

West Central Electric Cooperative's

2025 Rural Electric Youth Tour & CYCLE Essay Contest

West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. 7867 S. Highway 13, P.O. Box 452 * Higginsville, MO 64037 * 816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803

Dear Student,

Thank you for your interest in the 2025 Rural Electric Youth Tour and CYCLE essay contest and the trips to Washington, D.C and Jefferson City.

This packet contains a list of contest details, and various sections of information which should help you write a winning essay. Information is also available from several web sites, addresses for which you will find on the Contest Details sheet, or on the WCE website at www.westcentralelectric.coop. There are also links to various cooperative organizations such as Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc. (AECI), The Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives (AMEC), the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), Touchstone Energy, etc.

The essay topic is listed on the Contest Details sheet. Please follow the directions listed on the Contest Details sheet carefully.

The top 8-10 finalists (number of finalists depends on the number of entries received) on the written portion of the competition will present their essays during an oral competition in Higginsville on Wednesday, April 2, 2025. Following the oral competition, we will name three or four winners (depending on the number of essays received) who will receive the all-expense-paid trips to the Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. This year's Youth Tour trip is June 15-21, 2025. The five runners-up will receive an all-expense paid trip to the Cooperative Youth Conference and Leadership Experience (CYCLE), a leadership conference in Jefferson City scheduled for July 15-18, 2025.

Again, thank you for your interest in the Rural Electric Youth Tour and CYCLE. Good luck writing your essay, and we hope to see you in Higginsville on **April 2, 2025** for the oral competition and reception!

Sincerely,

Heather Hoflander, Communications Specialist Youth Tour Coordinator

West Central Electric Cooperative's

2025 Rural Electric Youth Tour & CYCLE Essay Contest

West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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Contest Details

The Topic: Students will write an essay on the following topic, taking it in any direction they desire: "The Cooperative Difference"

As a MEMBER-OWNED, NOT-FOR-PROFIT electric cooperative, we are intentionally different. Cooperatives are focused on PEOPLE, not PROFITS. A cooperative is a business that is created and owned by the people who use its goods and services. Co-ops are unique because its members are the owners, they have a say in the business decisions and share in any profits made. Co-ops put consumers first because the consumers are the owners. The 7 Cooperative Principles are the basis on which all cooperatives operate. Your essay should focus on what makes cooperatives different from other forms of businesses.

> *Essays that do not stick ot the topic, follow the guidelines, are deemed inappropriate, or are written with AI will be immediately disqualified.

Examples:

- •Use The 7 Cooperative Principles to discuss how cooperatives are different from other forms of business. Example: The 7th Cooperative Principle is "Concern for Community." Talk about how West Central Electric has made a difference in your local community.
- •Talk about how America's electric cooperatives focus on reliability and affordability rather than earning profits for investors, and the ways they strive for reliability and affordability.

Assignment:

Contestants should submit a 600-word, typed, creative essay on the above topic. On a separate cover sheet, include the following information: Your name and address, telephone number, parents' names, school, teacher's name and title of your essay. Also include the title at the TOP OF PAGE ONE of your essay. DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON ANY PART OF THE ESSAY -- COVER SHEET ONLY

Resources:

This packet contains research material which should provide you with the needed resources to write your essay. However, feel free to add other sources for your essay if you wish. You are also welcome to interview someone, or use any other additional sources you find helpful. Please include them at the end of the essay in a works cited page. Some websites which you may find helpful:

- ◆ National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (www.nreca.org)
- *Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc. (www.aeci.org)
- ◆Members First (www.membersfirst.coop)
- - *These websites are GREAT places for information that directly relates to the topic!

Heather Hoflander, Youth Tour Coordinator Mail essays to:

West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc.

P.O. Box 452

Higginsville, MO 64037

(Please coordinate this with your teacher so he or she can mail all of your school's essays

together if there are several entries.)

