November 2026

West Central Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Electric News



87th Annual Meeting

Complete coverage inside...

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West Central Electric News
a news service for the members of

West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc.



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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*

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Owned by those we serve.

Annual Meeting 2026

State of the Cooperative:
Stable and Reliable, GM Says

In his annual State of the Cooperative address given at the Aug. 28 annual meeting, West Central Electric Cooperative General Manager Michael Newland discussed electric grid reliability, growth in the service area and pledged to ensure the cooperative will continue its mission to deliver safe, reliable and affordable power now and into the future.

Grid Reliability

A major topic in the national news this past year has been reliability of the nation's electric grid. Newland broke down how reliability at the generation, transmission and distribution levels is being handled, detailing several projects to ensure cooperative members have all the electricity they need even when the weather is extreme.

"Last year I reported that NW Electric, our electric transmission supplier, was constructing the Holden Rural Substation. I am proud to report that this substation was completed just in time for a cold spell this winter. This substation allows us to transfer load from the Centerview Substation to allow for future growth there," Newland said.

He also noted that construction is in progress at a second substation near Lone Jack with an anticipated in-service date of 2027. In addition, two new power plants are under construction by generation cooperative Associated Electric, one in Ripley, Okla. and another in Turney, Mo., and cooperative representatives remain committed to talking with elected officials to ensure rates are affordable and power is reliable.

WCE System Growth

Growth on the WCE system continued throughout 2025 with the cooperative adding 296 new services and more than 11 miles of line. Newland said this work, as well as continued maintenance and upgrades has kept employees busy and the system in great shape.

"These improvements and maintenance are crucial to ensuring you have the reliability you have come to expect," he said. "I am proud to report that in 2025, we had the fewest outage hours since 2022, and the second lowest in the past 5 years."



Newland

Rates and Member Equity

Newland specifically praised the WCE Board of Directors for their extensive planning which has led to the financial stability of the cooperative, and directly benefitted the membership.

"I am proud to report that we were able to forego the anticipated rate increase for 2026," Newland told members. "I am also happy to announce that your board has approved paying back more than $1.75 million dollars in capital credits this year. To date, West Central Electric has returned more than $44 million in capital credits back to our members. This is a true testament to the legacy of those who helped form the cooperative back in 1939."

Newland closed by thanking members for attending and for their loyalty to the cooperative as we continue to navigate changes in the electric industry.

"We work diligently to keep you updated on things in your monthly newsletter," he said. "I want to thank you again for your trust as we navigate these challenges and make every dollar stretch as far as possible."

ON THE COVER: WCE Lineman Matt Jeske visits with member Wayne Fitterling.

Incumbents retain board seats, officers re-elected



Densil Allen Jr.
President

RE-ELECTED
463 VOTES



Clark Bredehoeft
Vice President



Robert Simmons
Secretary

RE-ELECTED
432 VOTES



Stan Rhodes
Asst. Secretary



Dale Jarman
Treasurer



Richard Strobel
Director

RE-ELECTED
432 VOTES



WCE Engineer Dan Disberger visits with members Don and Nancy Lawson.



Magnolia Spencer, 1 1/2, enjoys the light-up cap kids' giveaway.



After dinner, members wait for the start of the business meeting.



WCE scholarship winners in attendance: (L-r) Kathryn Carter, Joel Long, Brenna Burns, Blair Bergseiker, Cash Hale, Macey Greene, Morgan Nelson and Kiley Bieri.

Upcoming WCE Office Closings:
Wednesday, Nov. 11 for Veterans Day • Thursday & Friday, Nov. 26-27 for Thanksgiving



Allen talks honesty and transparency in traditional annual meeting address

During his traditional annual meeting message Aug. 28, West Central Electric Cooperative Board President Densil Allen Jr. spoke to members about the importance of the cooperative serving with honesty and transparency. Following are the remarks from Allen Jr. to the members attending the meeting:

"Honesty and transparency.

Those are two words you hear fairly often from your cooperative board, management and employees. But those words are not tossed around lightly. In fact, they are much more than words to us. They are an obligation.



An obligation to you, our members -- and a pledge from those you have elected to direct, and those chosen to lead, your cooperative.

Our job is to serve our members; to look out for your best interests, and to give you our best – always.

That might mean returning a portion of the upcoming member equity (or capital credits) to our most recent members. It might mean dedicating some space in your member newsletter to directly address some of the comments you took the time to mention in the Member Satisfaction Survey last fall; or, it may mean pulling the plug on this year's intended rate increase at the last minute when the circumstances changed.

