

May 2023



West Central Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Electric News

May is Electrical Safety Month

Storm warnings, downed power
lines...here's how to stay safe
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Board of Directors Qualifications:

No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold any position of trust in the cooperative who:

(A) is not a member who continuously uses cooperative energy and service at his/her permanent, primary place of residence; or

(B) is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or business selling electric energy supplies to the cooperative, or a business primarily engaged in selling electrical or plumbing appliances, fixtures or supplies to the members of the cooperative; or

(C) Has been an employee of the cooperative within the last three (3) years.

Nothing contained in this section shall affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the board of directors.

Memo on seasonal connections...

Members requesting seasonal connections on meters for wells, irrigation systems, etc. are asked to have either the map number or pole number available when they call in. Having one of these pieces of information will help cooperative employees ensure the right meter is being connected at your location. Please direct any questions to WCE at 816-565-4942 or 800-491-3803.

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.

2023 West Central Electric Cooperative Nominating Committee

Following is a list of the members named to the 2023 West Central Electric Cooperative Nominating Committee. If you are interested in serving on West Central Electric Cooperative's board of directors, contact any of the committee members in your district listed below. The committee will convene on May 11, 2023 to nominate individuals to be placed on the official ballot. Nominees will be voted on at the annual meeting Aug. 4, 2023 in Warrensburg.

District I

Adam Heater
8968 Powell Rd.
Odessa, Mo. 64076
816-529-6594

Charles Bartram
8679 Christy Rd.
Odessa, Mo. 64076
816-230-8192

District III

Virginia Haller
510 NE 201st Rd.
Warrensburg, Mo. 64093
660-747-7330

Jeremy Sanders
613 NW 1001 Rd.
Holden, Mo. 64040
660-909-3165

District II

Lance Tieman
P.O. Box 212
Higginsville, Mo. 64037
660-909-2127

Paul Nolte
711 W. 35th St.
Higginsville, Mo. 64037
660-909-7285

District IV

William Grauberger
513 NW 1201st Rd.
Holden, Mo. 64040
816-277-4171

Tonya Adams
1627 SW 830th Rd.
Holden, Mo. 64040
816-616-9004

District V

Stephanie Othic
41 SW 251st Rd.
Centerview, MO 64019
660-864-6687

**Terms will expire for District 3 directors Robert Simmons and Richard Strobel, and District 5-At-large director Densil Allen. Members will elect TWO directors from District 3 and ONE director from District 5.*

WCE employees and directors are honored for years of service



Employees recognized for five years of service: (l-r) General Manager Michael Newland and Computer Technician Brandon Thaller.



Employees recognized for 25 years of service: (l-r) Line Foreman Todd Gast, Line Foreman Billy Mackie, Administrative Assistant and Benefits Administrator Kim Lewis, Engineering Manager Pete Nelson, Accountant Laura Years and Groundman/Truck Driver Eric Wegener.



Member Services Manager Brent Schlotzhauer was recognized for 35 years of service.



Staking Technician Jeff Rhoades was recognized for 30 years of service.



Board member Sandra Streit was recognized by General Manager Michael Newland for serving on the WCE Board of Directors for 10 years.

An advertisement for Safe Electricity.org. The background is a photograph of a shovel digging into green grass, with a person's leg in jeans and a black rubber boot visible on the right. Overlaid on the left side is the text "DIG SAFELY" in large, bold, black letters, followed by "CALL 811 FIRST" in slightly smaller bold black letters. At the bottom left is the Safe Electricity.org logo, which includes a stylized plug icon and the text "Safe Electricity.org".



May is Electrical Safety Month

General Manager Michael Newland

Your electric cooperative goes to great lengths to make sure our employees go home safely to their families every day. We've created a culture of safety in order to build and reinforce work habits. Our goal is zero injuries due to electrical contact — and to eliminate all other safety risks that can lead to preventable injuries such as strains and falls.

We do this with constant training that covers injury prevention, safe work practices such as proper grounding of lines and proper flagging when working alongside roadways. Our vehicles, rubber cover-up materials and hotsticks used for live line work are rigorously inspected.

Tailgate talks where foremen and team leaders explain the job and highlight potential risks begin every work session. We even ask our employees to report near misses — those times when an accident could have happened but didn't — in order that all might learn from mistakes.

Our focus on employee safety is important to the men and women who are the most important resource your electric

cooperative has. But this is only half of the job. We also want to make sure that each and every cooperative member, along with members of the general public, stay safe around electricity.

This effort starts in the schools where our employees teach students life-saving skills including avoiding downed power lines, flying kites away from power lines and what to do if they are in an accident that causes a power line to fall on their car.

You will see safety tips shared on our local pages in rural Missouri and on our social media. Please take the time to read these messages and apply them to your daily activities. You should also share them with your family.

