



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

West Central Electric News

January 2015



West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. ~ Serving our members' needs since 1939

The power of policy impacts our members

WCE, NRECA are always looking out for your interests

It seems you can't turn on a TV, listen to the radio or pick up a newspaper without hearing about ineffectiveness in government. It often seems that no matter what we do or who we vote for, we don't feel truly represented in either our state or national governments.

At West Central Electric Cooperative, we understand how that feels, and we have been there ourselves. That feeling,

along with a strong desire to take action, is the reason why we have dedicated staff that works to ensure our members' interests are represented, and heard, by elected officials.

Members of our government relations and policy teams work tirelessly along with cooperative representatives from all around the state and nation to tackle complicated regulatory and policy issues. They apply these issues to the ever-changing energy market and then evaluate how those issues impact our communities. They have a deep understanding of the needs of the communities we serve, and they use that knowledge to ensure that your needs

are represented in major legislative decision-making.

The ability to impact change is a huge part of being a member of an electric cooperative. We don't lobby elected officials on behalf of investors with the aim to increase profit margins. We work with elected officials to make sure that your interests are being considered to ensure that you will always be provided with safe, reliable and affordable electric service. That is the cooperative difference.

But it isn't just our government relations team that helps us affect policy and legislative change. Your voice makes a huge difference in how quickly

and effectively we can drive change.

Through our grassroots advocacy programs we encourage you to bring your ideas to the table and to make your voice heard. This is how we show state and national officials that we are acting in your best interest. Your collective voice shows that we represent communities and families, not corporate interests.

The next time you are feeling frustrated, the next time you want to be heard or the next time you want to make a change in your community, call West Central Electric and find out what we are doing to represent your interests, and how you can help affect impactful change in our communities.

Fight the winter chills

Managing energy usage means spending less

Another colder-than-normal winter is predicted for much of the country this year. Frigid temperatures can cause heating systems to work over time, and since heating and cooling can make up nearly half of your electric bill, you may experience sticker shock when you open that bill. Instead of waiting until after a potentially high bill is in your mailbox, be proactive. There are things you can do now to help ensure you are managing your energy use and spending less.

Simple steps to manage energy use during the winter months:

- Wrap exposed pipes and water heaters that are in unconditioned spaces.
- Make sure to change your air filter once a month.
- Keep drapes closed at night and keep those that don't get direct sunlight closed during the day, too.
- Keep the fireplace damper closed when it is not in use. Keeping it open can bring cold air into the room.
- Caulk around the fireplace hearth, and caulk or weather strip around doors and windows.
- Log on to your West Central Electric account to keep up with your use. If we've had a few days of frigid temperatures, see how you can try to save on days that are milder.
- Dress for the weather, even if you are inside. Wearing proper clothing like long sleeves and pants, or wrapping up in a cozy blanket will help combat the temp-

tation of bumping up the thermostat.

So, when temperatures fall this winter and you hear your weatherman talking about bringing in pets and plants, take the steps above to help manage your use.

Why is my bill higher than normal during the winter?

Using the tips above can certainly help you manage your energy use, but your bill may still be higher than normal in

winter months. Why?

- The weather makes a big impact on electric bills, accounting for nearly half of your bill.
- Even those with the most efficient HVAC systems will see more use in extreme weather.
- When extreme cold temperatures hit, our heaters work overtime.
- For example, even if you set your thermostat to our recommended 68 degrees in the winter, when it is 19 degrees outside, your system has to work hard to make up that 49-degree difference.
- Your heater works harder and cycles on and off more often, making your use much higher. That means your bill will be much higher.
- Remember, there is value in comfort. For us to be comfortable in our homes, our heaters are going to work harder, but it may be worth the additional cost to you.

Managing your bills in winter:

- Call West Central Electric and see what kinds of options might be right for you. We offer pre-paid billing as well as leveled payment plans to assist with managing winter's high bills.
- Speak to one of our energy efficiency experts. They can help you understand how weather and your use patterns affect your bill.

Replacing filters once a month can help you manage your energy usage during the cold winter months.



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506 N. Broadway
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Website:
www.westcentralelectric.coop

24-Hour Number:
1-800-491-3803

General Manager:
Mike Gray

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

Board of Directors:
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Clark Bredehoeft, Vice-Pres.
Dale Jarman, Treasurer
Robert Simmons, Secretary
Stan Rhodes, Asst. Sect.
Max Swisegood, Director
Richard Strobel, Director
Sandra Streit, Director
Jeremy Ahmann, Director

Heat safely when using a space heater

As temperatures drop this winter, many will look for supplemental heating sources for their homes. Space heaters can be a good alternative for those who want to warm one area of their home without turning up the thermostat on the central heating system. However, space heaters are also responsible for 32 percent of house fires, according to the National Fire Protection Association. If you are planning to use a space heater in your home this winter, review these tips from West Central Electric to keep you, your family and your property safe.

MATERIALS -- What are the components of your space heater made of? Parts like metal grating can be hot to the touch and may burn anyone who gets too close. Make sure you purchase a heater that is cool to the touch and has guards over the coils just in case little fingers get too close.

PLACEMENT -- While it can be tempting to place a small heater on a shelf so it is not in the way of pets and children, it is safest to leave the heater on a level floor on a nonflammable surface. Keeping the space heater on the floor can keep it from falling over, preventing fire hazards. Also, remember that space heaters and bathrooms are not a good combination, unless the heater

is designed for bathroom use. Moisture can damage the heater.

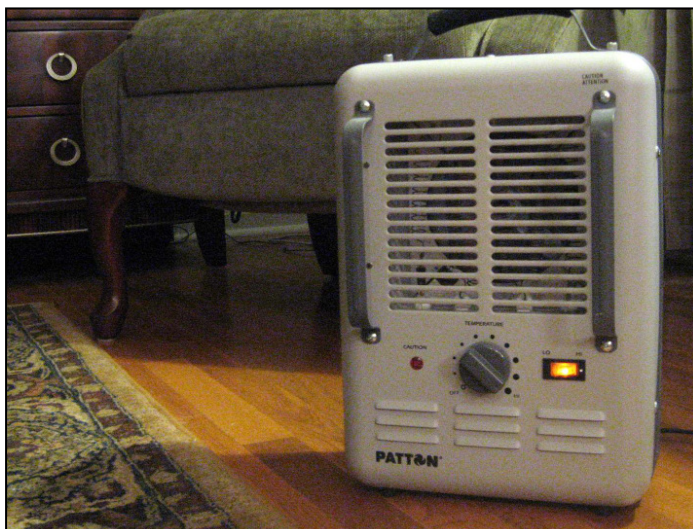
The most important rule about space heater placement is the three-foot rule. Whether you are using the heater in the bedroom, living room or kitchen, space heaters should always be kept three feet away from flammable materials and out of the way of children and pets.

SPECIAL FEATURES -- Does your space heater have an auto shutoff function if tipped over? Auto shutoff can be a lifesaver. If you currently own a space heater without auto shutoff, consider purchasing a heater with this important safety feature.

CORDS -- You should never use an extension cord when plugging in a space heater as it can cause overheating. The space heater should be plugged directly into a wall outlet, and should be the only thing plugged in to the wall outlet. Also make sure cords aren't in a high-traffic area so they are not a tripping hazard.

USE -- Never leave a heater unattended while in use. If you are leaving your home or going to bed, make sure to unplug the heater.

Following these tips and making sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions can keep you safe this winter.



If you use a space heater to supplement your main heating system during the winter, follow these safety tips to avoid fires.

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Statement of Nondiscrimination

West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provides that no person in the United States on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefit of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is Mike Gray, general manager. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above from and/or file a written complaint with this organization; or the USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.

**West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*



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Cooperative, Inc.**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

The Touchstone Energy® logo signifies that a local electric cooperative is among the hundreds of consumer-owned co-ops which have joined in a nationwide marketing alliance dedicated to providing superior service at affordable rates to all customers, large and small, and the communities they

You could be here in 2015!

WCE is looking for a few good Youth Tour/CYCLE delegates

What do the schools in West Central Electric Cooperative's service area have in common? They have sent some of the best and brightest to both our nation's and state's capitals for the Rural Electric Youth Tour and the Cooperative Youth Conference and Leadership Experience. If you are a high school junior this year, YOU could be a part of that, too!

What is Youth Tour?

The annual contest for high school juniors is sponsored by West Central Electric Cooperative, which sends delegates on a six-day trip to Washington, D.C. to learn about our nation's history and government while experiencing our nation's capital firsthand.

Electric Cooperatives throughout the country sponsor delegates on the trip which includes students from more than 40 states. Cooperatives from the state of Missouri will send approximately 80 delegates. This year, WCE will send **AT LEAST THREE DELEGATES**, and, depending on the number of entries received, as many as five delegates to Washington, D.C.

When is it?

This year's Youth Tour will be June 12-18, 2015. Missouri delegates will meet in Jefferson City on Friday, June 12 for a banquet and orientation before traveling by plane to Washington, D.C. June 13. Delegates and their families will also have the opportunity to participate in Family Capital Day sponsored by West Central Electric.

What will we do?

While in Washington, D.C., delegates will have the opportunity to meet

with their senators and representatives, as well as visit historic memorials such as the Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Iwo Jima and Vietnam memorials. Favorite Washington, D.C. landmarks are also on the agenda, including Mt. Vernon, the Smithsonian museums, Ford's Theatre, the Washington Monument and the Washington Cathedral. Delegates will also enjoy a moonlight cruise on the Potomac River and a MLB game or play at the Kennedy Center.

The Rural Electric Youth Tour provides a chance for high school juniors to learn about government, our nation's capital and electric cooperatives, as well as rural electrification and the impact it has had on our nation's development.

What is CYCLE?

CYCLE is the Cooperative Youth Conference and Leadership Experience which will be held July 15-17, 2015 in Jefferson City.

WCE will send **FIVE DELEGATES** to this conference sponsored by the

Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives. They will join approximately 95 other delegates from across the state.

Students will hear amazing speakers, participate in team-building and leadership activities, and get a chance to debate their own bill on the floor of the Missouri House of Representatives.

For more information, contact your high school English teacher, FFA advisor, or Heather Hoflander at West Central Electric Cooperative in Higginsville at 1-800-491-3803 or 660-584-2131.



Top right: WCE Youth Tour delegate Beth Harness (right) and new friends see how many delegates it takes to span a huge tree at Mount Vernon, the boyhood home of George Washington.

Above: WCE CYCLE delegates (l-r) Jillian Samson, George Cooper and Ali Landrum visit the Missouri State Capitol Building which includes the opportunity to debate their own bill on the



Above: WCE CYCLE delegate George Cooper works with his team to build a cooperative during the first day of the Jefferson City trip.



Left: WCE Youth Tour delegates at the United States Capitol Building. (L-r) Molly Bertz, Beth Harness and Heather Kopp.

Contest Details:

The contest is open to high school juniors who attend a school in the West Central Electric service area, or whose parents or legal guardians are current members of WCE.

How do I enter?

Submit a 600-word, typed essay on the following topic:

"The Value of Membership"

Students will use theme to write an essay showing the value of being a member of a rural electric cooperative.

For more information:

Visit westcentralelectric.coop and click on "Youth Programs" then "Youth Tour" to download the information packet.

From the Boardroom...

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held October 30 2014

The meeting was called to order by President Densil Allen. Robert Simmons, Secretary of the Cooperative, caused the minutes of the meeting to be kept. The following Directors were present: Max Swisegood, Clark Bredehoeft, Dale Jarman, Richard Strobel, Densil Allen, Robert Simmons, Stan Rhodes, Sandra Streit and Jeremy Ahmann. Also present were General Manager Mike Gray and general counsel Matt Krohn.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

After discussion, the agenda was approved with the addition of a review of auditor proposals.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The unapproved minutes of the regular meeting of the board of directors held September 25, 2014, were approved.

