



Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative

THREE DIRECTORS TO BE ELECTED AT THE 79TH CVEC ANNUAL MEETING

The 79th Annual Meeting of Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative (CVEC) will be held at the Cornell High School on Saturday, February 27, 2016.

This year, Districts 2, 4, and 7 are up for election. Members who reside in these districts received notice with the bills that were mailed in December. Board of directors representatives who presently hold positions are eligible to seek re-election.

Currently, District 2 is represented by Harold Flater, District 4 by Dennis St. Aubin, and District 7 by John Petzka. Please contact CVEC if you reside in Districts 2, 4, or 7 and are interested in participating in the upcoming director election. The deadline for declaring candidacy for any of the open districts is January 13, 2016 (45 days prior to the annual meeting). All director candidate papers must be returned to CVEC at that time.

A map showing the district boundaries is shown below. If you are unsure which district you are in, please feel free to contact the cooperative at (715) 239-6800 or toll free at 1-800-300-6800.

Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative's board is comprised of seven directors representing seven geographic districts. Each director serves a three-year term of office. In February each member in Districts 2, 4, and 7 will receive a ballot in the mail along with a notice announcing the annual meeting. Please do not lose your ballot—you will only receive one. The ballot can be brought to our office or mailed so that it is received at the cooperative in order to be counted at the meeting.

District 2

The incumbent director in District 2 is Harold Flater. District 2 includes the entire townships of Rusk, Big Bend, Washington, and Willard, Rusk County.



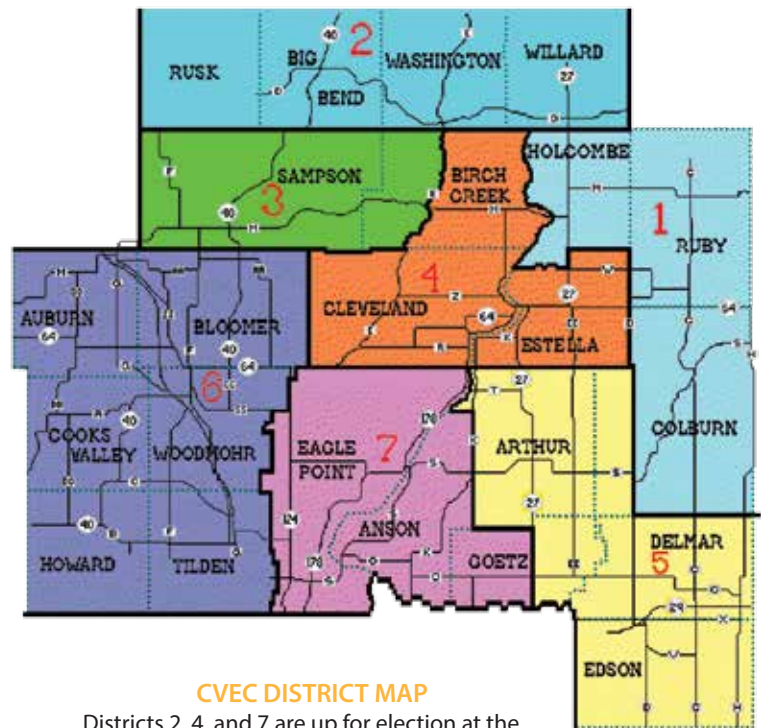
District 4

The incumbent director in District 4 is Dennis St. Aubin. District 4 includes the entire townships of Cleveland and Estella and the portion of Birch Creek township located east of County Highway E, Chippewa County.



District 7

The incumbent director in District 7 is John Petzka. District 7 includes the entire townships of Eagle Point and Anson, and a portion of Goetz township located West of State Highway 27, Chippewa County.



CVEC DISTRICT MAP

Districts 2, 4, and 7 are up for election at the 2016 CVEC Annual Meeting February 27.

MY CO-OP



RATE INCREASE SET FOR JANUARY 1, 2016

Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative is committed to providing dependable and reliable electric power to its members. Unfortunately, it has become necessary for us to raise our rates. Our wholesale rate will increase in 2016, contributing financial stress for your cooperative.

In completing the 2016 budget, in addition to projecting sales and expenses, it was determined approximately a 5 percent rate adjustment would be

needed to keep your cooperative within the financial parameters required by our lenders. Another factor that is contributing to a needed rate adjustment is declining sales. We have seen almost an 8 percent decrease in sales from 2014 due to the milder weather, and we do not see where sales will be coming back anytime soon. The low cost of fossil fuels has also taken away from some of our dual fuel sales.

At press time, the final breakdown on how the rate adjustment would be implemented had not yet been determined and was to be set by the board at the late December meeting. We felt it was necessary to at least get this notice out to you, our members, so you are aware that beginning January 1, 2016, there will be a slight increase in your electricity cost.

