



West Central Electric Cooperative

December 2025

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Electric News

Merry Christmas!

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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

In a director's shoes

I wish it was possible for our members to take turns serving on the board of directors. It would be an eye-opening experience, I am sure. Sadly, we have just nine seats on the board and more than 15,000 members, so that would take generations to accomplish.

The next best thing is to give each of you a glimpse into what your directors do. To begin, let's look at what a director is. An electric cooperative director is a steward of the co-op's mission, ensuring you have reliable, affordable power while acting in the best interests of its member-owners.

They must be a member of the cooperative and are elected by their fellow members at the annual meeting. They will serve a term that is set in the bylaws of the cooperative.

At a typical board meeting, they will review the actions of the general manager and staff. They will study reports on the finances of the cooperative. These are important because they show trends in how financially stable the cooperative is.

Some of our directors serve on various committees at the statewide association, our transmission cooperative or possibly the generation cooperative. They might also serve on various local committees. These committee members will report to the rest of the board so that we all have a good idea of the programs and issues that affect our cooperative.

The general manager and department heads also report to the board. For example, our operations manager might tell where the crews are working to improve service. Our financial staff will explain why the budget is on track, or if it's not, why that might be. Others will report on community services, communications efforts, youth programs, our safety



Michael Newland
General Manager

efforts or the building and grounds status.

It's a lot of information for a director to take in. You might compare our board meetings to drinking out of a fire hose! Fortunately, we have good people on hand to put things into perspective. If a director has a question, we make sure they get an answer.

One of the most important things a director does is approve the budget for the coming year. To do this they will consider whether our current rates meet the expenses of the cooperative. Remember, we don't make a profit, but we do have to make ends meet just like any business.

Being a director is a tough job. They must put their own self-interest aside when they enter the boardroom and make decisions for the good of the cooperative. Their job is to act as a voice for the members they represent.

I'm proud of the directors who serve on our board. There are times when they should be in the fields or taking care of their own business but set that aside to take care of the cooperative's business instead.

The next time you see one of our directors, please thank them for the work they do to ensure your cooperative is the best that it can be.

Sincerely,
Michael Newland, CPA
General Manager

Important Holiday Reminders...

WCE offices will be
Closed
Wednesday
and Thursday,
Dec. 24 & 25
and
Thursday, Jan. 1, 2026

Member Appreciation Day
8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Thursday, Dec. 11
Higginsville & Oak Grove offices

•Drawing for **FREE** \$25
electricity certificates and
2025 collector's edition
Willie Wiredhand ornaments

What you need to know

Walking With Your Directors



"Every decision we make affects our friends and neighbors. That's a responsibility I don't take lightly."

*Densil Allen Jr.
President*



"Keeping our elected officials informed to make positive decisions for WCE is something I strive for."

*Clark Bredehoeft
Vice President*



"I'm a strong believer in the co-op system, and I strive to make decisions that best support our members and their families."

*Dale Jarman
Treasurer*



"My goal as a board member is to ensure that our members have safe, affordable and reliable energy."

*Robert Simmons
Secretary*



"It's a privilege to serve the families of our co-op. These individuals are at the forefront of every decision we make."

*Stan Rhodes
Asst. Secretary*



"It is very rewarding to see how well everyone works together for the good of the membership."

Richard Strobel



"We strive to provide reliable, affordable power while keeping everyone's best interests in mind."

Jeremy Ahmann



"My goal is to be sure we are looking at future growth/demand, all while keeping service reliable & affordable."

Colby Dowell



"My job is to represent the members I serve, and it's a blessing and privilege to be able to serve my community in that way."

Elizabeth Houtsma



Merry Christmas

from your friends at
West Central Electric

Janette Blakely

Tim Bowler

Cody Brock

Lois Brunkhorst

Derek Cole

Tucker Crowe

Dan Disberger

Brandy Dukes

Dru Felkins

Tim Frerking

Pam Fuenfhausen

Scott Gard

Todd Gast

Austin Hatfield

Brandon Heck

Rebecca Hoeflicker

Heather Hoflander

Matt Jeske

Nathan Johnson

Dani Kirchhoff

Connor Lamphier

Kim Lewis

Dylan Lilleman

Will Long

Billy Mackie

Garret Nair

Pete Nelson

Michael Newland

Aydan Ramsey

Jeff Rhoades

Matt Schellman

Brent Schlotzhauer

Drew Schmidt

Johnny Sullins

Brandon Thaller

Jesse Underwood

Zac Wallpe

Eric Wegener

Gavin Wekenborg

Wyatt Wilkinson

Laura Yearns

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

BLINKS *explained*

Have you ever experienced the lights flicker while at home or woke up in the morning to see the clock on your digital appliances flashing? If so, it is likely that your home experienced a “blink.”

