



# A *Sweet* DEAL FOR YOU!



## Receive \$20 when you pay automatically!

Sign up for the cooperative's automatic payment program using a checking or savings account and receive a **\$20 one-time credit** on your electric bill. The automatic payment program offers a secure transfer of funds from your checking or savings account directly to Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative to pay your electric bill. A direct withdrawal will process from your bank account on the due date each month for your bill. No more stamps or writing checks!

If you are interested in participating in this convenient and secure payment method, please fill out the form below and return it to the cooperative office. This deal is for first-time participants only. **The sign-up deadline is March 31, 2026.**

### I want to participate in the Automatic Payment Plan

Name(s) on CVEC Bill \_\_\_\_\_

CVEC Account Number \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Cell/Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Bank Name \_\_\_\_\_ 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 participants are eligible for the \$20 credit. Member must remain on the Automatic Payment Plan for a minimum of 18 months. Sign-up deadline is March 31, 2026. Mail this page to CVEC, P.O. Box 575, Cornell, WI 54732. For more information, call 715-239-6800.



# UNDERSTANDING POWER OUTAGES

**W**hether a power outage is planned or unplanned, we understand that losing power can be inconvenient and frustrating. When an outage occurs, it is our goal to restore power as quickly and safely as possible.

## What causes a power outage?

Trees continue to be among the leading causes of blinking lights and power outages in Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative's (CVEC's) service territory. CVEC has numerous maintenance programs that help provide safe, reliable electricity. One of the most important programs the cooperative performs is our vegetation management program. This brushing and spraying program is twofold. First, trees are cut and trimmed from within the right-of-way. Once the trimming and clearing process has been completed, a herbicide application is applied to help reduce regrowth within the right-of-way.

**These maintenance programs have helped to reduce CVEC's average outage times over the last 5 years to under an hour per member. One of the lowest in the state.**

Other major causes of unplanned power outages include severe weather, high winds, heavy snow or ice. Wildlife and people (motor vehicle accidents, construction work, etc.) can also interfere with power lines.

## What should I do if an outage occurs?

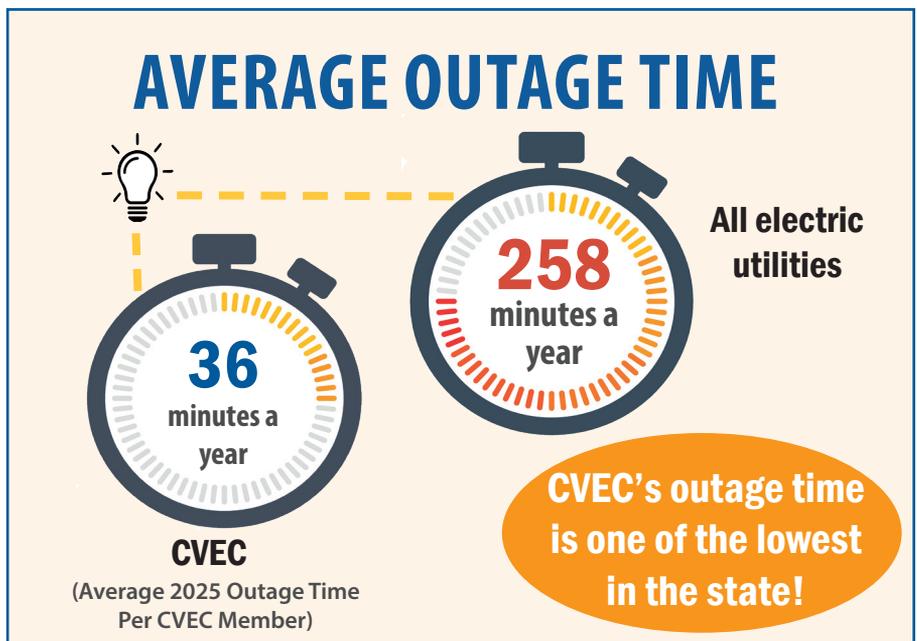
In the event that your electric service is interrupted, the first thing you should do is check your fuses or breakers to make sure the problem does not lie within your own home or business. Next, if possible, check if your neighbors have power. This can help to provide some context to the extent of the outage.

You can report outages any time, day or night, by calling 715-239-6800. If you have any information about the cause of the outage (tree limb, broken poles, etc.), please share this information with

the member service representative that you speak with. At times, this can help to ensure crews have needed items to restore power quickly.

## How long will it take for power to be restored?

Please be patient with our crews as they work to safely restore power to your home. We ask that you avoid approaching our line crews as they do restoration work. Additional people at a scene can be distracting and slow down the restoration process for our team members.



## How does the restoration process work?

Crews first check transmission lines; this is the backbone of our system, carrying high-voltage electricity from generation sources to our substations. If there is a problem with a transmission line, no one will have power, and this must be addressed before other repairs can be made.

Next will be our substations; they reduce the high-voltage electricity from the transmission lines so it can be safely carried on distribution lines. If there is an issue at a substation, it must be addressed before re-energizing distribution lines.

Distribution lines, sometimes called primary lines or feeders, carry power from the substation to various areas for further distribution. Repairing damage to these lines is the next necessary step in the power restoration process.

Lastly, tap lines, or secondary lines, carry power from distribution lines to smaller groups of homes. If an entire portion of your neighborhood is without power, the tap line is a likely source of the problem. This is the most time-consuming part of the restoration process.