ELECTRIC SPACE HEATERS INCREASE ELECTRIC BILLS

Throughout the next three to four months, we will receive several calls from members regarding high electric usage. For many, the culprit tends to be the use of an electric space heater.

Even though all electric space heaters are 100 percent efficient, they still use a considerable amount of electricity if used regularly. If you must use an electric space heater, use it only for supplemental heat in a small area. Space heaters are not designed to heat your entire home. For an approximate operating cost of an electric space heater, use the following formula:

$$\text{Watts}/1,000 \times \text{kWh rate of } \$0.1030 \times 8 \text{ hours of operation} = \text{cost}$$

For example, a 1,500-watt space heater operating eight hours a day for 30 days costs \$37.08 per month to operate.

There are more economical choices available to heat your home. Contact Russ at Chippewa Valley Electric to learn more about cost-effective electric heat options.



PHONE SCAM TO CHIPPEWA VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CUSTOMERS

On December 7 at approximately 4:15 p.m., a party representing themselves as Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative (CVEC) contacted one of our members demanding payment via MoneyGram for a “delinquent bill,” threatening immediate disconnection if not paid.

The caller knew the member’s name, address, and account number.

Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative will not make collection calls outside of normal business hours (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.), and will always work with our members to make payment arrangements.

If a CVEC member receives a collection call from a number other than 715.239.6800, and/or has any questions regarding a “collections call,” we are urging them to call the Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative office during normal business hours to confirm the legitimacy of the call.

The following is excerpted from an article by Russ Evavold of the Chippewa Herald, reprinted here with the Chippewa Herald’s permission:

It turns out the utility scam is quite prevalent in northwestern Wisconsin, according to Lisa Schiller, director of investigations and media relations of the Better Business Bureau of Wisconsin. It is more effective at this time of year, when a loss of heat is factored into the equation.

Schiller said the method of payment is “pretty much untraceable.” Once someone pays with a prepaid debit card or wire transfer, their money is gone. Phone numbers are generally of no help either, since technology allows calls to be routed to another location, making it appear the calls are coming from another number.

As with most scams, they don’t usually hold up to the light of day. But when someone gets snared in them, their thoughts are often elsewhere.

Schiller offered this bit of advice to others who field a telephone call that arouses suspicions: Go to www.bbb.org/scamtracker to report a scam.

“It’s a super tool for tracking trends throughout the country and Canada,” she said, adding that people should notify their utility company and local police department.

Not all scams are done by telephone. The Better Business Bureau warns the public to be on the lookout for emails disguised as overdue notices from “your utility company.”

Save the Date!
May 25 – CVEC Member
 Appreciation Picnic/Open
 House



Please join us on May 25 for our Member Appreciation Picnic and Open House. Come and enjoy lunch with your fellow members and see our new headquarters.

ENJOY THE CONVENIENCE OF THE AUTOMATIC PAYMENT PLAN

Sign up and
 receive a \$20 credit
 on your
 electric bill!



Credit is for first-time ACH participants only. ACH (Automated Clearing House) allows transfer of funds from your checking or savings account directly to Chippewa Valley Electric's account to pay your electric bill. A direct withdrawal would be made on the due date of each month for the amount of your bill.

If you are interested in participating in this convenient payment method, please fill out the form below and return it to our office with the required information. The sign-up deadline is March 31, 2016.

I want to participate in the Automatic Payment Plan

Name(s) on CVEC Bill _____

CVEC Account Number _____

Billing Address _____

Work Phone _____ Home Phone _____

Your Financial Institution _____

Account Number _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

If your payment is to be delivered from a checking account, enclose a blank check. Write VOID across it and DO NOT SIGN IT. If your payment is to be deducted from a savings account, enclose a deposit slip that includes your account number. Please allow one month for the set up of the Automatic Payment Plan.

CVEC has the right to cancel use of the Automatic Payment Plan. I will write to CVEC if I decide to cancel my use of the Automatic Payment Plan.

Account Holder(s) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Note: Only first time ACH participants are eligible for the \$20 credit. Member must remain on ACH for a minimum of 18 months. Sign-up deadline is March 31, 2016. Mail this form with your current payment or mail it separately to CVEC, P.O. Box 575, Cornell, WI 54732. For more information, call 715-239-6800 or 1-800-300-6800.



WEATHERING A WINTER STORM

When ice and heavy snow bring down limbs and power lines, safety is a consideration indoors and out. Make sure you know how to weather the storm. When outside, stay away from downed power lines:

- A power line does not need to be sparking or arcing to be energized. Equipment near power lines can also be energized and dangerous.
- Lines that appear to be “dead” can become energized as crews work to restore power, or sometimes from improper use of emergency generators. Assume all low and downed lines are energized and dangerous. If you see a downed or sagging line, contact your utility.
- Motorists should never drive over a downed line as snagging a line could pull down a pole or other equipment and cause other hazards.
- Be careful approaching intersections where traffic or crossing lights may be out.
- If you plan to use a generator, know how to operate it safely.

