

August 2023



West Central Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Electric News

Youth Tour delegates on The Hill in D.C.

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Annual meeting is Aug.
4; see reminders on
times and registration

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Beware of scam calls
that target energy
consumers

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Need appliances?
Here's some efficiency
tips to keep in mind

ANNUAL MEETING WILL BE HELD AUGUST 4, 2023

Don't forget to bring your annual meeting registration card to the Multipurpose Building on the campus of the University of Central Missouri Friday, Aug. 4. Registration begins and the meal is served at 5 p.m.

The business meeting begins at 7 p.m.

This card must be brought to the annual meeting in order to register for prizes and vote in the election of the board of directors.

***Just a reminder -- the Multipurpose Building swimming pool has been removed.**

ANNUAL MEETING COVERAGE PUBLISHES IN OCTOBER

Because of printing deadlines, coverage of the 2023 Annual Membership Meeting will be published in the October issue of Electric News.

For election results, check the WCE Facebook page following the meeting.

West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Headquarters:

7867 S. Highway 13, P.O. Box 452, Higginsville, MO 64037
816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803 • PAY BY PHONE: 1-855-874-5349

To report outages 24/7:

Call 816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803 • or report outages at www.westcentralelectric.coop under "View & Report Outages"

District office:

506 N. Broadway, Oak Grove, MO 64075

Website:

www.westcentralelectric.coop

General Manager:

Michael Newland

Board of Directors:

Densil Allen Jr., *President*; Clark Bredehoeft, *Vice-President*; Dale Jarman, *Treasurer*; Robert Simmons, *Secretary*; Stan Rhodes, *Asst. Secretary*; Richard Strobel, *Director*; Sandra Streit, *Director*; Jeremy Ahmann, *Director*; Colby Dowell, *Director*

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

ON THE COVER: WCE delegates Karson Morris, Madison Chenault and Serena Sartin on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. on the 2023 Rural Electric Youth Tour.

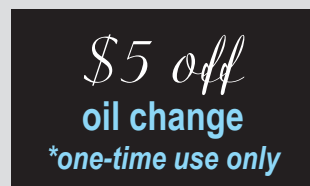
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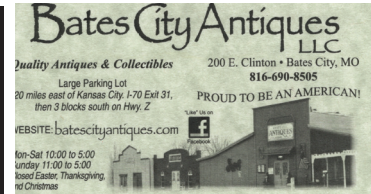
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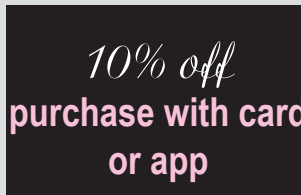
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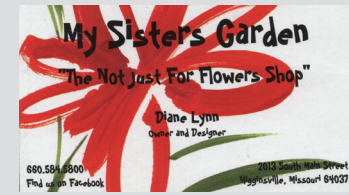
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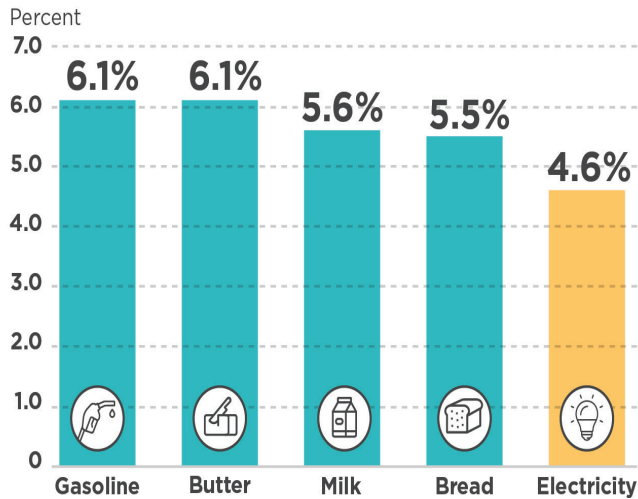
Install the app or visit www.connections.coop to find participating businesses in your area and across the nation.

*Find the complete list of local deals at www.westcentralelectric.coop.

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

Although inflation has led to increasing costs in many areas of our lives, the cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common goods. Looking at price increases over the last five years, electricity remains a good value.

Average Annual Price Increase 2017-2022



Missouri electric cooperatives offer scholarships up for grabs at State Fair

The state's electric cooperatives have once again banded together to provide four \$500 scholarships to members visiting the Missouri Electric Cooperatives building during the Missouri State Fair.

Co-op members may fill out an application in the building any time during the fair, August 10-20. Applicants must complete an application form and return to the Missouri Electric Cooperative building during the fair. Recipients must show a letter of acceptance from a college, university and/or vocational, technical school.



Beware of scam calls...