Entry Deadline: Essays must be received in the Higginsville office no later than 4:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 7, 2025. How essays will be scored:

There are 100 points possible based on five areas:

- 1. Knowledge of subject
- 2. Originality

- 4. Composition
- 3. Content (ability to adhere to topic)
- 5. Grammar, spelling & neatness

Essays will be blind-judged. (Before being sent to the judges, your cover page will be omitted so judges will not know who the writer is, what school the writer attends, etc.) Essays will be judged by other Youth Tour coordinators from around the state. *Please note that essays which do not adhere to the assigned topics will be disqualified and will not be sent to the written judges. WCE and contest judges reserve the right to disqualify any essay that is deemed inappropriate or that fails to accurately reflect the cooperative message.

How do I become a finalist?

After all essays are turned in, they will be given to three written judges who will read and judge each essay. After each judge assigns each essay a score, the three scores will be combined for a final written score. The top eight (or more depending on number of essays received) final written scores will comprise the list of finalists. Each finalist will then be invited to present their essay before another panel of three oral judges at 7 p.m. Wed., April 2, 2025 at West Central Electric's main office in Higginsville. Family members, teachers and principals will be invited to attend the evening's event, along with members of West Central's board of directors, staff and other invited guests.

How the oral judges score finalists:

There are 100 points possible from three oral judges. Scores are based on five areas:

1. Speaking ability

4. Originality

2. Knowledge of subject

- 5. Presentation of self
- 3. Content (ability to adhere to topic)

Who are the oral judges?

Oral judges are selected from the employee pools of other electric cooperatives or from area communities. Oral judges may include other Youth Tour coordinators or employees from other cooperatives, Youth Tour alumni, etc.

How the winners are chosen:

Each finalist's combined written score will be added to each of the three oral judges' scores for a final contest score. The winners will be announced that evening as West Central's delegates and the winners of the trip to Washington, D.C. **June 15-21, 2025**. *We will send at least three delegates to D.C. with a potential of five, depending on the number of essays received.

Five finalists will win a trip to CYCLE:

Five students will also be named winners of a trip to Jefferson City for the cooperative-sponsored "Cooperative Youth Conference and Leadership Experience" (C.Y.C.L.E.), a 4-day leadership conference is scheduled for July 15-18, 2025.

"If you are selected as a finalist, you are expected to attend whichever trip you win. If you know that you will not be able to attend the D.C trip, please let us know ASAP, as we can swap places among the winners if necessary. If you are chosen as a finalist and know you will not be able to attend either trip, please notify us immediately so we can give the next person in line your place in the finals and a chance at a trip to D.C. Please don't cheat someone else out of the experience!

Do I have to be in an organized high school class to enter?

No. You may enter this contest on your own by following the procedures on this sheet. There have been several independent entries (including home school students) over the years who have made the finals and won the trips to Washington, D.C. and Jefferson City.

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2025 Rural Electric Youth Tour Essay Contest

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Please provide us with the following information to be used if you are selected as a finalist. This information will be used for the finalist reception program, to introduce you if you are selected as a finalist, and for a news release if you are selected as a finalist. THIS INFORMATION SHEET MUST ACCOMPANY YOUR ESSAY.

Name:
Age:
Parents:
Address:
Email address (that you WILL CHECK on a regular basis):
BEST Telephone number to reach you:
School:
Teacher:
School activities in which you participate:

West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. MEDIA RELEASE FORM

I understand that through my participation in the West Central Electric Cooperative Rural Electric Youth Tour competition, my name, image and information provided by me to the cooperative may be used in various forms of media (print, video, web, etc.) while reporting and promoting information about the Youth Tour competition.

I hereby consent and authorize the use of my image and information by West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. and anyone authorized by West Central Electric Cooperative.

Signature:
Printed Name:
Address:
Phone Number:
Signature of parent or guardian (if minor):

^{*}Please include this form with your essay entry.

Rural Electric Youth Tour Scoring

Written Essay (100 points possible)

Knowledge of Subject

30 points

(Demonstrates a basic understanding of the Rural Electric program as it relates to his or her chosen topic.)

Originality

30 points

(Essay shows thought beyond the facts given in the resource packet, not just a regurgitation of the materials provided.)

Content (ability to adhere to topic)

20 points

(Essay clearly elaborates on the topic chosen with facts to back up the writer's opinions.)