What is a blink?

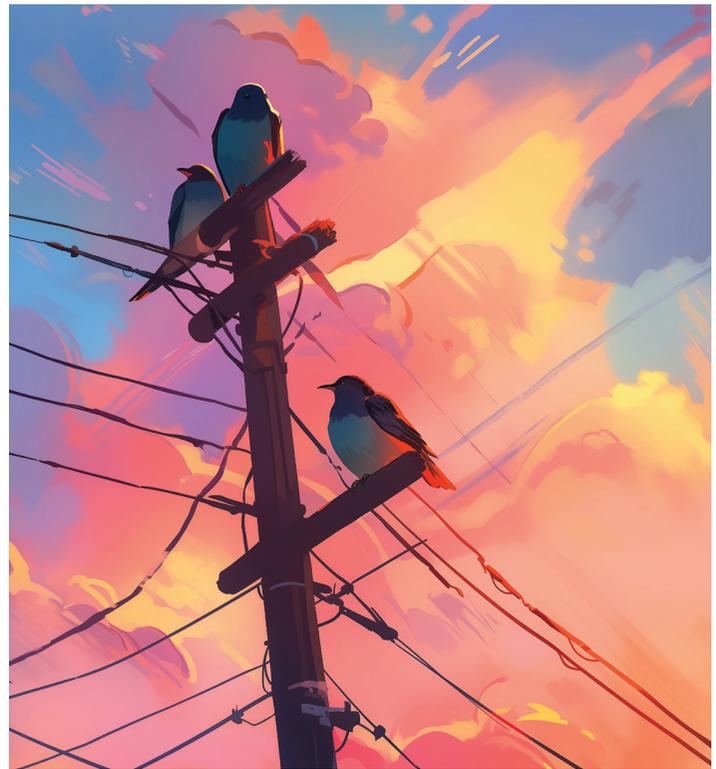
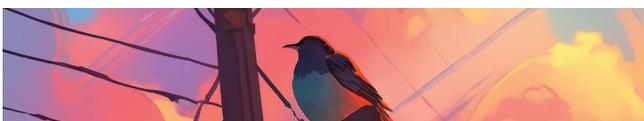
Simply put, a “blink” is a brief power interruption in the electrical grid caused by a fault that activates protection devices in attempts to prevent an outage. Blinks are usually caused by something contacting the power line that affects the flow of electricity (fault), lasting only a few seconds to a minute. As a result, you may experience a temporary interference of electric service such as your lights turning off and then right back on automatically.

What happens when a blink occurs?

Blinks are evidence that something interfered with the normal flow of power and your electric grid is actively working to allow that interference to clear itself out to prevent a potential outage. You may have even experienced several blinks within a short time-frame. Rest assured that your electric grid is working properly!

How should I respond to a blink?

- **When determining whether to call the cooperative to report that your line has been blinking, please consider the following:** Was your blink associated with a storm, lightning, or high winds? If so, please do not call; these conditions are out of the cooperative’s control. It is not uncommon to have your lights blink once or twice a month on what seems to be a nice day.
- **If you experience three or more blinks in one month NOT related to storms, contact WCE to report the issue.** WCE has sophisticated diagnostic equipment that can track down the problem area, but it takes several blinks to narrow it down.
- **Follow WCE’s Facebook page or view the outage map on our website to track whether there is an active outage.** Look for outages near you. This could be what blinked your lights. If you are experiencing an outage, contact us by phone or report the outage on SmartHub.



