



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

ElectricNews

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

12 Days of holiday energy savings

Get in the energy-saving spirit this holiday, with these 12 tips from the U.S. Department of Energy:

Day 12:

Drive your way to fuel savings

Whether you are driving across town to do errands or across the country to visit family, fuel costs can add up over the holidays. One way to reduce fuel consumption is to empty the car after all your driving trips — an extra 100 pounds in your vehicle could increase gas costs by up to 8 cents a gallon.

Day 11:

Plug holiday decorations into power strips

From holiday lights to those Christmas carols you listen to on repeat, the holidays can take a toll on your home's energy consumption. Even when you aren't using lights and electronics, they still draw small amounts of energy — averaging \$100 a year — for American households. Plug your electronics into a power strip, and turn it off to reduce your energy bills.

Day 10:

Install a timer

When decking your house in holiday lights, use timer controls to lower ener-

gy consumption and save money. The controls allow you to turn lights on and off at specific times, while staying in the holiday spirit.

Day 9:

Use LEDs

This holiday, light up your home with

light-emitting diode lights. In addition to being sturdier and more resistant to breakage, LED holiday lights last longer and consume 70 percent less energy

than conventional incandescent light strands. It only costs about 27 cents to

light a 6-foot tree for 12 hours a day for 40 days with LEDs compared to \$10 for incandescent lights.

Day 8:

Save energy in the kitchen

Between holiday baking and meal preparation, your oven is probably

working overtime. Cooking alone accounts for 4.5 percent of your home's energy use, and when factoring in other kitchen appliances, your kitchen's energy use can be as high as 15 percent. Take simple actions such as

using the right-sized pots on stove burners to save about \$36 annually for an electric range or \$18 for gas, and using the oven light to check on a dish's progress to prevent heat loss instead of opening the door, to entertain in style without raising your energy bill.

Day 17:

Purchase rechargeable batteries and an ENERGY STAR battery charger

If you are buying gifts that require batteries, consider purchasing rechargeable batteries, which are more cost effective than disposable batteries, as well as an ENERGY STAR battery charger. In the U.S. alone, more energy-efficient battery chargers could save families more than \$170 million annually.

Day 6:

Buy ENERGY STAR electronics

Are computers, TVs or other electronics on your wish list this holiday season? Be sure to ask for ENERGY STAR home electronics for instant energy savings. For example, depending on usage, an ENERGY STAR computer can save 30 to 65 percent more energy compared

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Please join us for our annual

Member Appreciation Day

8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2016
at our Higginsville and Oak Grove offices

Visit our offices and register to win:
***\$25 energy credit for your January 2017 electric bill**
(Four certificates will be given away at each office.)

Come on in to our offices and join us for coffee, punch and cookies to celebrate the season!

***Also register to win limited edition Willie Wiredhand collectible ornaments**

Headquarters:

7867 S. Highway 13, P.O. Box 452
 Higginsville, MO 64037
 816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803

District office:

506 N. Broadway
 Oak Grove, MO 64075

PAY BY PHONE: 1-855-874-5349

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:

Densil Allen, Jr. President
 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

Giving back is the cooperative way

As some of you might know, cooperatives across the globe adhere to the same Seven Cooperative Principles that guide all of our decisions—from how we run the co-op, to how we engage with our local communities. Concern for com-

munity is the seventh principle, and it is one that all employees of West Central Electric value year round. But during the holiday season, concern for community seems especially important.

Electric cooperatives have a proud his-

tory of giving back. Here at WCE, your board of directors chooses an area charity each Christmas to send a donation. Employees have adopted area families and provided Christmas gifts and food.

The cooperative donates to area school

and community groups as well as helping to provide school supplies for area students when the start of the new school year rolls around. We are also proud of our scholarship program,

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12 Days of holiday energy savings

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to a computer without this designation.

Day 5:**Take advantage of sunlight**

Use sunlight to your advantage this winter. Open curtains during the day to allow sunlight to naturally warm your home; close them at night to reduce the chill from cold windows.

Day 4:**Prepare your windows for winter**

Before you curl up on the couch in front of the window this holiday season, take steps to reduce heat loss.

Weatherizing your windows can reduce drafts, and installing storm windows can cut heat loss through your windows by 25 to 50 percent.

Day 3:**Maintain your Fireplace**

It isn't the holidays without a crackling fire, but don't let your energy bills go up with the smoke. Proper chimney maintenance — like sealing your fireplace flue damper, caulking around your hearth and installing tempered glass doors and a heat-air exchange system to blow warmed air back into

the room — will help keep warm air in your house and cold air out.