Composition

10 points

(Essay is composed in an organized format, flows well, and has good transitions.)

Grammar, Spelling and Neatness

10 points

(Words, sentences and paragraphs follow the standard rules of grammar; words are spelled correctly, and essay is typed or computergenerated without messy corrections.)

Oral Presentation (100 points possible)

Speaking Ability

30 points

(Student is able to speak clearly, has eye contact and expression, speaks rather than recites.)

Knowledge of Subject

20 points

(Demonstrates a basic understanding of the Rural Electric program as it relates to the chosen topic.)

Content (ability to adhere to topic)

20 points

(Essay clearly elaborates on the topic chosen with facts to back up the writer's opinions.)

Originality

20 points

(Essay shows thought beyond the regurgitation of facts from sources provided.)

Presentation of self

10 points

(Neat appearance, demonstrates a positive attitude and poise, seems excited to be a part of the contest, and exhibits a strong desire to be chosen as a delegate for the Rural Electric Youth Tour.)

Explaining Cooperatives

What is a cooperative?

With the help of Franklin D. Roosevelt, who established the Rural Electrification Administration in 1935, friends and neighbors banded together to create a new kind of electric utility, where the voice of every person made a difference. Electric cooperatives brought electric power to the rural areas when no one else would. Today, America's electric cooperatives provide much more than competitively-priced, reliable energy. They are committed to improving the quality of life in their communities.

Electric cooperatives are locally-owned and operated businesses established to supply electricity to their member-owners. They are are owned by the people who use the power the co-op provides, so its customers are also its owners. They are committed to putting their consumers first, and being responsive to local needs. Electric co-ops are governed by a board of directors elected from among the membership. Any member may run for the board, and all members are asked to participate in an annual membership meeting at which board members are elected.

Who is West Central Electric Cooperative?

A member-owned not-for-profit cooperative, West Central Electric Cooperative was formed in 1939 to bring electricity to rural west central Missouri. Rural Missourians began the co-op when existing utilities believed that energizing the countryside wasn't a profitable venture. There are 40 rural electric cooperatives in the state of Missouri. WCE now provides power to more than 14,800 meters through more than 2,500 miles of line in five counties, including Lafayette, Johnson, Eastern Jackson and a small part of Cass and Pettis counties. The company's headquarters is located in Higginsville, Missouri, with a branch office in Oak Grove.

West Central Electric operates as a cooperative system which is regulated by a set of bylaws. This means that when someone signs up for service, they become a member, and therefore a part owner of the cooperative. A board of directors is elected from among the members, and the board meets monthly to make decisions concerning the cooperative's business. Members of the cooperative have an equal vote on all amendments, bylaws and directors.

What are capital credits?

As a member of West Central Electric Cooperative, this is your business. While other electric consumers are paying some huge corporation for their electricity, WCE members are basically paying themselves for their own electricity.

After operating expenses for the co-op are met each year, any funds (profits) that remain are assigned to the members in the form of capital credit allocations which are your share of the amount paid for actual electric service, based on the cost of your electricity for the year. Capital credits are the cooperative's equity. They make it possible to secure loans and maintain facilities and services. When the equity level is high enough, the board of directors authorizes the disbursement of capital credits.

As of Dec. 2023, West Central Electric has repaid more than \$39 million in capital credits to its members!

What else do Electric Cooperatives do?

Obviously the number-one goal of a rural electric cooperative is to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity to our members. But that is just one of the ways electric cooperatives work for their member-owners.

Safety Programs--We offer several safety programs and demonstrations appropriate for all ages from preschool children to adults at schools, businesses, area 4-H meetings, businesses and community groups.

Rural Electric Youth Tour and CYCLE -- Each year, West Central Electric sends delegates to Washington, D.C. for the National Rural Electric Youth Tour, and to Jefferson City for the Cooperative Youth Conference and Leadership Experience known as CYCLE.

Scholarship Programs -- West Central offers three scholarship programs to students in our service area.