Early this year, you heard us announce that we needed to move forward with the next phase of our rate adjustment process. We studied numbers, evaluated expenses, and did everything in our power to make sure the planned rate adjustment would be manageable for our members.

As we began preparing to implement that, our final margins from both our power supplier -- Associated Electric Cooperative -- and our transmission cooperative -- NW Electric -- came in. They were higher than predicted. As we continued to crunch numbers well into the last minutes, a sealed bid opening revealed project costs well under what was expected.

That extra money, put together with a little belt tightening on our part, allowed us to delay the need to increase rates in 2026.

The first thing we did was break the news to you via a Facebook post that went pretty viral in our neck of the woods. And we were excited to get the word out and provide a little relief for the immediate future.

Things won't always turn out this way, and we still face the high costs of materials to operate, as well as increases in wholesale power costs. But we will take things as they come, always looking out for our members and giving you our very best. We are proud to serve you as your cooperative – with integrity, honesty and transparency."

Annual Meeting 2026







From top: Linemen Drew Schmidt and Brayden Barnett present John & Donna Eichhorn with their new TV. Lineman Dylan Lilleman presents Charles Blattel with the grand prize $500 energy certificate. Hudson Werneke shows off his new scooter.

2026 Annual Meeting Prize Winners

Grand Prize $500 Energy Credit
Charles & Brenda Blattel

55" Vizio 4K Smart TV
Donor: NW Electric
John & Donna Eichhorn

$250 WCE Energy Certificate
Bruce & Pamela Meinershagen

$100 Energy Certificates
Chris & Sandra McCreary
Gary Frerking
James Yates
Michael Camden

$50 Energy Certificates
Virginia Marsh
John & Jill Strauser
Darlene Benson
Larry Schnakenberg
Daniel & Susan Miller
Roland & Billye Davis
Kyle Martin & Deborah Stone
Paul Faris
Michael & Barbara Russell
Curtis & Brenda Langewisch
Clayton & Leslie Burgin
Daniel & Bonnie Thessen

$25 Energy Certificates
David & Patty Hackett
Andrew Hoeppner
Loren & Phyllis Limback
Niendick Bros.
David & Jamie Gurney
Karen Shipp
Robert & Virginia Strate
Ray & Anne Patrick
R.A. & Arlene Miller
Ralph & Becky Bledsoe
Roger & Dana Ward
Stanley & Kathy Oetting

$100 Cash
Donor: Scobee Powerline
Robert & Joyce Schilb
Jack & Katherine Lake
Edward & Linda Kammeyer
Mark Wesley
Gilbert & Valeria Alligood

Cooler
Donor: Altec
Milton & Judy Swainson

Milwaukee Tools, Bluetooth, Chrg.
Donor: Lynn Elliott
Carol Estill

Golf Backpack
Donor: NISC
John & Allena Yates

$50 Bass Pro Gift Card
Donor: Tallman Equipment
Elaine Guy

Golf Accessories
Donor: Evans, Lipka & Assoc.
Daniel & Cindy Crider

Bubba Electric Filet Knife
Donor: Asplundh
Randall Ring

Yeti Soft-side Cooler & Mug
Donor: Graybar
Ray & Suzanne Christopher

Kids' Drawing Prizes:

Boy's Light-up Scooter w/ Helmet
Hudson Werneke

Girl's Light-up Scooter w/ Helmet
Brynleigh Spencer

$10 DQ Gift Card
Everett Guy, Robert Yates, Theresa Yates
Rebecca (no last name given)

Bluetooth Headphones
Kieran Guy, Magnolia Gurney

$15 McDonald's Gift Card
Magnola Spencer
Michael Ware







From top: The usual large crowd was in attendance at the annual meeting. WCE Youth Tour delegate Hayley Jenkins addresses members prior to the start of the board meeting. Member Don Holton visits with Lineman Derek Cole.

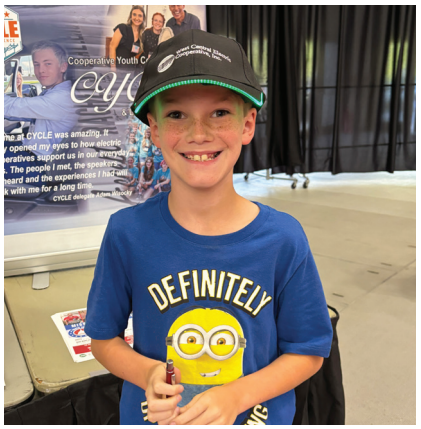
WCE hosts 87th annual meeting

"A total of 524 members were registered as attending this year's annual meeting," said CFO Rebecca Hoeflicker.

A total of 524 registered members and their guests enjoyed the traditional co-op barbecue dinner, informational booths and business meeting during West Central Electric Cooperative's 87th annual meeting Aug. 28 in Warrensburg. Total attendance was estimated at more than 1,000.

Director Election

District 3 incumbents Robert Simmons and Richard Strobel, and District 5 incumbent Densil Allen Jr. were all re-elected by member vote. New this year was the implementation of iPad voting for members to cast their votes rather than fill out paper ballots.



Reports

WCE's 2026 Youth Tour delegate Hayley Jenkins delivered the speech that earned her a place on the Missouri delegation to Washington, D.C. Jenkins spoke about her mother attending the trip as a WCE delegate in 2001.

"My mom's experience on the West Central Electric Youth Tour has influenced the way I approach my opportunities," she said. "I understand now how important it is to dream big and never let your circumstances stop you from taking chances."

Members also heard an address on the state of the cooperative from General Manager Michael Newland, and a report

from WCE Board President Densil Allen Jr. (A summary of Newland's speech and Allen Jr.'s full address appear in this issue.)

Other Evening Highlights

• Members were able to participate in a survey asking their opinions on hosting an in-person annual meeting vs. the meeting in a different format and adding different in-person member events throughout the service area. (Members who did not attend the annual meeting are also invited to participate in the survey. Details and a QR code are to the right of this story.)

• Informational booths by area vendors including a virtual reality simulation from Associated Electric Cooperative;

• Live demonstrations from WCE linemen on electrical safety and how power outages are located and repaired;

• WCE Operation RoundUp Foundation board members on hand to provide information on the program and show how the funds collected in the past year have been used to support various community programs throughout the service area;

• Prizes including a grand prize $500 energy credit (won by Charles & Brenda Blattel) and several energy certificates as well as other prizes;

• Kids area with prizes and giveaways.



West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc.
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Have you taken the survey?

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK
about your co-op and the annual meeting!
(QR code and link open Nov. 1-15, 2026)

Scan to take the survey!

OR VISIT
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QPRR9Q3

Survey takes less than 3 minutes!

No login required | One survey per member | Responses are confidential

We appreciate your feedback!

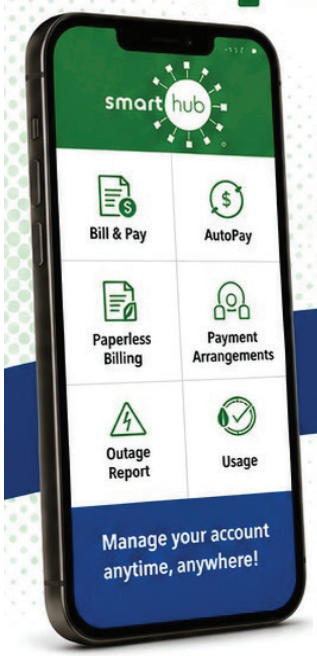


(Top) AMEC Vice President of Member Services and Missouri's Youth Tour Coordinator Chris Massman (in attendance to administer the iPad voting process) catches up with WCE Youth Tour delegates. (L-r) Hannah Cochran, Hayley Jenkins, Massman and Aiden McDonald. (Bottom) Members participate in the new iPad voting process.

What you need to know

smart hub

West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc.
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



GO DIGITAL & WIN!

SEPTEMBER 1 – DECEMBER 31

4 months of chances to win!

Enroll in Paperless Billing, AutoPay, or both and be entered to win!

WHO'S ELIGIBLE?

All active members enrolled in paperless billing, AutoPay, or participating in prepaid billing on each drawing date are eligible and will all automatically have an entry.

ALREADY ENROLLED?

Great news! You'll already be automatically entered.

- ✓ 1 entry for Paperless Billing
- ✓ 1 entry for AutoPay

You could win!

MONTHLY DRAWINGS

3 WINNERS EACH MONTH

$100 BILL CREDIT

Drawings will take place on the 15th of every month:
Sept. 15 • Oct. 15 • Nov. 15 • Dec. 15

GRAND PRIZE

$300 BILL CREDIT

Grand Prize drawing will take place on December 31!

SIGN UP TODAY!

Through SmartHub

At one of our office locations

Go digital for the benefits!

- Get your bill faster
- Never miss a payment
- Secure & convenient
- Manage your account anytime, anywhere
- Save paper & help the environment

www.westcentralelectric.coop | 800-491-3803 | *Official contest rules can be viewed at our website.*

WCE Employees on the Move



Matt Jeske

Former Operations Assistant and Line Inspector Matt Jeske has moved into an apprentice lineman position with the cooperative.

