



West Central Electric Cooperative

April 2026

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Electric News

Power of the Storm

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West Central Electric News
a news service for the members of



West Central Electric
Cooperative, Inc.



Headquarters

7867 S. Highway 13
Higginsville, MO 64037
816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803

PAY BY PHONE: 1-855-939-3639

To report outages 24/7

Call 816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803
Report online at
www.westcentralelectric.coop under
"Report Outage"

District office

506 N. Broadway, Oak Grove, MO 64075

Website:

www.westcentralelectric.coop

facebook Instagram

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*
Elizabeth Houtsma, *Director*

*This institution is an equal opportunity
provider and employer.*

Owned by those we serve.

From the manager's desk

Reliability requires investment



Michael Newland
General Manager

As your rural electric cooperative, our mission is to provide you with "safe, reliable and affordable electricity" -- a statement you have heard us echo many times. Behind that statement, however, is a complex and costly electric system that requires constant care.

Reliable electricity doesn't happen by accident. It requires an ongoing investment in our local grid—through system repairs, maintenance, upgrades and the integration of new technologies that help us operate smarter and more efficiently.

Maintaining an Aging Foundation

Much of the energy system we rely on today was built decades ago. While it has served us well, every pole, wire, transformer, and substation has a specific lifespan. Routine maintenance can extend that life, but eventually, the time comes when equipment must be replaced to ensure safety and performance.

In the February issue of West Central Electric News, we reported on the recent energizing of the new Holden Rural Substation. This and other projects help accomplish our promise to reliably serve you. Long-term system improvements such as these will not only improve reliability now, but they are also an investment for the next generation of growth.

Meeting the Demand

As we work to improve and enhance reliability, we must realize it comes with a price. The demands on our grid are increasing, not just because of growth in

our service area, but also in the technology that is rapidly advancing.

Homes and businesses today use more electricity than ever, and that trend will only continue. Electric vehicles, advanced HVAC systems, smart appliances and new commercial facilities add load to the local distribution system. As these technologies take hold, the grid must be able to support increased demand while maintaining the reliability our members expect.

Planning for Capacity Into the Future

Ensuring reliability also means looking beyond our local wires to where our power is generated. We are currently working with our generation and transmission part-

ners as they construct two new power plants to meet our members' capacity needs, today and tomorrow.

While the costs of these plants

are passed on to distribution cooperatives like ours, the return on that investment is a grid that doesn't fail when you need it most. This added capacity supports our local economy and enhances safety for our crews, but it requires us to manage the rising cost of power and its delivery. Powering our community means preparing for the future, not just maintaining the present. By investing in our local grid today, we are ensuring that the power you rely on remains available, resilient, and safe for decades to come.

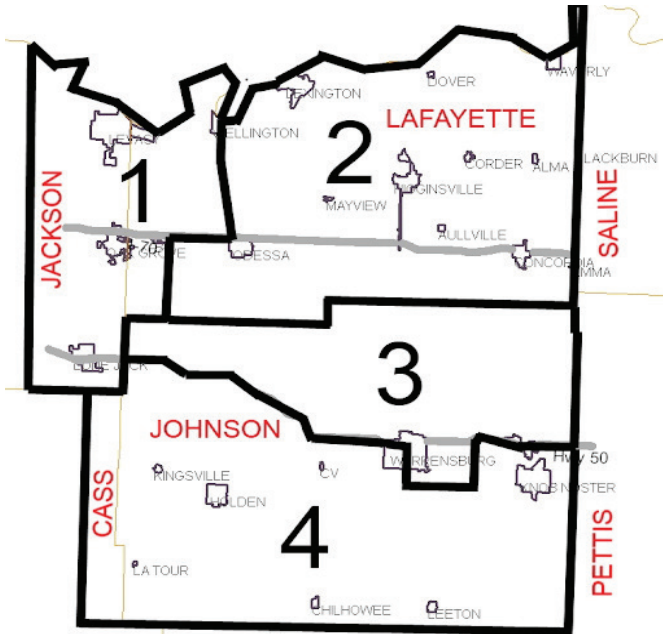
**"Powering our community
means preparing for the
future, not just maintaining
the present."**