May is National Electrical Safety Month. The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) is a non-profit organization dedicated exclusively to promoting electrical safety in the home, school, and workplace. To commemorate National Electrical Safety Month each May, ESFI spearheads an annual campaign to educate key audiences about the steps that can be taken in order to reduce the number of electrically related fires, fatalities, injuries and property loss.

Whether you own your home or rent, electrical safety should be a priority. Your electric cooperative joins with ESFI in promoting the safe use of electricity. You can learn more by visiting www.esfi.org and www.SafeElectricity.org.

Know what to do around downed power lines

Stay in the car or cab and call 9-1-1

May is Electrical Safety Month and a good time to think about how to stay safe in a situation where there are downed power lines, such as after a storm or as the result of an accident.

Mary Gehrig encountered such a scenario during a severe storm, and she shares what happened to her to increase awareness about downed power line safety.

Seventeen-year-old Gehrig was driving home from a friend's house on a stormy June night, from Fargo to Kindred, N.D. Although some cars had pulled over to wait out the storm, Gehrig was close to home, and she thought she could make it.

Around 25 minutes into her 30-minute drive, Gehrig turned onto the county road that would take her home. Although there was near-zero visibility due to the storm, which turned much more severe than originally forecast, she noticed two white lines in the distance. As she got closer, she realized that those lines were across the road, in her path, and they were anything but small.

"I realized I was not going to (be able to) drive over it," Gehrig recalls. She slammed on the brakes and her car struck the object, which happened to be one of two high-voltage transmission power lines lying in the road. The massive cable stopped Mary's car in its tracks. The car's

electrical system was damaged, and she was stuck there alone during the storm.

The next thing Gehrig did was pick up her phone and call her parents. When her dad heard that there was a downed power line involved, he told her to stay in the car and call 9-1-1.

Fire chief Rich Schock, who was on the scene that night, said, "Those are large transmission lines with a lot of volts in them," adding that the outcome could have been fatal had Mary gotten out. "Mary did everything right," he said.

When there is an accident involving downed power lines, a padmount transformer or other related utility equipment, Safe Electricity offers these safety tips:

- Call 9-1-1 and report that a downed line or other electrical equipment is involved.
- Do not get out of the vehicle until electric utility workers say it is safe to exit.
- Warn those involved in the accident to stay put and alert others who might approach to stay back.

Exiting a vehicle or equipment is the last resort and should only be attempted if the car is on fire or giving off smoke. If this is the case, exit the vehicle by crossing your arms and jumping from the vehicle without touching it. Then, hop with both feet together as far as you can.

To watch Mary's story or to learn more, go to [Safe Electricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

A storm warning means **TAKE ACTION**



Stay Safe During and After a Storm

Storms can be unpredictable and wreak havoc on the power grid. Severe wind and ice accumulation can cause power lines to gallop or snap. Tornadoes and hurricanes can bring down transmission towers, power poles and power lines and damage other equipment. Lightning can strike a transformer. All types of severe weather events can cause damage or make utility equipment difficult to access.

Do all you can to keep yourself and others safe during or after a storm.

KEEP YOU AND YOURS SAFE

- Install a weather app for severe weather notifications.
- Shelter in a safe area. (Storm warning = take action!)
- Have an evacuation plan in place (e.g., for floods, wildfires).
- Make sure your emergency kit is properly stocked and up to date.
- Follow all manufacturer's instructions when using a generator.
- Place a portable generator at least 20 feet away from doors and windows.
- Use a generator in an open area (not in a garage, carport or enclosed space).
- Ensure carbon monoxide alarms are installed on every level of your home.

KEEP OTHERS SAFE

Do not plug a generator into a wall outlet, which can cause backfeed. Backfeed means that power can go from your home back into the power grid and endanger crews that are working to restore power.

DURING CLEANUP

- If there is an outage, do not go outdoors until the power has been restored.
- Ice, snow, standing water or storm debris could be covering downed power lines.
- Never approach a downed power line; call 9-1-1 to report it. Alert others to stay away.
- Do not trim trees/branches within 10 feet of an overhead power line.

Learn more at:



WCE Life Support Equipment list will be updated

In an effort to better serve its members, West Central Electric Cooperative updates the Life Support Equipment List each year.

“Although we add new entries to the Life Support Equipment List as members call and request to be placed on the list,

we seldom get members calling to let us know they need to be removed,”

Communications Specialist

Heather

Hoflander said.

“In an effort to keep the list as

up-to-date as possible, we create a new list every year.”

Members are asked to fill out the following form, and mail it to West Central Electric NO LATER THAN JULY 1, 2023 to ensure their name appears on the

new list.

The Life Support Equipment List is used by cooperative personnel in the event of a planned outage, for example, during extensive repairs or maintenance.

The list is not used as a priority list to get service turned back on in the event of an

an individual service when the main line is down. Until the main line is repaired, there won’t be any power to the individual line.”