Energy Efficiency/Rebate Programs -- West Central Electric offers rebates to members who install energy-efficient appliances and provides its members with information on using electricity efficiently and easy steps they can take to reduce their energy consumption and therefore save money on their electric bills.

Committment to Local Communities -- One of the core values of Touchstone Energy Cooperatives is a commitment to their local communities. WCE donates both time and money to various community events and organizations. One of the cooperative's biggest areas of interest is area 4-H and FFA. The cooperative helps sponsor county 4-H and FFA fairs, and cooperative employees donate time to judge at area fairs, serve as 4-H project leaders and judge at area and district speech contests. The cooperative is also a sponsor of various school and community events throughout its service area, and co-op employees also serve on many different boards and leadership teams from chambers of commerce to economic development boards to coordinators of programs like CHOICES. The coop's newest venture is Operation RoundUp, which provides funding for various community and school projects in the service area.



Discover the value of your cooperative membership

Members are why we exist

You set up your electric service account with your local electric cooperative and you think to yourself, "That's done. Now I just have to pay my monthly bill." But the truth is, we're more than just a utility provider that you pay each month for electricity. We have more to offer. And we want you, our members, to know about your benefits.

It's all you

You, and all our members, are the reason cooperatives exist. When members embrace the idea that they have more than a passing interest in their co-op, and that they actually are the owners, with an ability to help guide it; that is the power of cooperative membership.



Keep it local

We were local before local was cool. As a member of your electric cooperative, you receive local and personal service from employees at your co-op who live in your community too. We support local schools, youth programs and events. And we've been doing all this since our beginning.

Your money

One of our goals is to make lives better and easier for members. And having a little extra cash can help with both. So we strive to provide affordable electricity, give money back with capital credits and offer energy efficiency tips to help you save energy and money.

Your safety

Your electric cooperative has always been dedicated to providing safe, reliable and affordable electricity to you, our member. The lengths we go to keep you, your family and our linemen safe are a point of pride for us and are never taken lightly.







7 Cooperative Principles reflect what co-ops value

Originally drawn up by Charles Howarth, one of 28 weavers and other artisans who founded the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers in Rochdale, England, on December 21, 1844, these principles governing cooperative operations were introduced into the United States in 1874 by the National Grange, and formally written down by the International Cooperative Alliance in 1937 (last updated in 1995).

Open and Voluntary Membership

Membership in a cooperative is open to all persons who can reasonably use its services and stand willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, regardless of race, religion, gender, or economic circumstances.

Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. Elected representatives (directors/trustees) are elected from among the membership and are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote); cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

Members' Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative; setting up reserves; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

Autonomy and Independence

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control as well as their unique identity.

Education, Training and Information

Education and training for members, elected representatives (directors/trustees), CEOs, and employees help them effectively contribute to the development of their cooperatives. Communications about the nature and benefits of cooperatives, particularly with the general public and opinion leaders, helps boost cooperative understanding.

Cooperation Among Cooperatives

By working together through local, national, regional, and international structures, cooperatives improve services, bolster local economies, and deal more effectively with social and community needs.

Concern for Community

Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies supported by the membership. These principles are underpinned by six ideals—the so-called cooperative values of Self-Help, Self-Responsibility, Democracy, Equality, Equity, and Solidarity. In addition, the International Cooperative Alliance lists cooperative "ethical values" of Honesty, Openness, Social Responsibility, and Caring for Others.

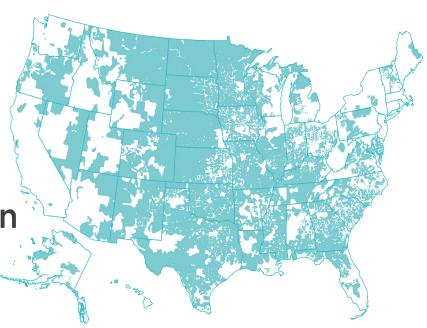
America's Electric Cooperatives

From booming suburbs to remote rural communities, America's electric cooperatives are energy providers and engines of economic development. Electric cooperatives keep the lights on and play a vital role in transforming communities.

Cooperatives power

56% of the American

landscape.



Our co-ops ...