Never give your personal information over the phone

Scammers are targeting energy consumers everywhere. They often call threatening to shut off power unless payment is made immediately. Or they may call saying you overpaid and ask for credit card or bank info to provide a credit.

Never give out personal information to anyone who calls claiming to be from your utility!

Many of these scam attempts play out like this: the caller poses as a representative of your power provider, says you are behind on the bill and a truck is on the way to disconnect your service unless you pay your bill right now – over the phone. Some ask their targets to purchase prepaid cards and call back with the prepaid card number to pay the bill.

Don't fall for these scams!

"We frequently have members contact us to say they have received these type of calls, and we try to get alerts out on our Facebook page each time to warn members that it is happening again," Communications Specialist Heather Hoflander said. "West Central Electric will never call demanding immediate payment over the phone. If you get this type of a call, or have questions about your bill, call us yourself and ask about

your account. Never give out personal information over the phone."

(Remember WCE does not take payments over the phone unless the member calls the automated, secure pay-by-phone line.)

Attempts have also been made in person at the door or via email. If

your provider needs to replace or service equipment in your home, they will contact you in advance. Never respond to an email that claims to be from your utility that provides a link for payment or asks for personal information.

"This goes for all utilities, not just electric companies," Hoflander said.

If consumers suspect someone is trying to scam them, they should hang up, delete the email, or shut the door. They should call their utility at the number on their monthly bill or

the utility's website, not the phone number the scammer provides. If consumers ever feel that they are in physical danger, they should call 911.

Consumers who suspect that they have been victims of fraud should also contact local law enforcement authorities. The Federal Trade Commission's website (www.ftc.gov) is also a good source of information about how to protect personal information.



Youth Tour

is trip of a lifetime for local students

What makes electric cooperatives different from other utilities is that giving something back to the community is part of their business plan. Why do electric cooperatives bring high school students to Washington, D.C.? Because it is important to learn about the political process and to interact with your government. Students walk away from this week a better leader and with a sense that they can make a difference.

In June, Serena Sartin, Madison Chenault and Karson Morris, joined 100 other youth from across Missouri on the National Rural Electric Youth Tour where they were able to take in all our nation's capital has to offer and witness government at work on Capitol Hill.

"Our district representative, Congressman Mark Alford, was amazing," Chenault said. "He was so kind and gave very in-depth answers to whatever questions he was asked."

Time and again, delegates both past and present choose the same words to describe their experience, calling Youth Tour "the trip of a lifetime," and basking in the experiences and friendships they gained while in our nation's capital.

"This trip was seriously the trip of a lifetime," Karson Morris said. "The friendships and memories I made will stick with me forever."

More than 56,000 students from rural areas and small towns across America have participated in this unique program, with participants going on to become doctors, teachers, aircraft designers, law enforcement officers and even top legislators in the U.S. Senate. Delegates also return with a new appreciation of America and her history.

"Walking where our founding fathers shaped the future of America, and seeing the memorials that represent the millions of Americans who have fought to uphold their legacy, is truly an unforgettable experience," Sartin said. "Reflecting by the World War II Memorial, and looking across the pool to see the Washington Monument standing proud, showed me how valuable the freedoms we enjoy in this country truly are."

WCE has sent 75 area students to our nation's capital since reestablishing the Youth Tour program at the cooperative in 1992.



WCE Youth Tour delegates (l-r) Serena Sartin, Karson Morris and Madison Chenault arrive in D.C. ready to take on Youth Tour 2023!

"This trip seriously was the trip of a lifetime. The friendships and memories I made will stick with me forever. I cannot recommend it enough."

**--Karson Morris
2023 YouthTour Delegate**



Missouri's Youth Tour delegates visit the White House during the 2023 Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.

“I went in not knowing what to expect, and was welcomed with open arms into a family I never knew I needed. Missouri Youth Tour allowed me to find my people, and I will forever be grateful for this experience of a lifetime.”

**—Serena Sartin
2023 YouthTour Delegate**



(Above) Serena at Youth Tour orientation. (Below) Serena, Karson and Madison, along with fellow Youth Tour delegates from the 4th Congressional District, visit with Representative Mark Alford at his office on Capitol Hill.



WCE and fellow Missouri delegates on the Potomac River dance cruise.



Cabot Long joins WCE as journeyman

West Central Electric Cooperative welcomes Cabot Long as a journeyman lineman working out of the Higginsville location.

Long will work with crews to install new lines, build new services, repair outages and other system maintenance work.

"I am looking forward to working in the community I grew up in," Long said.



Long

He lives in Higginsville with his wife, Jennifer and daughter, Nellie.