## My neighbor has power, but I don't.

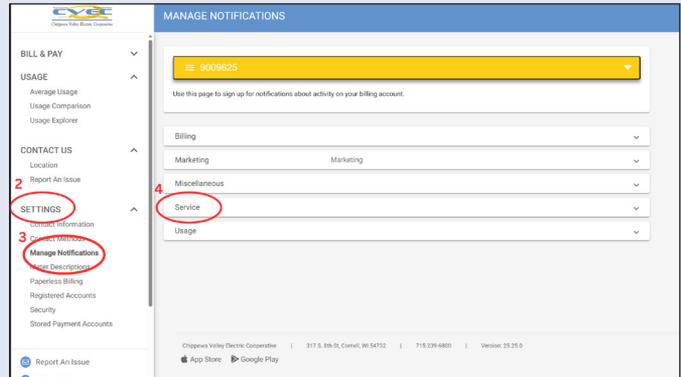
Sometimes this means you might simply have a tripped breaker in your home. If your neighbor has power and you don't, their power might be fed from a different substation or distribution line than yours, or occasionally they may have a backup generator.

## Where can I get outage updates?

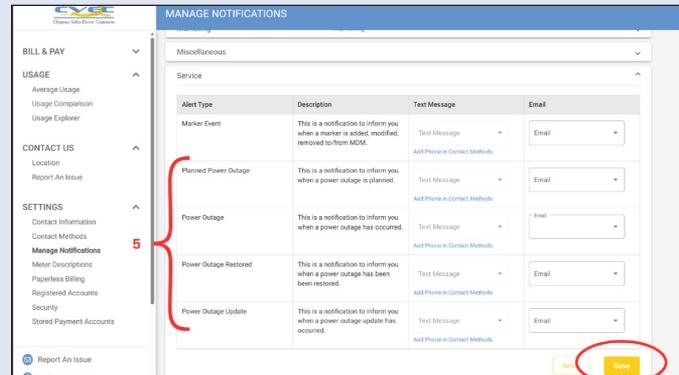
Updates will be provided on Facebook for larger power outages in our service area. Members can also get text or email notifications by signing up through SmartHub.

## How to Sign Up for New Outage and Restoration Messages Using SmartHub

1. Log in or create a SmartHub account.
2. On the left hand side bar- click **Settings**.
3. Click **Manage Notifications**.
4. Click **Service**.

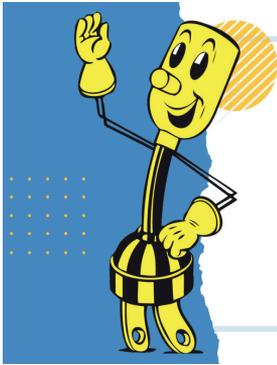


5. Fill in the **phone number and/ or e-mail** for the desired notifications you wish to receive and click **Save**. Log in to or create a SmartHub account.



*\*May look slightly different on a mobile device, but the steps remain the same.*





Your Cooperative Powering Your Future

# CVEC Sparks

## CO-OP NEWS

**CELEBRATING OUR CO-OP COMMUNITY!**

### Reminders

- Director Candidate Paperwork Due **Monday, February 9.**
- CVEC 89th Annual Meeting: **Thursday, March 26.**
- Scholarships Available for High School Seniors: Deadline is **Wednesday, April 1.**



### CVEC Can Help With Stray Voltage Concerns

Stray voltage is the common term used to describe neutral-to-Earth voltage in a cow or livestock contact area, usually in the barn. When a cow makes contact between two points with a difference in voltage, such as a watering cup and the concrete floor, an electric current may flow through the cow, which the cow may feel. Such situations can be caused by a variety of electrical problems both on farm and off farm.

Neutral-to-Earth voltage may never be completely eliminated because it is present on all grounded electrical distribution systems. However, much can be done to resolve stray voltage concerns. There are fairly simple electrical tests that can be performed by qualified individuals to determine whether stray voltage is present at unacceptable levels on your farm.

If you believe you may have stray voltage, CVEC stands ready to investigate that possibility. We have the equipment and trained personnel to offer assistance and advice pertaining to stray voltage.

The Midwest Rural Energy Council is a great resource for additional information on stray voltage. Visit their website at [www.mrec.org](http://www.mrec.org).

### Safety First! Dairy Farm Rewiring Loan and Grant Program

The Safety First! Farm Rewiring program represents part of our commitment to dairy farmers and state policy makers to help mitigate stray voltage and safety risks. This commitment is as important today as it was in 2002 and is why all electric cooperatives that serve dairy farms in Wisconsin agreed to support and participate in this program.



#### Requirements

- Dairy farms only (including cows, goats, and sheep that are kept for the production of milk)
- Existing farmstead
- Pre-program inspection
- Electrician's estimate
- Service agreement for length of loan
- Credit eligibility requirements

#### Loans and Grants

- A loan/grant combination is available up to \$30,000.
- Grants are available for 20 percent or up to \$6,000 from the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association.
- Loans are available for 80 percent or up to \$24,000 from your electric cooperative.
- Take up to five years to repay the loan.
- 3 percent interest applies to the loan.

For more information, please contact CVEC's Operations Department at 715-239-6800.



Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative  
 317 S. 8th St., P.O. Box 575  
 Cornell, WI 54732  
 715.239.6800 • 1.800.300.6800  
[www.cvecoop.com](http://www.cvecoop.com) • email: [cvec@cve.coop](mailto:cvec@cve.coop)  
*This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*

### Board of Directors

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- District 3 – Frank Draxler
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**Russ Falkenberg, President/CEO**



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 Monday — Thursday: 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
 Friday: 7:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**Rebecca Pehlke, Editor**