Inclusion on the list also does not waive disconnection for non-payment.

Members requesting their name be

placed on the Life Support Equipment List should mail the following form to the Higginsville office. If you or a family member is on oxygen, please let us

know how many hours of back-up you have available.

Please keep in mind that if we do not hear from you by JULY 1, 2023, your name will be removed from the current Life Support Equipment List.

If your name needs to remain on the WCE Life Support Equipment List, You MUST fill out the following form and mail it to West Central Electric Cooperative BEFORE July 1, 2023, or your name will be removed from the current list.

Request for 2023-24 Life Support Equipment List inclusion

(Please fill out all information completely.)

Name to appear on list: _____

Name on WCE account: _____

Account Number: _____ Location Number: _____

BEST Phone Number to reach you: _____ Email address: _____

Life support equipment requiring electricity to operate: _____

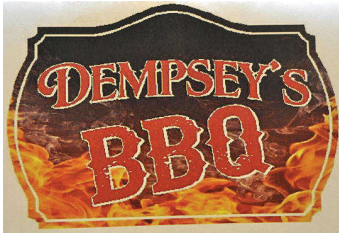
If on oxygen, how many hours back-up? _____

Please fill out all information completely and mail to Heather Hoflander, West Central Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 452, Higginsville, MO 64037.

**West Central Electric Cooperative offices will be closed
for Memorial Day on Monday, May 29**

What can your
**Co-op Connections
card**

get you at this month's
featured businesses?



Free Drink
with purchase of
an adult meal

Dempsey's BBQ
103 NE 2nd St., Concordia, Mo. • 660-463-7232

Must show Co-op Connections card or app. One per visit.



10% off
massage
Free
consultation

Oak Grove Chiropractic
705 S. Broadway, Oak Grove, Mo. • 302-545-8264

Must show Co-op Connections card or app

10% off
**new business card
orders placed on
the first Friday of
the month**



Higginsville Printing
1808 Main St., Higginsville, Mo. • 660-584-7721

Must show Co-op Connections card or app. Offer good 1x per year.

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

In the market for a new A/C? Think efficiency

The weather is warming up, and if you find yourself in the market for a new air conditioner, it can be tough to know how to find the most efficient option for your home. Here are some tips to consider for finding the right solution and saving you money on your electric bill.

Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory's Home Energy Saver offers these suggestions when shopping for a new air conditioner: Don't hire a contractor who wants to size your unit based solely on the floor area of your house.

Contractors should calculate how much cooling a home needs according to the guidelines in the Manual J of the Air Conditioner Contractors of America. To gather the necessary information, your contractor should spend about an hour poking around your house, taking measurements in each room and asking questions. He or she needs to measure floors, ceilings, and walls – including all the windows – and check insulation in the attic, walls and crawlspaces. Some other factors that go into the cooling load formula include indoor and outdoor temperatures, number of occupants, shading and roof color.

Insist on getting a copy or printout of the cooling load calculations. These can be useful in comparing bids from contractors. Question the contractor if the calculations don't include all the items mentioned above, or if you see anything that you don't understand.

Ask your contractor to size the air conditioner based on the latent cooling load (which considers the humidity of the air) as well as the sensible cooling load (which considers the temperature of the air) for your home.

Don't be tempted by the lowest bid. Be willing to pay for the time the contractor must spend to do the job right.

Check for duct leaks and disconnected ducts. Also be sure air flow is not restricted by ducts that are crushed or too small for the system. Ideally, the contractor should use diagnostic equipment to find leaks and then fix them with quality duct sealants (not duct tape). It doesn't make a lot of sense to buy a larger air conditioner to cool your attic or crawlspace!

Understand new efficiency ratings – A room air unit's efficiency is measured by the energy efficiency ratio or EER. New EER standards were enacted Jan. 1, 2023. Look for an EER2 of 9.6 and above for portables and 11.5 and above for window units.

The SEER2 standards set a minimum of 13.4 for residential systems in the northern states and 14.3 SEER2 for southern states.

Install for ease of maintenance. Make sure the inside coil can be reached for cleaning. The contractor may have to install an access panel, depending on the model. The coil should be cleaned every two years. The air filter should be located where it is easy to remove. Check it every month during the summer, and clean or change whenever dirty.

Place the outside unit on the north or east side of the house, out of direct sunlight, but don't add shade for it. Leave plenty of room for free air flow on all sides and at least 4 feet clearance at the top. Keep the area free of debris and shrubbery. The air conditioner draws a lot of air through it. It's more important for the unit to have a lot of space than for it to be well shaded.