Before a winter storm, you should have supplies on hand, and know how to stay warm:

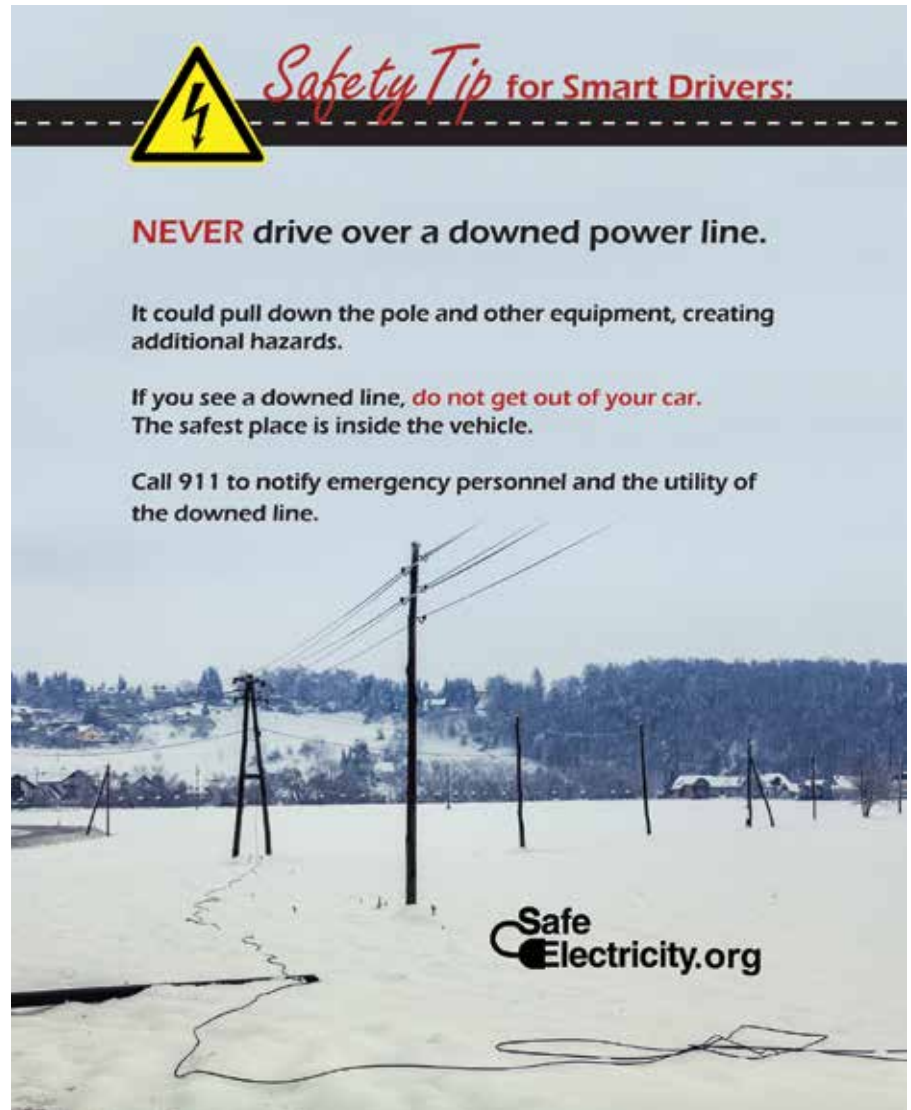
- Always keep a battery-powered radio or TV, flashlights, and fresh batteries. You should also have water, blankets, and non-perishable food.
- When power goes out, it often comes back in spikes. This can damage electronics. Keep your electronics safe by unplugging them when the power goes out. Leave one lamp or switch on as a signal for when your power returns.
- To prevent water pipes from freezing, keep faucets turned on slightly so

that water drips from the tap. Know how to shut off water valves in case a pipe bursts.

- Never use a charcoal grill to cook or heat with inside the home. Burning charcoal gives off deadly carbon monoxide gas. Charcoal grills should only be used outdoors.
- If you live with a child or elderly person, you may need to take them

somewhere with power so they can stay warm. If you are healthy enough to stay home safely, there are ways to stay warm: stay inside and dress warmly in layered clothing.

- Close off unneeded rooms.
- When using an alternate heat source, follow operating instructions, use fire safeguards, and be sure to properly ventilate.—*SafeElectricity.org*



Todd Howard, President/CEO

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Nicole Whipp Sime, Editor



Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative

CVEC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.