

# NEWS LINE

Citizens Electric Corporation's monthly publication

877-876-3511/www.CECMO.com



DECEMBER 2017

## Always on call for you

Each year front porches are ambushed by books that offer information and advertisements for residents and businesses in our area. These books, which many young people have never opened, reside in drawers, on top of refrigerators and on shelves in homes everywhere. They may gather dust, they may be well worn, but rarely are they recent. For many businesses, like Citizens Electric, this poses a problem.

Over the past few years, Citizens Electric has gone through many changes. We have consolidated buildings to better serve members, we have added an automated attendant to protect your privacy while paying over the phone and we have consolidated all of our contact numbers into one, toll free, number: 877-876-3511.

Those books in drawers and on shelves

do not update automatically, yet many members are still relying on old, outdated information to find CEC. While we have our phone number and web address in every Powerful Connections and NewsLine, it can be overlooked.

Some members could be confused about our automated attendant.

When calling Citizens Electric, you will be greeted by a voice offering different prompts. We ask that you listen to the prompts to ensure that you are transferred to the desired location.

If you are calling about an outage, you will be prompted to press 1, bill payment will require pressing 2, and press 5 to speak with a Member Services Representative.

One easy way to stay in contact, make payments and report outages is through

the use of CEC Mobile. This free app for iPhone and Android also offers a variety of functions such as outage map, usage information and many other features found on our website.

Whether you contact us on the phone or via CEC Mobile, we are always ready to help.



Contact CEC by calling 877-876-3511, on the web at [www.CECMO.com](http://www.CECMO.com) or via CEC Mobile for iPhone and Android.

## Ste. Gen Solar Park over 50% Enrolled

Drawing energy from the sun was science fiction 70 years ago when Citizens Electric was formed. However, today many CEC members are doing just that.

SharedSolar is an optional environmental program designed for those members who want a sustainable, carbon-free choice in electric generation. Designed to be simple, SharedSolar is possibly the easiest way for any CEC member to participate in solar energy without expensive up-front costs, location restrictions or maintenance.

Members currently receive

7% of their electricity from sustainable sources. By adding three blocks of SharedSolar, this can jump to more than 50% (based on average member usage).

Currently, SharedSolar is an environmental benefit for our members. Each \$0.99/month block, allows members to know that they are doing their part to support renewable energy. Wabash Valley Power Association, plans to expand solar development based on member interest.

Currently more than half of the 500KW output of the Ste.

Genevieve array has been spoken for by CEC members.

Our recent Member Satisfaction Survey indicated that many members are interested in a program offering economic benefits. CEC staff and board members are currently examining various solar programs from across the country to offer a program that provides economic benefits to members in the

near future. Current participants will have the first chance to enroll.

SharedSolar is easy to join and has no long term contract. Member Services Representatives can assist you in meeting your carbon-free, sustainable goals. Simply call 877-876-3511. Additional information can be found at [www.CECMO.com](http://www.CECMO.com).



## CEC Calendar Photo Contest

We are looking for photos taken by our members to be used in our 2019 calendar. Submissions are open until January 31, 2018. Photos should be appropriate for different seasons/months, and prizes will be awarded for the cover, 1st, 2nd and 3rd place for both adults and youth.

Photos should be from the areas we serve in Cape Girardeau, Perry and Ste.

Genevieve counties.

The calendar will go to print in early 2018 and will be issued starting November 1, 2018. Images must be horizontal and submitted as a high-resolution digital file accompanied by an 8" x 10" print on photo quality paper. Entry forms are available by request, at our Perryville office or at [cecmo.com](http://cecmo.com).

More information is available online at [www.CECMO.com](http://www.CECMO.com) or call Shawn at 877-876-3511.

### Prizes:

- Cover \$250
- 1st place (adult and youth) \$100
- 2nd place (adult and youth) \$75
- 3rd place (adult and youth) \$50

## No Holiday from Scams

Unfortunately, in today's world, scams are inevitable. Scammers can threaten you with everything from legal action involving the IRS to turning off power to your home.

Scams often involve an individual posing as a critical services employee, including Citizens Electric. The scammer may use threatening language in order to frighten you into offering your credit card or bank account information. Don't fall victim to these types of scams. Understand the threats posed and your best course of action:

- If someone calls your home or cell phone demanding you pay your electric bill immediately, gather as much information as you can from that individual, hang-up the phone and contact the local authorities. Scammers often use threats and urgency to pressure you into giving them your bank account number or loading a pre-paid credit or debit card (such as a Green Dot card). Citizens Electric will never ask you to offer up personal finance information over the phone. If you have any doubts about your electric bill, contact member services either in person, or over the phone at 877-876-3511. You can also check your bill status with CEC Mobile for iPhone and Android.

- If someone comes to your home claiming to be an employee of Citizens Electric that needs to collect money, call local authorities for assistance. Do not let the individual into your home. We do not collect payments in the field. Likewise, a CEC employee should not require access to your home. If you are approached by someone claiming to be from CEC, ask for official identification and call us at 877-876-3511 to verify that they are indeed an employee. Never give a stranger money or invite them into your home.

There are other types of scams consumers should watch out for:

- Government agencies like the IRS will never call to inform you that you have unpaid taxes or other liens against you. You will always receive this type of information in the mail. If someone calls claiming to be the IRS, hang-up immediately.
- If you receive an email from an unknown sender; an email riddled with spelling errors and typos; or an email threatening action unless a sum of money is paid, do not click any links provided within the email, and do not respond to the email. Simply delete the email, or send it to your spam folder.
- If someone calls your home claiming



**Urgent call from a utility? It could be a scam.**

to have discovered a virus on your computer, hang-up. This caller's intent is to access personal information you may be keeping on your computer.

Citizens Electric wants to make sure you avoid any and all types of scams that could put you or your financial information in jeopardy. If you have any questions or would like more information about how you can protect yourself from scammers, call us at 877-876-3511, or visit [www.CECMO.com](http://www.CECMO.com).

## Free Energy Audit

You could qualify for a free energy audit and home winterization. This is for both home owners and those who rent. Contact East Missouri Action Agency today to see if you qualify. Call 1-800-392-8663, or visit your local East Missouri Action Agency.

**Now is the time to put money back in your pocket with this free service.**



### MERRY, BRIGHT AND EFFICIENT HOLIDAY LIGHTING

Decking the halls doesn't have to take a toll on your energy bill! Keep your holiday lighting merry, bright and energy efficient with LED light strands.

- Consider replacing older light strands with new ENERGY STAR LED® lights. LED strands are 70 percent more efficient and last 10 times longer than the age-old standard bulbs.
- You can get the look of cozy lighting with LEDs. Just look for "warm white" on the label.
- Unlike older light strands, LED lights give off virtually no heat, making them safer for kids and pets (and reindeer).
- Save energy by setting a timer for outdoor lighting and decorations. Program the timer so the lights turn on in the evening and turn off later at night when you typically go to sleep.

Source: Dept. of Energy



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES