

December 2023



West Central Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Electric News

Join us for Member Appreciation Day

Tips for holiday safety
and efficiency
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RoundUp Foundation
awards final 2023 grants
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of electricity
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WCE rebate and
cost-share programs
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Member Appreciation Day

8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 14
Higginsville and Oak Grove offices

- Register for FREE \$25 electricity certificates
- Register for 2023 collector's edition
Willie Wiredhand ornaments

*WCE offices will be closed
on the following days:*

**Monday, Dec. 25 and Tuesday, Dec. 26
for the Christmas holiday
and
Monday, Jan. 1, 2024
for the New Year's holiday**

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*; Jeremy Ahmann, *Director*; Colby Dowell, *Director*

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Merry Christmas!

from your friends at West Central Electric
Cooperative

Stacy Barnett
Adam Beck
Janette Blakely
Tim Bowler
Lois Brunkhorst
Jeff Campbell
Derek Cole
Kade Collins
Tucker Crowe
Brandy Dukes
Dru Felkins
Tiger Fiene
Tim Frerking
Pam Fuenfhausen
Scott Gard
Todd Gast
Austin Hatfield
Brandon Heck
Rebecca Hoeflicker
Heather Hoflander

Nathan Johnson
Connor Lamphier
Kim Lewis
Dylan Lilleman
Cabot Long
Will Long
Billy Mackie
Garret Nair
Pete Nelson
Michael Newland
Jeff Rhoades
Matt Schellman
Brent Schlotzhauer
Jacob Schowengerdt
Johnny Sullins
Brandon Thaller
Jesse Underwood
Zac Wallpe
Eric Wegener
Laura Yearns

**We are honored to serve our
members, and wish you a safe
and prosperous new year!**

Johnathon Sullins is promoted to service lineman



Johnathon Sullins, journeyman lineman at West Central's Oak Grove location, has accepted a position as service lineman for the cooperative, according to General Manager Michael Newland.

Sullins started his career at WCE as an apprentice lineman on June 1, 2015. He earned his journeyman status in August of 2019, a position he held until his recent promotion to service-man on Sept. 17.

Take advantage of energy-saving rebates

Remember to check the West Central Electric website at <https://www.westcentralelectric.coop/energy-saving-rebates> to apply for energy-efficiency rebates and incentives. Full details on qualifications can be found on our website.

Rebates are offered on the following equipment:

•Electric Vehicle Level 2 Charging Station	\$250
•Electric Water Heaters	\$50
•Heat Pump Water Heaters (or Hybrid Water Heater)	\$500
•Ground Source Heat Pump	\$750/ton
•Ground Source Heat Pump Replacement	\$150/ton
•Air Source Heat Pump *NEW*	\$150/ton
•Dual Fuel Heat Pump	\$150/ton
•Mini-Split Heat Pump	\$150/ton
•Energy Star Window Air Conditioners	\$50
•Energy Star Advanced Programmable Thermostat	\$50
•Variable Frequency Drives for HVAC pumps/fans	\$50 per brake HP

50/50 COST SHARE PROGRAMS:

•Basement/Crawl Space/Slab Insulation	Incentive up to \$500
•Home Energy Weatherization	Incentive up to \$750 per home, \$25,000 for multi-unit complexes

For high-efficiency business lighting rebates, contact Brent Schlotzhauer at WCE at 800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942 for terms and details.

•Energy Audits--Residential Incentive up to \$175

For commercial, industrial and school energy audits, contact Brent Schlotzhauer at WCE at 800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942 for terms and details.

The value of electricity remains strong

You may remember as a kid, dropping by the local electric cooperative office with your parents or grandparents to pay the light bill. Whether you do that in person, by mail or online today, paying your monthly bill does a lot more than just keep the lights on.

Electricity keeps us connected to our modern world. Consider all the necessities and conveniences we enjoy in part because of the power lines running to the electric meter outside your home: televisions, laptops, tablets, gaming consoles and video players. Whether they get used every day or just occasionally, the electricity that keeps them working comes from West Central Electric. Between the coffee maker, toaster and microwave, a lot of us have added several other modern small appliances.

