consumers Energy Board of Directors will appoint cooperative members to the Nominating Committee and the Election & Credentials Committee at their February board meeting. The Nominating Committee is tasked with selecting individuals to be placed on the ballot as director candidates in the upcoming director elections. The Nominating Committee also serves as the Election & Credentials Committee that oversees the voting and director election process before and during the Annual Meeting.

The Articles of Incorporation of Consumers Energy state that the Board of Directors must appoint a Nominating Committee to select individuals as director candidates to be placed on the ballot and voted on at the Annual Meeting on Thursday, August 1, 2024, at the cooperative's headquarters located at 2074 242nd Street, Marshalltown. The Nominating Committee's initial meeting will be held in April.

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 2024 ARE:

District No. 1 for Marshall, Jasper, and Tama Counties:
Denny Beckman

District No. 2 for Story County:
Bob Meimann

District No. 3 for Polk County:
Tony Lem

MEMBERS WHO WISH TO SUBMIT NOMINEES FOR DIRECTOR CANDIDATES ARE ENCOURAGED TO SEND THEIR SUGGESTIONS TO ARRIVE AT THE COOPERATIVE OFFICE BY APRIL 5, 2024, BY ANY OF THESE MEANS:

MAIL:
Consumers Energy
Attn: Nominating Committee
2074 242nd Street
Marshalltown, IA 50158

CALL:

- CEO/General Manager Bridget Itzen at 641-754-1649
- Executive Assistant/ Communications Coordinator Kippen Glenney at 641-754-1646

EMAIL:
admin@consumersenergy.coop

Nominating Committee Timeline:

1 DIRECTORS APPOINT MEMBERS TO THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE.

2 NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEETS IN EARLY APRIL.

3 THE COMMITTEE CONTACTS MEMBERS TO RUN FOR OPEN DIRECTOR SEATS.

4 DIRECTOR ELECTIONS ARE HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ANNUAL MEETING.

KIPPEN GLENNEY

EMPLOYEE
SPOTLIGHT



JOB: EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT/COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR



DREAM VACATION: I LOVE TROPICAL BEACHES, HIKING, & EXPLORING!



FAVE BANDS/PERFORMERS: P!NK, AJR, ALANIS MORISSETTE, PEARL JAM



FAVE MOVIES: THE JERK, THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION, BEETLEJUICE



FAVE BOOKS: SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS, THE CRY, HUNGER GAMES SERIES

Valentine Emoji Pictionary

Guess the Valentine-themed item or activity! Enter the monthly newsletter contest by sending in your answers!

Contest details are on page 8-A.

1	❤️ 📧	6	💘 🎬
2	🕯️ 🍴	7	📅 🌙
3	👉 😘	8	🐶 ❤️
4	❤️ 🐦 🐦	9	🏹 😊
5	👩❤️👩 📅 👩❤️👩 📅	10	❤️ 📖

Answer to Number Puzzle

Here are the answers to the number puzzle from the December newsletter contest. See page 8-A for contest details.

2	8	9
3	2	4
3	6	1

Read the first two rows of numbers horizontally, each as one number: 289 and 324.

The pattern is that $17 \times 17 = 289$ and $18 \times 18 = 324$.
So the bottom row will be $19 \times 19 = 361$.
The missing number is one.

CONSUMERS ENERGY IS HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE EXCITING CHANGES TAKING PLACE AT THE COOPERATIVE!

With the upcoming retirement of Finance & Accounting Coordinator **Brenda Hedum**, our team will be restructured! New jobs are in store for **Justin Krueger** and **Ethan Ronnebaum**.



Brenda Hedum
Retiring Finance & Accounting
Coordinator



Justin Krueger
Finance Manager

Justin Krueger began his career at Consumers Energy in 2011 as the cooperative's Metering Systems Coordinator. Justin's educational background includes an Accounting Foundations Certificate and a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration. He began his duties as Finance Manager in January.

Justin has a daughter, Lydia, is engaged to Trisha, and lives in Albion. Once Justin is married, he will have 2 grown stepchildren, Micah & Taylor.



Ethan Ronnebaum
Metering Systems Coordinator

Ethan Ronnebaum started working at Consumers Energy in July 2021 as an Apprentice Lineman. He earned his Associate of Arts degree in Geographical Information Systems (GIS) from Kirkwood Community College as well as his Powerline Technician diploma from Marshalltown Community College. Ethan started his position of Metering Systems Coordinator in January.

Ethan lives in Marshalltown with his wife, Lauren, and their pets.

Congrats to Brenda on her upcoming retirement and to Justin & Ethan on their new positions at Consumers Energy!

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



Combine Budget Billing with Automatic Bill Payment!



Contact the Member Services Department at 800-696-6552, or find the Auto Pay Program under Bill & Pay on the SmartHub app on your mobile device, on your computer at the cooperative's Website: www.consumersenergy.coop, or by scanning this QR code that takes you straight to the Auto Pay Authorization Form.

0000012345



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

Marshalltown Office
2074 242nd Street
Marshalltown, IA 50158
7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday - Friday
Phone: 800-696-6552 or 641-752-1593
Secure Pay Toll-Free Phone: 844-201-7196

Billing Date: 02/08/2024

4010 1 AV 0.395
ANY PERSON
88 MARSHALLTOWN BLVD
MARSHALLTOWN IA
50158-9465

4 4010
C-12 P-17

Page 1 of 2



Message Center

Powering the Future! ConsumersEnergy annually awards \$1,000 scholarships to area students. A lineworker and academic scholarships are available to those who qualify. Visit our website for more details or call the office at 800-696-6552.
Your monthly budget payment has been recalculated. Beginning next month your monthly budget payment will be \$99.00.