General Manager Michael Newland

*Sincerely,
Michael Newland, CPA
General Manager*

What you need to know

West Central Electric Cooperative District Map



**District 5 is an "At-Large" district encompassing the entire service area*

2026 West Central Electric Nominating Committee

Following is a list of the members named to the 2026 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 Thursday, April 30, 2026 to nominate individuals to be placed on the official ballot. Nominees will be voted on at the 2026 annual meeting July 31, 2026 in Warrensburg.

District 1

Kyle Grumke
4246 Highway FF
Odessa, MO 64076
816-565-0276

Blaine Beissenherz
9236 Christy Rd.
Odessa, MO 64076
816-786-6751

District 2

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 3

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 4

Laura Smith
660 SW 301st Rd.
Warrensburg, MO 64093
660-909-3612

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

District 5

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 director Densil Allen Jr. Members will elect TWO directors from District 3 and ONE director from District 5.*

***Please Note: Annual meeting has moved one week earlier than normal, and will be held FRIDAY, JULY 31, 2026**

Board of Directors Qualifications

To apply/run to be a director and remain a director, a person must comply with the following qualifications:

- (a) Be an individual,
- (b) Have the capacity to enter into legally-binding contracts,
- (c) Not have been convicted of or plead guilty to a felony,
- (d) Be a member who continuously uses cooperative energy and services at his/her permanent, primary place of residence in the district which they were elected to serve,
- (e) Not in any way be employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or business, including selling any form of energy. They also must not be in the business of selling electrical supplies to the cooperative,
- (f) Not have been, in the last 3 years, employed by the cooperative or be a close relative of said employee.
- (g) Not be a close relative of a current board member.
- (h) A close relative will be defined as a child, parent, brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister, grandchildren, grandparents. This includes their spouses and anyone living in the same household.
- (i) Attend 2/3 of the regular meetings unless excused for cause by 2/3 of the remaining board members.



Brayden Barnett
Higginsville
Apprentice



Derek Cole
Higginsville
Journeyman



Tucker Crowe
Higginsville
Apprentice



Tim Frerking
Higginsville
Serviceman



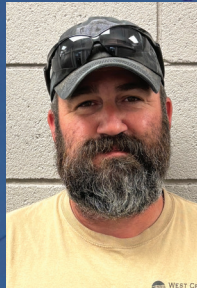
Scott Gard
Higginsville
Operations Mgr.



Todd Gast
Higginsville
Line Foreman



Austin Hatfield
Oak Grove
Journeyman



Brandon Heck
Higginsville
Journeyman



Nathan Johnson
Higginsville
Journeyman



Connor Lamphier
Higginsville
Journeyman



Dylan Lilleman
Higginsville
Apprentice



Billy Mackie
Higginsville
Line Foreman



Garret Nair
Oak Grove
Apprentice



Pete Nelson
Higginsville
Engineering Mgr.



Aydan Ramsey
Oak Grove
Apprentice



Matt Schellman
Oak Grove
Dist Operations Sup.



Drew Schmidt
Oak Grove
Apprentice



Johnathon Sullins
Oak Grove
Serviceman



Jesse Underwood
Oak Grove
Line Foreman



Zac Wallpe
Higginsville
Journeyman



Eric Wegener
Oak Grove
Groundman/Driver

Honoring our own on
**Lineworker
Appreciation Day**

April 13, 2026

Know how to stay safe after the storm

Severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, and flooding can leave more than damage in their wake—they can leave hidden dangers as well. In some cases, more lives are lost after the storm than from the storm itself.

When dealing with storm cleanup or flood-damaged property, the prospect of an electrical accident may not be in the front of your mind, but it's the first thing you should think of before you go outside, step foot into a flooded area, or enter a storm-damaged building.