Jeske celebrated his first anniversary with the cooperative in September. He is working out of the Higginsville location.



Austin Hatfield

Oak Grove Journeyman Lineman Austin Hatfield has transitioned to the position of service lineman to fill the co-op's need for a specialist in this technical role.

Hatfield joined the cooperative in 2023, and will continue to work out of the Oak Grove location.

New Employee Spotlight



Landon Curry • Apprentice Lineman

West Central Electric Cooperative has recently welcomed Landon Curry as an apprentice lineman.

Curry, who completed an internship with WCE in 2025, has returned to the co-op and is working out of the Oak Grove location. He is a recent graduate of State Technical College in the field of electrical distribution systems.

"I am looking forward to learning everything about line work from my co-workers," Curry said.

Curry's hometown is Waverly, Mo.



WE LOVE A PARADE!

Getting out in our local communities is one of the things our employees love about working at WCE! Each year, our employees and their families volunteer to ride and throw candy to spectators in a host of festival parades throughout the serve area. (At left) Employees and families find a shady spot to wait for the start of the Higginsville Country Fair parade in September.



Prune during winter
for safety & tree health

As trees grow up and out, maintenance and upkeep is necessary. Weak, dying and dead branches can break off during storms, damaging electrical equipment, power lines and buildings. Weaker branches also stress the tree as it diverts more resources to sustain and repair those parts.

Pruning and trimming done correctly benefit the entire tree, but done incorrectly, can cause significant damage to it. Contrary to what some may think, it's best to prune during cold weather when the tree is dormant, not when trees are growing. The ideal time for pruning is between mid-November and mid-March. Trees pruned during winter months will have increased growth in the spring.

"Pruning is the most beneficial between November and mid-March, but never trim or prune trees near power lines yourself. Call in a professional instead."

--Dru Felkins
ROW Coordinator,
ISA Certified Arborist



Keep in mind: Never trim trees that are close to overhead power lines, including the service connection to your home. That is a job for tree trimmers who are certified to work near power lines.

Start with removal of dead or damaged wood. In fact, branches damaged during storms should be removed as soon as possible. When splits in the tree's wood emerge, they expand as the tree grows. This can result in fallen branches that bring down power lines and damage electrical equipment.

Always make a plan before pruning. Take into consideration the area surrounding the tree so that it will not come in contact with overhead power lines. If you're using a chainsaw to prune, never reach above your shoulders. Ladders can be especially dangerous, so make sure that you have a firm foundation before you climb. Have someone stationed at the bottom for added stability.

Look up to make sure that you or your equipment does not make contact with an overhead power line as you prune. Start with the largest branches that need pruning before moving to the smaller ones. Trim at the growth points, not in the middle of branches.

While pruning, make sure that you take frequent breaks so that you can remain focused on the task. During these breaks, always look up to assess if pruning can be done safely in the surrounding area. Pruning your trees can be dangerous, so don't hesitate to hire a professional to do the job.

For more information on electrical safety, visit safeelectricity.org.

Is your HVAC system ready for winter?

Here's what to check this fall...

As cold weather approaches, fall is a good time to ensure your heating and cooling system is ready for winter.

Schedule a professional inspection

• Have your heating system inspected by a qualified HVAC professional each year, before winter weather arrives. A professional can check for worn parts, airflow issues, safe operation and other problems that may not be obvious.

• Ensure the inspection includes checking for proper ventilation and signs of carbon monoxide risks if you have a gas, propane or oil furnace.

Change or clean air filters

• Check your air filter regularly and replace or clean it as needed — usually every one to three months. A dirty filter can block airflow, make your system work harder and affect indoor air quality.

Check airflow throughout the home

• Ensure registers and vents are clean and not blocked by furniture, rugs, curtains etc.

• Vacuum vents to remove dust and keep air moving freely.

• Keep most of the registers open throughout your home. Closing vents in unused rooms can disrupt airflow and work your system harder.

Reduce heat loss

• Look for drafts around windows and doors, and seal gaps with weatherstripping or caulk.

• Check insulation in attics, basements and crawl spaces.

Prepare outdoor HVAC equipment

• Remove leaves, branches, grass clippings and other debris around outdoor HVAC equipment. Trim shrubs and vegetation to maintain at least two feet of clearance around the unit.

• Check gutters and downspouts to ensure water drains away from HVAC equipment.