REVIEW OF EXPENDITURES FOR SEPTEMBER

An itemized list of expenditures for August was presented to the board, and the payment of the bills was ratified.

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following October 2014 reports were approved: Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement including the Financial Statistical Report with month and budget comparisons and statistical data pertaining to operating revenue, expenses, margins, assets, liabilities, and KWH sales; Treasurer's Report; the written monthly Construction, Retirement, Maintenance and Operations Report and the Safety Report, which included no lost time accidents during the month.

MEMBERSHIPS

The applications submitted for membership in the cooperative were accepted and approved. Directors reviewed a list of requests for termination of membership in the cooperative which, along with their requests that their billings be deducted from their deposits and the remainder, if any, be refunded to them, were accepted and approved.

N.W. ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE, INC. REPORT

Gray and Swisegood reported their attendance at the November board meeting and shared highlights of the meeting.

AMEC REPORT

Gray and Bredehoeft reported their attendance and shared highlights from the recent AMEC regular board meeting and the annual meeting.

NRECA REGION 8-10 MEETING REPORT

Simons and Swisegood reported their attendance at the Region 8-10 meeting and shared information and updates from the meeting. Directors approved a donation to the NRECA Foundation.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Mike Gray provided his Manager's Report for the month which included information on the upcoming board retreat set for Jan. 22-23; a Thomas Hill tour, mileage procedure, a possible rate increase and WCE's rates compared with other cooperatives, board retreat topics and feedback from the directors and finding a facilitator for the board retreat.

MILEAGE EXPENSES

The board determined the cooperative will pay one-half the IRS approved rate on the days the board has a West Central Services meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Administrative Assistant Kim Lewis was invited into the meeting to report on the Credentialed Cooperative Director Program and training

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Directors adjourned into executive session and then returned to the regular meeting.

MEETING ADJOURNED

FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • September 2014

	This month	YTD 2014	YTD 2013
Revenue	1,928,964	20,066,904	19,386,446
Power Bill Expense	1,168,193	11,959,659	11,553,078
Operation & Maint. Expense	217,509	1,918,501	2,061,473
Depreciation Expense	154,273	1,371,184	1,330,190
Interest Expense	115,182	1,013,904	1,002,928
Total cost of Srvcs. (Total Expense)	1,655,157	16,263,248	15,947,669
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	4,490	1,411,997	1,103,094
Other Margins	14,744	100,853	152,352
TOTAL MARGINS	19,234	1,512,850	1,255,446

To report an outage...

Online:

Members may report power outages online at www.westcentralelectric.coop. Click on the tab at the top titled "Report an Outage" and enter your account number or phone number.

By phone:

You may also call to report outages by phone. Call 1-800-491-3803 -- 24 hrs. a day, or Higginsville at 816-565-4942.

***During heavy outages, we will be busy, so please keep trying if you get a busy signal.**

Before calling, have you:

- 1) Checked your fuses or multibreakers?
- 2) Checked with your neighbors to see if they are out of electricity?

When calling, have this information ready:

- A) Your name, or the name your service is under;
B) Your account number (Look on your latest bill to find it.) or your map location number.
(This is the number the co-op uses to locate where you live. It was given to you when you signed up for membership.) Please keep both numbers by your phone for quicker service.

Tracking Outages

Outage information may be tracked on our website, and periodic updates will be posted on our facebook page. **PLEASE DO NOT REPORT OUTAGES ON THE FACEBOOK PAGE** as they have a good chance of getting missed. If you have internet service, go to the website to report instead.

Reminder to our members...

West Central Electric would like to remind members that there is no mail service to our Oak Grove Office.

Any correspondence or payments must be mailed to WCE headquarters in Higginsville to the following address:

**West Central Electric
Cooperative,
P.O. Box 452, Higginsville,
MO 64037**

*(Walk-in and night-drop box services
available at both locations.)*