... SERVE

42 million people, including **92% of persistent** poverty counties.

... POWER over **22 million**

businesses, homes, schools and farms in 48 states.

... RETURN more than \$1 billion

to their consumer-members annually as not-for-profit organizations.



832

distribution cooperatives

are the foundation of the electric cooperative network. They were built by and serve co-op members in the community by delivering electricity and other services.



64

generation & transmission cooperatives

provide wholesale power to distribution co-ops through their own electric generation facilities or by purchasing power on behalf of the distribution members.



/////////// THE IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON ...

Threats to Reliability

Electric co-ops rely on a diverse suite of resources to reliably meet the energy needs of their communities. Always available energy is key to keeping the lights on. Yet threats to reliability are increasing.

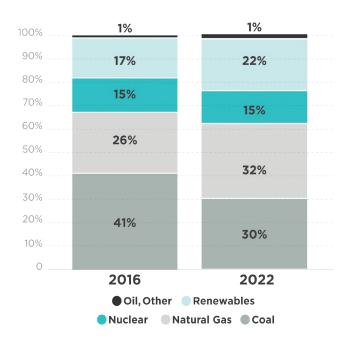
Demand for electricity is growing rapidly. The Energy Information Administration projects that power demand will increase by 2.5% this year and 3.2% in 2025. And over the next five years, peak electricity demand is forecast to grow by 38 gigawatts - the equivalent of adding another California to the nation's grid.

Supply is not keeping up. More than 110 gigawatts of always-available generation enough to power about 35 million homes is forecast to retire by 2033.

Public policy is making the problem worse.

As a result, all or parts of 19 states are at high risk of rolling blackouts during normal peak conditions from 2024 - 2028.

Co-op Retail Energy Mix



Note: Chart reflects most recently available data. Renewables include owned and directly purchased electric generation, plus generation in the mix from wholesale market purchases and do not reflect renewable tax credits. Source: NRECA analysis

//////// ... AT A COST FAMILIES AND BUSINESSES CAN AFFORD.

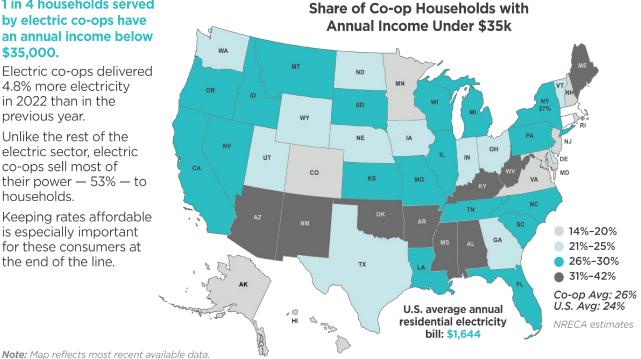
1 in 4 households served by electric co-ops have an annual income below \$35,000.

Electric co-ops delivered 4.8% more electricity in 2022 than in the previous year.

Unlike the rest of the electric sector, electric co-ops sell most of their power -53% - to households.

Keeping rates affordable is especially important for these consumers at the end of the line.

Source: 2022 EIA data



2

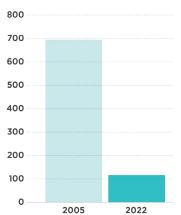
CO-OPS ARE REDUCING EMISSIONS

Cleaner Air

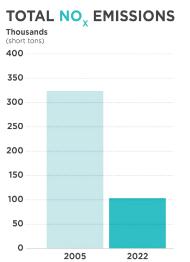
Cooperatives are meeting member expectations by reducing emissions through a combination of emission-reduction measures and switching to natural gas and renewables.

Reduced **sulphur dioxide** emissions 83% from 2005-2022.

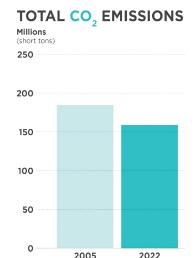




Reduced **nitrogen oxide** emissions 68% from 2005-2022.



Reduced **carbon dioxide** emissions 14% from 2005-2022.