Account Number	Description	Property Address
12345	HOUSE	88 MARSHALLTOWN BLVD
ACCOUNT SUMMARY		
<u>Average Temperatures</u>	Previous Balance	-181.81
This Month: 21	Payment Received - Thank You	-112.00
Last Month: 26	Balance Forward	-293.81
Last Year: 22	Total Electric Charges	159.34
	Account Balance	-134.47
Total Budget Amount Due		112.00

WINTER SAFETY WORD SEARCH

Did you know most home fires happen during colder months? Play it safe this winter season. Read the safety tips below, then find and circle the bolded words in the puzzle.



Never overload electrical outlets with too many **electronics**.
 Test smoke and carbon monoxide **alarms** every month.
 Never leave a **candle** burning in an empty room.

Keep flammable items at least three feet away from a **space heater**.
Extension cords should only be used temporarily. Damaged or frayed cords should be thrown away.

Attention high school sophomores, juniors, & seniors:
WIN A FREE TRIP OF A LIFETIME!

JUNE 15-21, 2024



To apply for a chance to win this FREE trip to Washington, D.C., scan the QR code here or visit

www.consumersenergy.coop/youthtour.



DEADLINE TO APPLY: MARCH 14, 2024

For more information, contact Billing and Education Program Coordinator, Tami Kerwood, at 800-696-6552 or tkerwood@consumersenergy.coop.



Academic Scholarship



Apply for one of Consumers Energy's \$1,000 academic scholarships available to graduating high school seniors!

For full details or to apply, scan the QR code here or visit www.consumersenergy.coop/scholarship-program.



DEADLINE TO APPLY: MARCH 15, 2024

For more information, contact Billing & Education Program Coordinator, Tami Kerwood, at 800-696-6552 or tkerwood@consumersenergy.coop.



Lineworker Scholarship



For those pursuing a career in the powerline industry, apply for Consumers Energy's \$1,000 Lineworker Scholarship.

For full details or to apply, scan the QR code here or visit www.consumersenergy.coop/scholarship-program.

The Lineworker Scholarship Application is below the Academic Scholarship Application on this page.

For more information, contact Billing and Education Program Coordinator, Tami Kerwood, at 800-696-6552 or tkerwood@consumersenergy.coop.



DEADLINE TO APPLY: MARCH 15, 2024

2024
REBATE
PROGRAM



2074 242nd Street | Marshalltown, IA 50158
 641-752-1593 | 800-696-6552
 641-752-5738
www.consumersenergy.coop
info@consumersenergy.coop

If you purchase certain electric equipment, you may qualify for rebates from Consumers Energy!

Submitting information for your rebate is simple. Members need to complete a form, and send in copies of receipts. This can all be done from the website or by contacting the co-op for a hard copy of the form.

Air Source Heat Pump

Any Unit \$200/ton

Appliances

Clothes Washer \$40/unit
 Electric Clothes Dryer \$20/unit

Central Air Conditioning

Any Unit \$100/unit

Electric Vehicles and Charging Units

Level II Chargers 50% of cost (Up to \$750)

EV Ready - New Construction (240/208 VAC) \$100

Class I or II Forklift up to \$1,000 each
 Class III Hand Lift/Truck up to \$350 each

For residential applications, one rebate per membership is available. For commercial applications, rebates are available up to four of each.

Electric Water Heating

Heat Pump Water Heater \$350/unit

Consumers Energy offers special pricing on Marathon Electric Water Heaters. Contact the co-op for more information.

Geothermal Heat Pump

New \$300/ton
 Geothermal Unit Only - Existing \$100/ton



SCAN THIS QR CODE TO
 ACCESS CONSUMERS
 ENERGY'S REBATE PAGE.

If you have questions about Consumers Energy's Rebate Program or need a form:

call 800-696-6552

email info@consumersenergy.coop

visit www.consumersenergy.coop/rebates

CONSUMERS ENERGY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

District 1 - Marshall, Jasper, & Tama Counties:
Denny Beckman
President
dbeckman@consumersenergy.coop

Bill Hobson
Director
whobson@consumersenergy.coop

Pat VonAhnen
Secretary-Treasurer
pvonahren@consumersenergy.coop

District 2 - Story County:
Arden Greiner
Director
agreiner@consumersenergy.coop

Bob Meimann
Assistant Secretary-Treasurer
rmeimann@consumersenergy.coop

Steve Quick
Director
squick@consumersenergy.coop

District 3 - Polk County:
Craig Griffieon
Vice President
cgriffieon@consumersenergy.coop

Tony Lem
Director
alem@consumersenergy.coop

Jennifer Sease
Director
jsease@consumersenergy.coop

Energy Efficiency Cost per kWh:
\$0.000381

To report an outage, call 800-696-6552.

For the most accurate
outage updates, check
SmartHub or
www.consumersenergy.coop
for messages, the statewide
outage map, or call
Consumers Energy.

WAYS TO PAY YOUR CONSUMERS ENERGY BILL



Online or the app
www.consumersenergy.coop

Automatic recurring
monthly payments



In person

By phone 24/7
844-201-7196



By mail

By dropbox



2074 242nd Street | Marshalltown, IA 50158



641-752-1593 | 800-696-6552



641-752-5738



www.consumersenergy.coop



info@consumersenergy.coop

OFFICE HOURS
7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
MONDAY - FRIDAY



SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

- \$1,000 scholarships for academic and lineworker applicants



YOUTH TOUR

- FREE trip to D.C.!
- Educational & FUN!
- Offered to members' high school sophomores, juniors, & seniors

For information on ways to pay or programs and services offered, contact the Member Services Department.