You use electricity to run all these devices, in addition to things like the heating and air conditioning and other major appliances --and we still keep the lights on. The good news is, even as we rely more on electricity, it's still a bargain, especially compared to other things we pay for regularly.

The cost of medical care and education increase year after year, as does the cost of things we use daily such as butter, meat, bread and eggs. Electricity is no different with rising costs of materials and transportation, but it still remains a good value for your money.

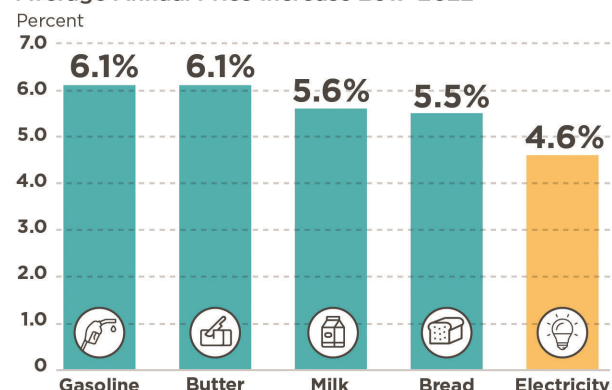
As your local electric cooperative, we're always looking for ways to work with you to make it even better. That's why WCE encourages energy efficiency, recommends ENERGY STAR® appliances, and promotes technology such as programmable thermostats that give members more control over their electricity use. Rebates are available for installing energy-efficient equipment.

You depend upon WCE for more than the power that keeps the lights on. That's why we're always working to provide service that's reliable, affordable, and even more valuable to our members -- you, your family and your neighbors.

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



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Consumer Price Index

Focus on

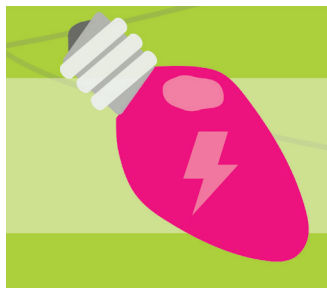
Holiday Safety and Efficiency

Cut electricity use during holiday vacations

You can eliminate some of the unnecessary energy usage during the holidays when you are away from home for several days by following a few easy tips:

- Switch off electronics and appliances that use phantom electricity.
- Set your programmable thermostat on “hold” or the “vacation” setting.
- If it is a regular thermostat, set it at a temperature that maintains a safe environment for pipes, pets and plants in the house.
- Set the refrigerator to a warmer setting or even empty it completely if yours is an extended trip; leave the door open to prevent mildew.
- Turn the water heater down to the lowest setting; some have “vacation” settings.

Energy efficient ideas to save money over the holidays



ENERGY STAR and the U.S. Department of Energy offer these energy-efficient ideas for the holidays:

Switch to LED options. Use ENERGY STAR-qualified light-emitting diode bulbs in place of incandescent-lit decorations. They'll use 70 percent less energy and provide a brighter light.

Find rebates. Check out coupon and rebate options on ENERGY STAR'S website at Special Offers and Rebates from ENERGY STAR Partners | EPA ENERGY STAR. And don't forget to explore the Take Control & Save website at Energy Efficiency | Members First.

Less is more. You don't need a zillion lights as you've seen in lighting competitions!

Consider a fiber optic tree. These pre-lit trees are fitted out with light-emitting diodes and use much less electricity. Often, there's a single light at the base that lights the entire tree.

Reduce usage. Use automatic timers to turn lights off at evening's end. Six hours or less of daily use is a good goal to aim for.

Limit secondary lighting. A brightly lit Christmas tree looks more impressive when it's the only light in the room. Turn off other lights when your tree lights are on.

Decorate creatively. Instead of using battery-operated or electric decorations, use ornaments and tinsel that reflect light to brighten up your tree or room in place of traditional lights. Candles are another alternative to electric lights, but be careful where you place them, monitor closely and blow out before you leave the room. Luminaries lit by candles along your walkway can add a special glow to your home.

Look for gifts that don't need energy or are energy efficient. Lots of toys, home décor items and electronics require batteries. Consider gifts that don't need them. ENERGY STAR-qualified products also are good choices for gifts because they use as much as 60 percent less electricity.