FROM THE WCE BOARDROOM

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held Feb. 23, 2023

The meeting, was held following the board retreat at the Hilton Garden Inn, Independence, Mo. at 8 a.m. The meeting was called to order by President Densil Allen Jr. Robert Simmons, Secretary of the Cooperative, caused the minutes of the meeting to be kept. The following directors were present: Densil Allen Jr., Clark Bredehoeft, Richard Strobel, Stan Rhodes, Sandra Streit, Dale Jarman, Robert Simmons, Jeremy Ahmann and Colby Dowell. Also present were General Manager Michael Newland and general counsel Sheri Smiley.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

After discussion, the agenda was approved.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The board approved its consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of January 26, 2023; expenditures for the month of January 2023; new membership applications and membership terminations.

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following January reports were approved:

Financing and Treasurer's Report: Newland presented the January 2023 Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement. He reviewed the Financial and Statistical Report and Treasurer's Report with monthly and annual budget comparisons. He also gave the investment report. He presented and reviewed statistical data pertaining to operating revenue, expenses, margins, assets, liabilities, cash flow management, and KWH sales and ratios. KRTA ratios were reviewed. Demand costs were discussed. The top KWH users for 2022 were reported on.

Operations Report: Operations Manager Scott Gard provided a report to supplement his written Operations Report. Work is being done on a subdivision outside of Warrensburg. Pole changes and new services were reported on. Training schools attended were reported on. There were no major outages for the month. An update on the storage building, a report on the mechanic and fleet was given and discussed.

Safety and Engineering Report: Engineering Manager Pete Nelson provided a report to supplement his written Safety and Engineering Report. A Safety Committee meeting was held. Safety meetings were reported on. Crew inspections were held and no safety violations were observed. Issues with pole attachments and make-ready work was discussed. He also reported on the new subdivision that is coming in.

Member Services Report: Brent Schlotzhauer provided a report to supplement his written Member Services Report. His report included Operation RoundUp enrollment and amount collected and how RoundUp awards are being sent through press releases. He gave an update on net metering and an update on the 2023 Legislative Conference that he and Bredehoeft attended. He also reported on chamber meetings he attended.

IT REPORT

IT Manager Tim Bowler gave the IT report. He discussed systems being used, including the AMI system and reports that can be generated from that system. He gave updates on internet reliability and the new phone system.

BUDGET

Accounting Manager Rebecca Hoefficker and Newland presented the 2023 Operating Budget. They presented on assumptions, expenses, debt, interest rates, notes, historical data, deferred revenue, staffing supply chain issues and increased expenses, equity level, anticipated capital credits, right-of-way expenses, capital investments, safety and cash flow.

NRECA DIRECTOR'S CONFERENCE REPORT

Directors who attended the conference discussed speaker presentations and break-out sessions attended including EV's and board room practice.

APPOINT NW VOTING DELEGATE

Strobel was appointed as the delegate and Allen as the alternate.



APPROVE AMEC PAC CORPORATE CONTRIBUTION

The board approved a \$1,500.00 contribution to the AMEC PAC.

REVIEW AND DISCUSS BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT

The Board Self-Assessment was reviewed. The policy committee will meet to discuss how policies should be reviewed. Committees were discussed. The CEO Annual Performance Review was discussed and Attorney Smiley will bring back a proposed CEO evaluation for discussion for the board to complete in the Fall of 2023.

ROUNDUP FOUNDATION REPORT

Streit gave an update. Kyle Grumke and Amy Kephart were appointed to the RoundUp Foundation Board.

REVIEW AND APPROVE UPDATES TO SECTION 23

New rebates are available and were reported on and approved.

DISCUSS PREPAID METERING

Information will be sent to prepaid members that the cold weather rules for disconnect do not apply to prepaid metering.

AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft provided a written report on the AMEC department reports and on the meeting he attended Feb. 1. He reported on the legislative conference and on training courses that are coming out.

N.W. ELECTRIC REPORT

Simmons gave a report on the meeting he and Newland attended. An AECl written report was provided. He reported on margins, deferred revenue, outages and the upcoming annual meeting.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Newland presented the monthly Manager's Report. He reported on the MIP program and that the employee banquet is March 11. A discussion was also held on how we will be evaluated.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None

POLICY

Bredehoeft questioned if there should be a policy regarding how cancellations are paid if a board member can not make a scheduled conference. Attorney Smiley will bring back a policy for review.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session was called at 11:49 am and adjourned at 11:50 am.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned.

FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • January 2023

	This month	YTD 2023	YTD 2022
Revenue	\$3,281,842	\$3,281,842	\$3,314,460
Power Bill Expense	1,733,344	1,733,344	1,898,255
Operation & Maint. Expense	529,688	529,688	504,759
Depreciation Expense	220,838	220,838	207,763
Interest Expense	130,093	130,093	113,923
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	2,613,963	2,613,963	2,724,700
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	667,879	667,879	589,760
Other Margins	19,979	19,979	7,556
TOTAL MARGINS	\$687,858	\$687,858	\$597,316