When outside, stay away from downed power lines and be alert to the possibility that tree limbs or debris may hide an electrical hazard. Treat all downed or hanging power lines as if they are energized. Lines do not have to be arcing or sparking to be live. Warn others to stay away, and contact West Central Electric to report downed lines.

Do not touch downed power lines, and do not touch objects or puddles of water in contact with those lines. There is no way to know if they are energized. Encountering these objects can be as hazardous as coming into contact with a downed power line itself.

If you are driving and come upon a downed power line, stay in your vehicle, warn others to stay away, and contact emergency personnel. Never drive over a downed line, as it could pull down poles and other items along its path.

Before re-entering storm-damaged buildings or rooms, be sure all electric and gas services are turned off. Never attempt to turn off power at the breaker box if you must stand in water to do so. If you cannot reach your breaker box safely, call WCE to shut off power at the meter.

Electric motors in appliances that have been drenched or submerged should be thoroughly cleaned and reconditioned before they are put back into service. It may be necessary to replace them. Do not use any water-damaged appliance until a professional has checked it out.

If you use a portable generator, be sure a transfer safety switch has been installed, or connect appliances directly to the generator. This prevents electricity from traveling back through the home to power lines—what is known as “backfeed.” Back-feed creates danger for anyone near lines, particularly crews working to restore power.

For additional information, tips and safety videos, visit SafeElectricity.org.



You asked, we answered!



THANK YOU to our members who took time to complete the latest Member Satisfaction Survey last fall. Your responses help us to better serve you. We received some great questions and comments, and would like to provide you with more information on your cooperative and address some of your concerns. Following are some of the comments received by members participating in the survey. If one person asked, chances are there are several more thinking the same thing!

Concern: I would like a rebate or discount for using smart thermostats!

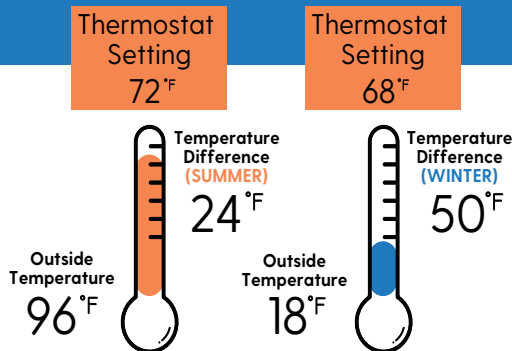
Explanation: We have that! Go to our website at www.westcentralelectric.coop and look under "Saving Energy" and "Energy-Saving Rebates."

Concern: My electric bill maintains a wonderful rate in the hot summer, but as soon as winter comes and the heat comes on my bills spike.

Explanation: We live in a winter peaking area, meaning we use more electricity in the winter to stay warm than we do in the summer to stay cool. The greater the temperature difference between the outside

temperature and what you have your thermostat set on, the harder your HVAC system has to work. That difference is much greater in the winter than it is in the summer.

The greater the temperature difference between inside and outside, the more your HVAC system must run to keep your home at the set temperature.



Concern: I'm wondering, now that EPA is rolling back regulations, what is the co-op doing to lower my electrical costs?

Explanation: Keeping costs down for our members is one of the top priorities in our mission statement. The directors you have elected do a great job of monitoring finances to make sure that happens. It has been a challenge the past several years to keep a growing system reliable while working to keep costs down in an expensive economy. The ability to avoid a rate increase this year when we originally thought that wouldn't happen is a true testament to great leadership on your board, great management decisions and strong efforts on the part of the employees who serve you.

Concern: Get rid of monthly usage fee. Charge for the electricity at a rate that covers this expense. High energy users will pay more and low energy users will pay less.

Explanation: The "service availability fee" is actually the fairest way to cover those costs. This fee takes the cost to maintain the system delivering your electricity (poles, lines, "service" to your property), and divides it equally among the membership because it is used equally by the membership. The actual energy costs are determined by how much or how little electricity you use during the month.

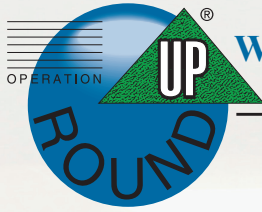
Concern: I am unhappy that the bill arrives in the mail only a few days before it is due.