5 common causes of blinks:

- **Birds and Small Animals** – It is not uncommon for critters to fly or climb onto power lines. Unfortunately, if these creatures become grounded when touching the power line, it can shock them and create a fault on the electric grid causing a blink.
- **Tree Branches contacting Power lines** – When tree branches contact the power lines due to high winds it can trigger a fault. This is why cooperatives often prioritize right-of-way clearing to help mitigate tree branches or vegetation from interfering with power lines to enhance grid reliability.
- **Weather** – Heavy snow and ice weighing down the power lines or strong winds swaying and throwing debris onto the power lines can trigger a fault on the grid resulting in blinks.
- **Lightning Strike** – Have you ever heard the crack of thunder and simultaneously experienced your power shut off then turn right back on? Lightning can hit power lines or equipment, causing a blink.
- **Planned Maintenance** – Your cooperative may intentionally open or close switches to conduct routine maintenance. This is often a planned procedure necessary for grid reliability. During this process blinks may occur, although these are typically brief and scheduled in advance with members who will be affected.

Debunking the misconceptions about blinks

MYTH

Blinks are outages

Blinks are NOT outages.

Though blinks can still be an inconvenience, it is a sign that the protective equipment on the electric grid is actively working to prevent an outage when a fault occurs!

A blink is a brief power interruption that typically lasts only a few seconds to a minute and restores itself automatically. It is usually caused by protective systems responding to a minor fault.

Outages are a prolonged disruption of electricity when faults are not stopped and become grounded, lasting several minutes to hours. Outages require manual troubleshooting due to larger issues.

FACT

Blinks DO NOT damage home appliances.

When you experience your power turn off and back on abruptly you may think to yourself, "will this damage my appliances?" There is a misconception that surges, or voltage spikes are caused by blinks. This is simply not true. A blink itself won't damage home appliances. However, surges (voltage spikes) could occur if the fault is NOT stopped which can potentially harm sensitive electronics.

MYTH

Blinks are power surges

FACT

Blinks are NOT power surges.

However, surges (voltage spikes) could occur if the fault is NOT stopped which can potentially harm sensitive electronics.

To protect against this, it's recommended to use surge protectors for devices like computers, TVs and other valuable electronics.

New Employee Spotlight



Gavin Wekenborg • Staking Technician

West Central Electric is pleased to welcome Gavin Wekenborg, who has joined the cooperative as a staking technician.

Some of his responsibilities include staking new services, meeting with members and contractors on site plans to ensure a steady flow of the build process, and making sure the process goes smoothly for the member.

"I have enjoyed getting to be a part of the planning and designing of new services," Wekenborg said. "A lot of times the members we meet for new services are building their dream home and it is special to get to be a part of something like that."

Originally from Jefferson City, and a graduate of State Technical College of Missouri, Wekenborg earned his degree in civil engineering technology. He has experience in the physical and legal sides of land surveying, and has also worked on monitoring surveying and boundary research.

"I look forward to combining my staking experience with WCE's staking methods to best fit the team," he said.

Wekenborg works out of the cooperative's headquarters location in Higginsville.

Winter Home:

Keep warm air in and money in your pocket



When the harsh cold winds of winter blow, having a nice warm home in which to retreat is great. The only problem is making that home nice and warm can be expensive. With some preparation and work before winter hits, you can reduce your energy use and save money. It is worth making sure your home heating system is as efficient as possible to prevent the waste of energy and your hard-earned money.

Start by locating air leaks

Some of the air leaks can easily be fixed yourself with caulking and weather stripping. Other leaks might take a contractor's help to repair.

Some common areas to find air leaks include:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Behind or under knee walls | The attic hatch |
| Wiring holes | Plumbing vents |
| Furnace vents | Dryer vents |
| Recessed lights | Windows and doors |

There are other steps you can take to save on your power bill and increase the efficiency of your home as well.

One of the easiest ways is to make sure the furnace filter is clean. Clean or change the filter monthly to keep air flowing freely. Dust and dirt slow down air flow, which makes the system work harder and ends up wasting energy and costing you money.

Another step you can take is to install a programmable thermostat. This can help automatically turn the heat down when no one is home and turn the heat up when you need a warmer home.

Finally, when it comes time to replace your Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) system, invest in energy efficient equipment that will help save money on heating bills.

EnergyStar recommends having your HVAC system evaluated if it is over 10 years old or if it is not keeping your home comfortable. If your system needs to be replaced, talk to your installer about getting the most efficient unit you can afford.

For more information on home energy efficiency, go to SafeElectricity.org.ity.org.