Invest in rechargeable batteries and a charger. If you receive gifts that need batteries, invest in rechargeable batteries and a charger. Rechargeable batteries can be used a thousand times or more! Not only invest in them but buy them as gifts.

Cook efficiently. For big cooking items, bake several items at a time in your oven, and use the microwave and toaster oven for smaller cooking tasks. For stove-top cooking, keep lids on pots to cook more quickly.

Look for the ENERGY STAR label

Look for the ENERGY STAR label when you're shopping for electronics, appliances, light bulbs and fixtures, thermostats and ceiling fans. Here's the difference such gifts can make: The average American household spends about \$2,000 a year on energy bills. If your home were filled with ENERGY STAR-qualified products, you would save about 30 percent or \$575 a year on your energy bills. Over the lifetime of the products, you could save \$8,750 and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 77,000 pounds, according to ENERGY STAR. Those are gifts worth giving!

LEDs are the way to go

Forget about those old strings of incandescent Christmas lights. Toss 'em. You'll spend about 56 cents for electricity using a string of light-emitting diode bulbs instead of more than \$25 for electricity for incandescent bulbs, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Here are the reasons to use LEDs:

- Use 70 percent less energy than traditional bulbs
- Brighter than incandescent
- More eco-friendly
- Safer because they are cooler than incandescent lights
- Easy to install – up to 24 strings of LEDs can be connected end-to-end without overloading
- Last 10 times longer
- Have no filaments or glass to break
- Costs similar to the old standard
- Flexibility – if you prefer white lights with the look of incandescent, look for “warm” white on the label

Holiday LIGHTING Safety

Use only holiday lights that have been safety tested and have the **UL label**.



Before using, **check each strand** for broken sockets, frayed cords, or faulty plugs.



Don't string together more than **three** standard-sized incandescent sets of lights or you could **overload the circuit**.



Don't throw lights over tree branches that are **near power lines** and service connections.



Always unplug lights before leaving your home or going to bed; a timer can help with this.



Learn more at

Safe Electricity.org

2023 ROUNDUP GRANTS

West Central Electric's RoundUp Foundation awarded the final round of grants for 2023 this fall. Since 2018, **72 projects for a total of more than \$269,000** have been funded throughout the WCE service area. If your community organization has a project that needs funding, contact Kim Lewis at kim@wcecoop.com, or visit our website at www.westcentralelectric.coop for information on how to apply for a grant. Contact us to round up your monthly bill and share your extra pennies!



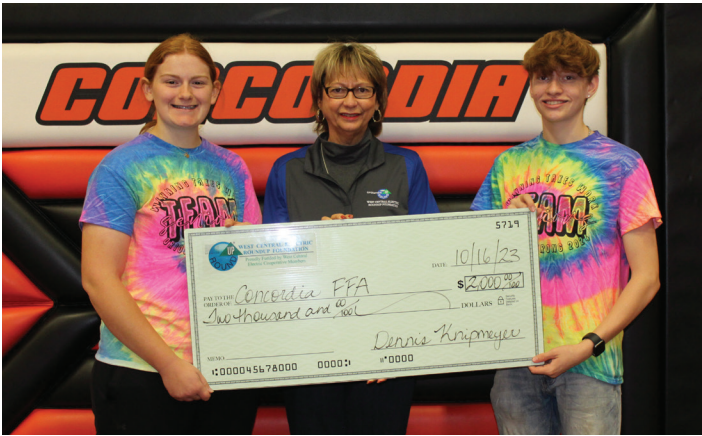
\$1,500 GRANT
Lafayette Co. C-I
HS/MS Library
 Creating Readers Project



\$2,500 GRANT
HCC Network of
Lafayette County
 Project Connect & Social
Determinants of Health



\$2,000 GRANT
Lafayette Co. C-I
Grandview Elementary
 Sensory Motor Lab



\$2,000 GRANT
Concordia High School FFA Chapter
 Oriole Strong Meal of Help Meal Packing Event and Back Snack Program



\$1,550 GRANT
McQuerry Elementary
 Building Confidence and Eye-Hand Coordination through Baseball and Softball



\$1,000 GRANT
Concordia Senior Center
 Meals for Seniors Program



\$2,500 GRANT
Mt. Tabor Church
 Kitchen and Fellowship Hall Floor Covering Project

FROM THE WCE BOARDROOM...