Jesse Underwood is named Oak Grove line foreman



Underwood

Jesse Underwood has been named the new line foreman at the Oak Grove location, according to West Central Electric General Manager Michael Newland.

Underwood began his new position May 1, and replaced Matt Schellman who was named district operations supervisor earlier this year.

Underwood worked as a summer intern in 2010 and officially began his career at WCE on May 16, 2011 as an apprentice lineman. He was named journeyman Feb. 1, 2015, the position he has served in until his recent promotion.

How to read the EnergyGuide label

The EnergyGuide label is required to be placed on all appliances by the manufacturers. The label provides information about energy consumption and shows you how much energy an appliance uses compared with similar models. Keep in mind that the numbers are averages: actual costs will differ somewhat depending on how you use them. The label shows the following:

The federal government requires manufacturers to place EnergyGuide labels on all appliances. It averages energy consumption and compares that with similar models. The label shows:

- Make, model number and size of the appliance
- Estimated yearly operating cost (based on the national average cost of electricity) and the range of operating costs for similar models
- The ENERGY STAR® logo indicates that this model meets strict criteria for energy efficiency
- Estimated yearly electricity consumption
- Key features of the appliance and the similar models that make up the cost comparison range

About smart appliances

Manufacturers now offer "smart" appliances that connect to or are controlled by smart electric meters or home energy management systems. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, they help you shift your electricity use to off-peak hours. Air conditioners, water heaters, refrigerators, dishwashers and other appliances may be available as smart appliances. Smart thermostats also can be installed to manage new or existing heating and cooling systems.

Smart appliances don't just turn off during times of peak electricity demand — instead, they use subtle ways to shift energy use. You might not even be aware of it. For example, your air conditioner may run slightly less often, or your water heater may adjust its heating cycle to operate when energy costs are lower, without impacting their performance. Or your laundry or dishwasher can be scheduled to operate when electricity rates and demand are lower.

Bright ideas



Electric co-ops truly care about the communities they serve. You can find out more about this "Concern for Community" by following your co-op's social media, visiting its website, attending the annual meeting, and, of course, reading the local pages in Rural Missouri.

Before you go appliance shopping...



Before you go shopping for appliances:

- Measure space where the new appliance will go, allowing you to open the door or lid fully and with enough clearance for safe ventilation
- Decide what features you want and ask knowledgeable sales and product personnel how they operate
- Check product reviews
- Look at the energy use on the yellow EnergyGuide label
- Ask about energy-efficiency offers; your salesperson or cooperative may have information about rebates, low-interest loans or other incentives

Energy-saving tips for the kitchen

Here are tips to save kitchen energy. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, some may cut your energy use in half.

- Cover cooking pans/pots
- Use an electric kettle instead of running hot water
- Load the dishwasher fully before washing
- Reduce the number of times the refrigerator is opened
- Remove extra refrigerators/freezers
- Place the faucet lever on the kitchen sink in the cold position when using small amounts of water; placing the lever in the hot position draws hot water even though it may never reach the faucet
- Look for blue flames in natural gas appliances; yellow flames indicate the gas is burning inefficiently and an adjustment may be needed;

if you see yellow flames, consult the manufacturer or gas company

- Keep range-top burners and reflectors clean; they will reflect the heat better, and you will save energy
- Use a covered kettle, pan or electric kettle to boil water; it's faster and uses less energy
- Match the size of the pan to the heating element when cooking.
- Use the microwave oven when possible
- Use small electric pans, toaster ovens or convection ovens for small meals rather than your large stove or oven; they use one-third to one-half as much energy as a full-sized oven
- Set your refrigerator temperature at 35 to 38 degrees and 0 degrees for separate freezers for long-term storage
- Make sure your refrigerator door seals are airtight; test them by closing the door over a piece of paper or a dollar bill so it is half in and half out of the refrigerator; if you can pull the paper or bill out easily, the latch may need adjustment, the seal may need replacing or you may consider buying a new unit
- Regularly defrost manual-defrost freezers and refrigerators; frost buildup decreases the energy efficiency of the unit; don't allow frost to build up more than one-quarter of an inch
- Scrape, don't rinse, dishes before loading in dishwasher; rinsing can use up to 20 gallons of water before even loading
- Fill up the dishwasher; you'll use the same amount of energy and water regardless of the number of dishes inside
- Select the no-heat drying option in the dishwasher; it gives good drying results with less energy



FROM THE WCE BOARDROOM

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held May 25, 2023

A meeting of the board of directors of West Central Electric Cooperative was held at the office of the Cooperative, in Higginsville, Missouri, at 10 a.m. on Thursday, May 25, 2023, pursuant to the bylaws of the cooperative and previous resolution of the board of directors. The meeting was called to order by President Densil Allen Jr. Secretary Robert Simmons caused the minutes of the meeting to be kept. The following directors were present: Allen, Simmons, Clark Bredehoeft, Stan Rhodes, Sandra Streit, Dale Jarman, Richard Strobel, Colby Dowell and Jeremy Ahmann. Also present were General Manager Michael Newland and Cooperative Attorney Sheri Smiley.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was amended to include a District 1 Meeting Update and then approved as amended.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The board approved its consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of April 27, 2023; expenditures for the month of April 2023; new membership applications and membership terminations.