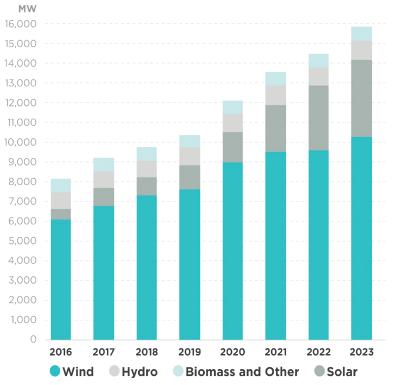
Note: Chart reflects most recent available data. Source: NRECA analysis of EPA data

Renewable Energy Growth

Co-ops are incorporating renewables to complement always-available generation.

- Since 2016, co-ops have nearly doubled their renewable capacity from 8.2 gigawatts to nearly 15.8 gigawatts.
- Co-ops added over 1.3 gigawatts of new renewable capacity in 2023.
- Electric co-op wind farms and solar arrays generate enough electricity to power more than 3.5 million homes.
- Co-ops have announced more than 5.3 gigawatts of renewable capacity additions through 2027.
- Co-ops also purchase 10 gigawatts of power from federal hydropower facilities.

Cumulative Co-op Renewable Capacity, Owned and Under Contract



HUBS OF INNOVATION









| Meeting Tomorrow's Energy Needs by Investing in the Future of Communities

Today, co-ops are positioning themselves to leverage new infrastructure funds to support their communities through programs included in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act.

As of early 2024, over 60 cooperatives in 30 states have been selected to move forward with funding negotiations for more than \$1 billion in federal funding, with more on the way. These include a variety of project types, including:

- Clean Energy Technologies, including solar, hydroelectric and battery storage
- Microgrid Deployment
- Transmission & Distribution Upgrades
- Carbon Capture and Storage
- Electric Vehicles
- Broadband and Smart Grid Investments
- Grid Hardening and **Resilience** from Natural Disasters
- Long Duration Battery Technologies



THE MANAGEMENT OF THE MANAGEME

Focused on people, not profits.

- Electric cooperatives are built by and belong to the communities they serve. They are led by members from the community and are uniquely suited to meet local needs.
- In the 2023 J.D. Power Electric Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction Study, co-ops secured seven of the top 10 spots and the highest average score among all electric utility providers.

Source: NRECA





What is Operation Round Up?

Operation Round Up is a program designed to charitable organizations and the communities collect donations that will be used to benefit within the WCE service territory.

How did Round Up begin?

cooperatives in Missouri. WCE has participated in Cooperative in South Carolina in 1989. Since that than 200 electric cooperatives nationwide and 18 The program was created by Palmetto Electric time, the program has been adopted by more the program since Sept. 1, 2018.

How does Round Up work?

example, if your bill is \$65.50, it would be rounded to charitable organizations through an application up to \$60.00. The funds collected are placed into **WCE members who want to particiate have their** the WCE Round Up Foundation and are donated is tax deductible, and you may opt out simply by member will donate \$6.00 a year. Your donation contacting the cooperative if you do not wish to up to \$66.00. A bill of \$59.99 would be rounded keep any of the money collected. On average, a monthly bill rounded up to the next dollar. For process. WCE Round Up Foundation does not

Why get involved in Operation **Round Up?**

support of community developments and identifymembers by enhancing the quality of life through ing and serving the members' energy needs. By can continue our commitment to our local comadopting the Operation Round Up program we WCE exists to serve the changing needs of

Operation Round Up Grant Recipients:

Holden Food Pantry

Odessa Community Services Holden Senior Center

Trinity Lutheran School - Alma

Partners for Odessa Parks & Rec Mayview Missouri Foundation Concordia School District

Church Women of Higginsville

Chilhowee Park Board

Tri-County Outreach – Waverly Concordia Senior Center

•MU Extension of Lafayette & Johnson Counties Higginsville Senior Center

Good Shepherd Care Community Mayview Fire Protection District

Warrensburg Middle School

Binding Hearts Quilt Ministry

Montessori Schoolhouse - Higginsville

 Concordia Fire Protection District Assembly of Good - Higginsville

Lafayette County Enterprises

Johnson Co. Livestock Committee

Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Johnson Co.