Explanation: Bills are mailed at least two weeks before the due date. Unfortunately, once the bills are in the mail, it is out of our control. We do have several other options for members, however, such as signing up for SmartHub. Through SmartHub, you can check your balance, monitor your energy usage and pay your bill all in one place. You can also sign up to receive your bill via email (paperless) or choose autopay. Those who still want to pay by mail are always welcome to call in and get your amount due any time.

Concern: I hope WCE will continue to support local media like The Odessan and county newspapers instead of advertising on social media.

Explanation: We believe our small-town newspapers serve a niche and a purpose in our local communities, and we always support them! We also know that many members turn to social media for convenience and timeliness, so we keep a mix of both.

From your cooperative



WEST CENTRAL ELECTRIC ROUNDUP FOUNDATION

Proudly Funded by West Central
Electric Cooperative Members

Thank you
WCE members!

FIRST QUARTER 2026 ROUND-UP GRANTS FUND AREA PROJECTS

\$1,500 GRANT



Grow Pediatric Therapy Services
"Socks for Students" program

"This grant is a significant investment in our Special Olympics initiative, enabling Knob Noster schools to provide opportunities for our students to participate, compete, and feel celebrated. This support helps remove barriers, cover essential costs, and ensure that more of our students can experience the confidence, inclusion, and joy that come with being part of a team."

--Kasha Oetinger
Knob Noster Director of Student Services

\$3,000 GRANT



HCC Network
Funding for hygiene kits

\$2,000 GRANT



Odessa Middle School Robotics Team
Expansion of robotics club and equipment

\$2,500 GRANT



Knob Noster Special Olympics
Funds to start Special Olympics program

\$3,500 GRANT



Helen's House
Funding to restock supplies and necessities

From the WCE boardroom

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held Jan. 22, 2026.

A meeting of the board of directors of West Central Electric Cooperative was held at the offices of the cooperative, in Higginsville, Missouri, at 9:30 a.m. Jan. 22, 2026, 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. Attorney Sheri Smiley caused the minutes of the meeting to be kept. The following directors were present: Allen Jr., Clark Bredehoeft, Richard Strobel, Dale Jarman, Robert Simmons, Jeremy Ahmann, Colby Dowell and Elizabeth Houtsma. Stan Rhodes was absent. Also present was General Manager Michael Newland.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The board approved its consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting on Dec. 18, 2025; expenditures for the month of December 2025; new membership applications and membership terminations, and the treasurer's report.

FINANCING AND TREASURER'S REPORT

Newland reported on margins that NW announced the day before. CFO Rebecca Hoefflcker presented the December 2025 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. She reported on interest rates, the impact of large loads on the budget and projections for January, gave updated budget numbers, reviewed investments, provided updated reports based on the announcement of the NW margins and reported on the borrowing payments made on the line of credit. She gave a list of the top members by revenue. New services connected were reported on. The financial reports were accepted as presented.

ADOPTION OF REVENUE DEFERRAL PLAN

Hoefflcker reported on revenue. She presented two revenue deferral plans which were adopted.

APPROVAL OF STAFF REPORTS

The following staff reports were approved:

Operations Report

Operations Manager Scott Gard provided an oral report to supplement his written operations report. He reported on crews, outages and causes. He also reported on the new Holden Rural Substation. A brush crew and right-of-way report was given. He discussed how the co-op was preparing for the upcoming predicted storm.

Safety and Engineering Report: Engineering Manager Pete Nelson provided an oral report to supplement his written safety and engineering report. A mobile sub will be brought in for the Holden substation. Lines over I-70 were raised. Potential subdivisions were reported on.

Member Services Report: Member Services Manager Brent Schlotzhauer provided a written member services report. He provided updates on Operation RoundUp, the communication department activities including Youth Tour presentations, the website and publications. He reported on net metered solar systems and rebates, Vanilla Direct Cash Payments and chamber meetings attended. He reported on 2025 rebate totals. School "reality check" programs were participated in and discussed. The electronic member handbook and bill redesign were discussed. Publication of service rules and regulations was discussed.