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following April reports were approved:

Financing and Treasurer's Report: Accounting Manager Rebecca Hoefflicker presented the April 2023 Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement. She reviewed the Financial and Statistical Report and Treasurer's Report with monthly and annual budget comparisons. She also gave the investment report. She presented and reviewed statistical data pertaining to operating revenue, expenses, margins, assets, liabilities, cash flow management, and KWH sales and ratios.

APPROVE AUDIT -- The audit for the period ending Dec. 31, 2022 was provided in the board packet. A clean audit was reported with no adjustments. After review the audit was accepted as presented.

AUDIT PROPOSAL -- An audit proposal for 2023 and 2024 from Kelso-Lynch was in the board packet. Staff recommended the board accept the audit proposal. The audit proposal was approved.

WRITTEN OFF ACCOUNTS -- A net of \$1,767.99 for the year end was presented for write offs after applying capital credits.

Operations Report: Operations Manager Scott Gard provided a written Operations Report. Pole changes and new services were reported on. Training given to crews was reported on. He reported on outages for the month. A report was given on brush crews and right-of-way.

Safety and Engineering Report: Engineering Manager Pete Nelson provided a written Safety and Engineering Report and presented the report to the board. Safety meetings, crew visits, and an engineer/staking department report was given. MECIP inspected the work crew and found no problems. New loads were discussed.

Member Services Report: Brent Schlotzhauer provided a report to supplement his written Member Services Report. His report included RoundUp enrollment. He reported on scholarship ceremonies attended. A net metering report was given. AMEC scholarships will be announced at the Fair. The co-op made a \$50.00 donation towards those scholarships. He reported on rebates and chamber meetings he attended.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Smiley presented a Conflict of Interest Policy for the board of directors which was approved.

APPOINT AMEC ANNUAL MEETING VOTING DELEGATE

Bredehoeft was appointed the voting delegate and Simmons was named as the alternate.



DISTRICT 1 MEETING

Bredehoeft reported on the meeting he attended at NW Electric. He reported on all committee appointments and the nominations for awards.

AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft reported on the executive committee meeting he attended on May 23. He reported on the new auditor, FR clothing program, safety and training, Linemen Appreciation Day, new legislation, Rural Missouri magazine updates, the State Fair, Missouri director training, the Legislative Conference, coal generation and the NRECA director's conference.

NW ELECTRIC REPORT

Simmons gave a report on the meeting he and Newland attended. An AECl written report was provided. The site for Lone Jack updates was reported on. He also reported on margins, deferred revenue, outages and a potential gas plant being planned. The audit was presented and there was a clean audit for last year.

AECI ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

Directors who attended the meeting reported on the speakers.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Smiley gave the report from the May 11 Nominating Committee meeting. She reported Simmons and Strobel were nominated for two positions for District 3, and Allen and Ralph Damon were nominated for one position for the at-large position.

LEGAL REPORT

Smiley gave a legal report.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Newland presented the monthly Manager's Report. The annual meeting and door prizes were discussed. He asked that a donation be made to the CFC Integrity Fund. The board voted to make a \$250.00 donation. He reviewed price increases on materials and discussed a rate study and cost-of-service study. Toth can complete the study by the end of the year and it has been budgeted. The board consensus was to have Toth move forward. Equity management was discussed and will be discussed more at the committee level. He reported on the CFC new CEO orientation he attended and reported on staffing.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Streit asked that Policy 2.9 be changed to clarify the name of legal counsel as Friel, McCord & Smiley, LLC. The board voted to amend the policy.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned.

FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • April 2023

	This month	YTD 2023	YTD 2022
Revenue	\$2,297,921	\$11,685,995	\$11,927,408
Power Bill Expense	1,401,358	6,289,511	6,549,026
Operation & Maint. Expense	569,637	2,285,714	2,238,684
Depreciation Expense	222,502	885,385	837,073
Interest Expense	116,593	482,811	447,591
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	2,310,090	9,943,421	10,072,374
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	(12,169)	1,742,574	1,855,034
Other Margins	21,663	94,801	66,331
TOTAL MARGINS	\$9,494	\$1,837,375	\$1,921,365