• Check your furnace's outdoor air intake and exhaust pipes. Snow, ice or debris can block airflow, keep your furnace from operating properly and increase the risk of carbon monoxide buildup.

• Keep outdoor heat pumps clear of snow, ice and debris during the winter. Do not cover a heat pump while it is operating, because it needs airflow to work properly.

Adjust your thermostat for energy savings

• Install or program a smart thermostat to match your household schedule. Lowering the temperature when you are asleep or away from home can help save energy without compromising comfort.

• Review the settings on your smart or programmable thermostat before winter begins. You could set the fan to "auto" during mild fall weather to circulate air efficiently without unnecessary energy use.









West Central Electric Cooperative Electric News

From the WCE boardroom

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held Aug. 27, 2026.

A meeting of the board of directors of West Central Electric Cooperative was held at the offices of the cooperative in Higginsville, Mo. at 9:30 a.m. Aug. 27, 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, Elizabeth Houtsma and Colby Dowell. 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 July 23, 2026; expenditures for the month of July 2026; new membership applications and membership terminations, and the treasurer's report.

FINANCING AND TREASURER'S REPORT

CFO Rebecca Hoeflicker presented the July 2026 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, borrowing funds, and projections for June. She gave updated budget numbers and reviewed investments. Equity was reported on. The cash-flow statement was reviewed. New services connected were reported on. The KRTA data was in the board packet. Staffing 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, mechanic and fleet, and outages. The new digger truck was reported on. A request made by the Odessa VFW was discussed. Summer interns were reported on.

Engineering Report: Engineering Manager Pete Nelson provided an oral report to supplement his written engineering report. He reported on new work being done by subcontractors. He gave a Lone Jack update and reported on new services and requests for loads. He reported NISC training was done.

Safety Report

Safety and Compliance Manager Cody Brock provided an oral report to supplement his written safety report. A safety meeting will be held on Aug. 28, 2026. He reported on crew visits. As of July 31, 2026, the employees worked 1,367 days without a lost-time accident and drove 38,779 miles for the month.

Member Services Report: Member Services Manager Brent Schlotzhauer provided a member services report. He provided updates on Operation RoundUp and the communication department activities. The state fair and member outreach were discussed. The annual meeting was reported on. He gave a report on solar and wind, net metering and rebates. He reported on chamber meetings and on member engagement



including parade participations. Member Services Supervisor Brandy Dukes reported on member service key metrics and payment options regarding how members currently pay their bills. She also reported on prepay applications, automated transitions and cross training.

AMEC MEETING

Bredehoeft reported on the Aug. 5 meeting. He had provided department reports prior to the meeting. He discussed Rural Missouri magazine, executive physicals, data centers, and the AECI report. The AMEC annual meeting is Sept. 30-Oct. 1 in Branson. He gave a training center update.

NW BOARD REPORT

Simmons and Newland gave the NW Board report. They reported on margins, equity, and outages. They gave a Lone Jack update.

POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Jarman reported on what the committee had reviewed including policies 2.6, 2.16, 4.5, 5.3, 5.5 and 5.6. They will be brought back next month.

ANNUAL MEETING DISCUSSION

Newland discussed the annual meeting preparation.

REVIEW BOARD STANDING COMMITTEES

The standing committees were reviewed and will stay the same for 2027.

LEGAL REPORT

Smiley gave the legal report for the month.

MANAGERS REPORT

Newland gave the manager's report. He reported on meetings attended. Locate companies were discussed. He reported on staffing. A franchise agreement with the city of Oak Grove has been completed. He reported the NRECA health insurance premiums will increase by 16% for the year

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

It was reported that Houtsma has completed her NRECA training. Director's expenses were discussed. The decision was made to not reimburse an office expense for equipment/materials that is beyond what the co-op issues.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session was called at 10:57 a.m. and was out at 12:42 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned.

FINANCIAL REPORT

July 2026
Statement of Operations

	This month	YTD 2026	YTD 2025
Revenue	**$3,810,440**	**$24,600,948**	**$24,977,656**
Power Bill Expense	2,203,656	14,604,624	15,172,739
Operation & Maintenance Expense	950,791	5,571,948	5,399,400
Depreciation Expense	232,824	1,597,361	1,521,919
Interest Expense	164,397	1,050,721	980,500
Total cost of Service (Total Expenses)	**3,551,668**	**22,824,654**	**23,074,558**
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	258,772	1,776,294	1,903,098
Other Margins	38,470	302,971	219,535
TOTAL MARGINS	**$297,242**	**$2,079,265**	**$2,122,633**