PRESENTATION BY MOORE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Matt and Robin Moore gave a presentation on the REDLG loan and grant program offered by the USDA.

REVIEW AND APPROVE 2026 BUDGET

Hoefflcker reviewed the 2026 budget. She went through assumptions, the organizational chart, 2024 and 2025 comparisons, deferred revenues, budget classifications, cost of purchase power and projected kWh sales, expenses, rebates, depreciation, taxes, interest, long-term debt, capital investment and the construction work plan. She also discussed projected cash flows. The board raised questions throughout. The budget was approved as presented.

RATE ADJUSTMENT REVIEW

Newland announced that staff recommended no rate increase at this time.

NW BOARD REPORT

Simmons and Newland gave the NW board report. They reported on substations, Lone Jack, margins, deferred revenue, equity and the AECl report. Potential con-



demnations and strategic planning were also discussed.

REVIEW AND APPROVE POLICY 2.6, AND 2.16

Policy 2.6 and Policy 2.16 from the policy committee were tabled.

REVIEW AND APPROVE POLICY 2.15

Policy 2.15 was reviewed. No suggested changes. Policy affirmed.

REVIEW POLICY 3.17

Smiley discussed the board policy on fiduciary duties of the board of directors. The board signed and returned the policy stating they had reviewed and understood it.

REVIEW AND APPROVE SECTION 8

Staff recommended changes to Section 8. The board approved the recommended changes.

REVIEW AND APPROVE SECTION 16

Staff recommended changes to Section 16. The board approved the recommended changes.

REVIEW AND APPROVE SECTION 23

Staff recommended changes to Section 23 to reflect the change in AECl rebates. The board approved the recommended changes.

REVIEW AND APPROVE THE AGREEMENT WITH N.W. ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE FOR LONE JACK UNDERBUILD

Newland presented an agreement with NW Electric Power Cooperative for the Lone Jack underbuild. The board approved entering into the agreement.

REVIEW AND APPROVE UNDERGROUND DISTRIBUTION BIDS

Newland and Nelson presented a resolution regarding the bid for underground distribution work. The resolution was passed. Dowell abstained from voting.

APPOINT 2026 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The following were appointed to the 2026 nominating committee:

Kyle Grumke	Blane Beissenherz	Paul Nolte
Jeremy Sanders	Laura Smith	Will Grauberger
Stephanie Othic	Virginia Howell	

ROUNDUP FOUNDATION REPORT

Dowell gave an update on the RoundUp Foundation including a list of awards given. The bylaws for the foundation will be reviewed at the board retreat. Mark Wesley was appointed to the foundation board.

LEGAL REPORT

Smiley gave the legal report for the month.

MANAGERS REPORT

Newland gave the manager's report. He provided a written report to the board prior to the meeting. Bill credits will be discussed at a later date. The annual meeting date was discussed. UCM has a conflict with renting the gymnasium on Aug. 7, so the annual meeting will need to be moved to July 31.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was brought forward.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session was called at 12:55 p.m. and was out at 1:10 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned.

FINANCIAL REPORT

December 2025 Statement of Operations

	This month	YTD 2025	YTD 2024
Revenue	\$2,655,328	\$41,137,171	\$36,902,132
Power Bill Expense	2,484,293	26,251,496	21,944,035
Operation & Maintenance Expense	713,863	9,036,139	8,545,823
Depreciation Expense	225,679	2,637,437	2,530,744
Interest Expense	<u>144,254</u>	<u>1,659,069</u>	<u>1,601,451</u>
Total cost of Service (Total Expenses)	3,568,089	39,584,141	34,622,053
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	(912,761)	1,553,030	2,280,079
Other Margins	<u>2,382,749</u>	<u>2,827,687</u>	<u>1,309,401</u>
TOTAL MARGINS	\$1,469,988	\$4,380,717	\$3,589,480