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held Sept. 28, 2023

A meeting of the board of directors of West Central Electric Cooperative was held at the offices of the Cooperative, in Higginsville, Missouri, at 10 a.m. on Thursday, Sept. 28, 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. Cooperative Attorney Sheri Smiley caused the minutes of the meeting to be kept. The following directors were present: Densil Allen Jr., Clark Bredehoeft, Richard Strobel, Stan Rhodes, Dale Jarman, Robert Simmons, Jeremy Ahmann and Colby Dowell. Sandra Streit was absent. Also present was General Manager Michael Newland and cooperative attorney Sheri Smiley.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

After discussion, an amended agenda was approved.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The board approved its consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of Aug. 24, 2023; expenditures for the month of August 2023; new membership applications and membership terminations and the Treasurer's Report.

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following reports were approved:

Financing and Treasurer's Report: Accounting Manager Rebecca Hoefflicker presented the August 2023 Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement. She reported on the 990's being prepared by Kelso-Lynch, gave an ERTC update, reported that the gift credits received by members at the annual meeting were applied to the September bill, reported that RUS did a civil rights review and that she is reviewing the depreciation on plant and assets based on the last audit. 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.

Operations Report

Operations Manager Scott Gard provided a written Operations Report. He reported on crews and fleet. There were no major outages to report. Mechanic work on trucks was discussed. Brush crews and right-of-way were reported on, and bids continue to come in and are being reviewed.

Safety and Engineering Report: Engineering Manager Pete Nelson provided a written Safety and Engineering Report. Safety meetings were reported on. AMEC did a second MECIP audit with no issues found. An energy/staking department report was given.

Member Services Report: Member Services Manager Brent Schlotzhauer provided a report to supplement his written Member Services Report. His report included RoundUp enrollment and updates. AMI concerns from a member were discussed. Net metering and rebates were reported on. He reported on chamber meetings attended.

AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft gave a summary of the Sept. 6 executive meeting he attended.



He reported on member services and iPad voting, the State Fair, the accountant's conference, CYCLE, the social media director position, legislation, annual meetings, broadband funds, PAC contributions, the FR program, the Linemen's Rodeo, budget, and AMEC director training.

NW REPORT

Simmons and Newland reported on the NW meeting and board retreat. They reported on the work plan, the Lone Jack Substation build and site, new builds, a fiber build, equipment and staffing.

APPOINT CFC VOTING DELEGATE

Simmons was appointed delegate and Newland as alternate.

APPOINT FEDERATED VOTING DELEGATE

Newland was appointed delegate and Simmons as alternate.

REVIEW AND APPROVE POLICY 3.3 AND POLICY 3.7

Newland presented two policy changes suggested by staff. Policy changes were approved.

REVIEW AND APPROVE STANDARD CONSTRUCTION PRACTICES

Newland presented changes to the Standard Construction Practices Policy. After discussion, recommended changes were accepted.

LEGAL REPORT

Smiley presented a report on legal matters.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Newland presented the monthly Manager's Report. He reported on pole inspections and change outs, provided an MIP summary in the board packet, and is reviewing the current credit card policy. Key accounts and economic development was discussed along with the new incentive rates that can be offered.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Newland reviewed bid for the Construction Work Plan from Toth. Following discussion, the bid was accepted.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive session was called at 11:48 a.m. and adjourned at 12:36 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned.

FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • August 2023

	This month	YTD 2023	YTD 2022
Revenue	\$3,085,338	\$22,390,354	\$22,506,213
Power Bill Expense	1,746,726	12,841,868	12,743,079
Operation & Maint. Expense	551,137	5,256,234	5,268,059
Depreciation Expense	225,456	1,782,672	1,688,827
Interest Expense	128,363	976,875	903,835
Total cost of Service (Total Expense)	2,651,682	20,857,649	20,603,800
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	433,656	1,532,705	1,902,413
Other Margins	75,243	246,541	126,346
TOTAL MARGINS	\$508,899	\$1,779,246	\$2,028,759