From your cooperative

4th Quarter RoundUp Grants



\$6,500
Care Connection: Higginsville, Holden, Lexington, Concordia & Warrensburg
\$1,300 for each area senior center for meal programs



\$1,000
McQuerry Elementary, Odessa
Phys Ed Department equipment



\$1,500
Bright Futures, Holden School Dist.
'Snacks to Go' program



\$1,000
Pediatric Place Family First Initiative
Funding for families in financial hardship



\$1,500
Chilhowee School District
Community fundraiser assistance



\$1,350
Grandview Elementary, Higginsville
Materials for Motor Lab



\$1,500
Lone Jack Schools Mulepack prog.
Weekend meals & snacks for students



Thank you WCE members for helping us fund these important projects in your local communities!

From the WCE boardroom

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held Sept. 25, 2025

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. Sept. 25, 2025, 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, Stan Rhodes, Jeremy Ahmann and Elizabeth Houtsma. Colby Dowell was absent. Also present was General Manager Michael Newland.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The board approved its consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting on Aug. 28, 2025; expenditures for the month of August 2025; new membership applications and membership terminations, and the treasurer's report.

FINANCING AND TREASURER'S REPORT

CFO Rebecca Hoeflicker presented the August 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 September. She gave updated budget numbers. She reviewed investments. New services connected were reported on. Large bills paid for the month were discussed. The CFC KRTA update was in the board packet for review. Equity was discussed. The AECI rate increase is 4% overall. AMEC is gathering data on the sales tax exemption savings. The impact to margins from large loads was discussed. The financial reports were accepted as presented.

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, expansions worked on, and outages and causes for the month. He gave a mechanic and fleet report. Locates and subs are being checked. The pole inspection has been completed with 9,056 poles inspected. A brush crew and right-of-way report was given. An update on new fleet arriving was discussed.

Safety and Engineering Report: Engineering Manager Pete Nelson provided an oral report to supplement his written safety and engineering report. As of Aug. 31, 2025, employees have worked 1,033 days without a lost-time accident. Co-op employees drove a total of 36,536 miles as of the end of August without a serious accident. He reported on safety meetings, crew visits, and gave an engineering/staking department report. He reported on projects being worked on. Highway 13 and MoDot were discussed.

Member Services Report: Member Services Manager Brent



Schlottzauer provided a written member services report. He provided updates on Operation RoundUp, the communication department activities and net metering. Chamber meetings and member surveys were reported on. REDLG loans and grants were discussed.

NW REPORT

Simmons and Newland gave the NW Report. They reported on the new manager search, Lone Jack, the Turney project and projects through 2035. They also gave an AECI update.

APPOINT CFC VOTING DELEGATE AND ALTERNATE FOR REGION 8-10 MEETING

Bredehoeft was named the CFC voting delegate and Simmons the alternate.

APPOINT FEDERATED DELEGATE FOR REGION 8-10 MEETING

Rhodes was named the Federated voting delegate and Allen Jr. the alternate.

REVIEW POLICY 5.5-1

Policy 5.5-1 was presented by Newland and Nelson. Staff had recommended changes to the policy. The board amended the policy.

BOARD RETREAT DATES

The board retreat was discussed.

LEGAL REPORT

Smiley gave the legal report for the month.

MANAGERS REPORT

Newland gave the manager's report. He had provided a written report to the board prior to the meeting. He discussed fleet, gave a strategic planning matrix, reported on the franchise agreement with Bates City. He gave an update on services near Oak Grove and gave a staffing report. A cost-of-service study was discussed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Strobel discussed safety of infrastructure. REDLG loans were also discussed and more information will be brought back to the board.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session was called at 11:23 a.m. and was out at 12:07 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned.

FINANCIAL REPORT

August 2025 Statement of Operations

	This month	YTD 2025	YTD 2024
Revenue	\$3,862,939	\$28,840,595	\$24,899,764
Power Bill Expense	2,264,707	17,437,446	15,091,933
Operation & Maintenance Expense	740,779	6,140,179	5,844,694
Depreciation Expense	221,558	1,743,477	1,673,983
Interest Expense	135.992	1,116.492	1,063.519
Total cost of Service (Total Expenses)	3,363,036	26,437,594	23,674,129
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	499,903	2,403,001	1,225,635
Other Margins	20.094	239.629	223.675
TOTAL MARGINS	\$519,997	\$2,642,630	\$1,449,310