Corder Fire Protection District

Concordia High School Backsnack Program Lafayette Co. C-1 Phys. Ed. Dept.

Santa Fe FFA Backsnack Program Chilhowee Baptist Church Knob Noster Footsteps

·Health Care Coalition of Lafayette Co. Lafayette Co. 4-H Fairboard

Refuge on Ming

Crest Ridge School District

Operation Round Up really make? How much of a difference can

iion Round Up could raise approximately \$36,000 membership participates in the program, Operaorganizations within our communities, the posper year. With those funds going to charitable WCE has over 12,000 members. If 50% of our

Did you know change a life? change could your pocket







Applications and awarding of funds procedures

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

the Cooperative. Organizations or individuals providing activities, programs, are eligible for funding consideration. graphically within the area served by Cooperative geographic service area Applications will be accepted from or benefits to people who live in the individuals or entities located geo-

EVALUATION FACTORS

The following factors will be considered in the evaluation of all funding requests:

 Level of the community support for dents and the entire community; or, ·Potential benefit to the area resi-

ne program or project or the organizaion requesting the funds; or,

 Fiscal and administrative capacity of the organization to deliver on proposed activities; or,

 Available balance of WCEF accounts; or,

Provide predictable and evaluative

FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

Contributions shall not be made for the following:
•Political, lobbying, fraternal, labor

organizations.

Fund-raising dinners, raffles, and

other events.

 Capital fund campaigns. National fund drives.

Advertising.

Scholarship programs or individual scholarships.

Uniforms or general sponsorships

for league or traveling sports teams Internal payroll expenses of an

ed with a school district shall be limited Donations to organizations associat- Organizations or individuals located to \$10,000 per calendar year.

Cooperative geographic service area outside the Cooperative geographic for activities occurring outside the service area requesting support



Major Funding Categories



Economic Development

Education and Youth

Environment





Looking out for our members

One of electric cooperatives' most important roles is looking out for our members. That takes many different forms from ensuring a safe, reliable and affordable power supply; to monitoring state and federal regulations that could affect cooperative members' electric rates and reliablity of service; to being reaponsible stewards of the environment; to helping our members save money on their electric bills by producing and transmitting power at the lowest cost possible.

KEEPING TRACK OF LEGISLATION AFFECTING OUR MEMBERS

AMEC's Government Relations Department represents the interests of Missouri's electric cooperatives and their members before the Missouri General Assembly, state agencies and the U.S. Congress. Their responsibilities include educating lawmakers about Missouri's electric cooperatives, monitoring legislation which affects co-ops and their members and influencing legislation when necessary. The department also works closely with regulators and other state officials.



West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. Higginsville, Mo. • Oak Grove, Mo. • (816) 565-4842 or (800) 491-3803 A Exalument Energy Cooperative

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Our focus on serving members drives us to be good stewards of the environment and of our members' resources. We've balanced our responsibilities to produce reliable, affordable, responsible electricity, and constantly seek ways to improve the efficiency and environmental performance of our units at our power plants.

Associated Electric Cooperative and its members have invested more than \$1 billion since 1994 to improve air quality and care for our land and water resources, reducing nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide and mercury emissions. We have achieved national recognition for restoring land that today provides pasture, woodlands, wildlife habitat and outdoor recreational opportunities. We've partnered to bring the first utility-scale wind farms to Missouri -- and we buy all the power from those farms, as well as farms in Oklahoma and Kansas.

AFFORDABILITY AND RELIABILITY

We understand ultimately, all costs are paid by our rural electric cooperative members. That drives us to innovate and find ways to provide reliable power in the most economical way. The goal of our three-tiered system of cooperatives is to deliver reliable electricity to cooperative member-consumers at the lowest cost possible. Associated and its six member-owners' integrated, high-voltage transmission system is a key resource for ensuring affordable, reliable power for members.

Associated ensures reliability with a balanced mix of generating and transmission assets including natural gas, reliable coal and alternative energy like wind and hydropower.