Day 2:**Install programmable thermostat**

Don't pay for warm air that you aren't using. By installing and setting a programmable thermostat, you can save money on your energy bills. Lowering your thermostat 10 to 15 degrees for 8 hours can save up to 15 percent a year on heating bills. If you are traveling this holiday, be sure to program your thermostat for energy savings while you are away.

Day 1:**Get a home energy audit**

This holiday, give the gift of energy savings by purchasing a professional home energy audit for someone. A home energy audit helps you pinpoint where your home is losing energy-- and what you can do to save money -- by checking for air leaks, inspecting insulation, surveying heating and cooling equipment and more. By making upgrades to your home following a home energy audit, you could save 5 to 30 percent on your energy bills.

Improvements underway at co-op offices



Contractors remove a portion of the old awnings covering the sidewalks of the employee entrances to WCE's headquarters building.

There has been lots of bustling around the cooperative offices this fall, and it has nothing to do with the approaching holidays. In lieu of spending the money to construct a new building, the board of directors opted to make some long-overdue and badly-needed improvements to the current facilities.

"There are many things that needed to be done, not from an aesthetic standpoint, but for the safety and security of our cooperative, our members and our employees," WCE Board President Densil Allen Jr. said. "The Higginsville building has not had any major repairs since it was built in 1962, and technology has changed so much in the past 50 years that we felt it was time to upgrade some things."

Improvements at the Higginsville office include everything from replacing crumbling sidewalks and a large section of the warehouse lot to securing the computer server room, installing energy-efficient lighting, and removing the old awnings outside the employee entrance. Also on the agenda is a turn-lane from Highway 13, to eliminate the need for traffic to come to a stop on the highway when turning into the lot.

Avoiding the energy rush: *Time of use matters*

Did you know that when you use electricity often matters as much as how much electricity you consume?

It's no surprise that electricity use fluctuates throughout the day based on consumer demand, and electric co-ops must be able to provide enough electricity to meet the energy demands of their members during times of highest energy use, also known as "on-peak hours." Early-morning hours, when people often start their day, and evening hours, when people return to their homes after work, are common times for on-peak

hours. To reduce peak energy demand and save money, many electric co-ops have created a time-of-use rate program to encourage electricity use during off-peak hours—when energy is less expensive to provide. Similar to saving money by attending a matinee, you can keep more money in your wallet simply by using electricity during an off-peak time period. Using less on-peak power means lower costs for the co-op—and ultimately, lower rates for members.

Electric rates based on time of use offer consumers the ability to lower

their electricity costs without reducing the amount of electricity used. By performing some of your daily chores, like running the dishwasher or doing laundry during off-peak hours, you can save on your utility bill. In a similar vein, plug electronic equipment, such as computers, printers, TVs and power tools into a power strip, then turn it off during peak hours.

You can also put technology to work for you. Use automatic timers to run hot tubs, pool pumps, water heaters and other appliances in the same way.

Saving energy can be simple. Remember, by shifting your energy use to off-peak times, you have the power to save on your monthly energy bill. To learn more about why time of use matters, watch a short video by visiting the following link: <http://tinyurl.com/TOUmatters>.

Anne Prince writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

Take advantage of energy efficiency tax credits

Last year Congress renewed the residential energy efficiency tax credits, and they are available for purchases made in 2016, as well as retroactive for purchases made in 2015. The credits expire Dec. 31, 2016, unless Congress once again renews them.

These residential energy-efficient credits apply to biomass stoves, air source heat pumps, central air conditioning, certain boilers, certain furnaces and fans, insulation, roofs, water heaters (non-solar), windows, doors and skylights.

The credits are for 10 percent of cost up to \$500 or a specific amount from \$50-\$300 for existing homes and principal residences. The credits for geothermal heat pumps are for 30 percent of cost with no upper limit through Dec. 31, 2016. New construction and rentals are not eligible for the tax incentives.

For more details, go to www.energystar.gov/about/federal_tax_credits.

Enjoy some holiday bling but save, too

A little bling is perfectly acceptable for the holidays. Now, you can have your bling and be efficient, too. Here are some tips from the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Savers and Lowe's:

Buy LED lights — Light-emitting diode holiday lights are the way to go. Here's why:

1. They use 70 percent less energy than traditional lights
2. They're brighter, friendly to the environment and safer because they don't produce much heat
3. They last 10 times longer than traditional lights
4. They contain no filaments or glass to break
5. You can connect up to 24 strands of LEDs end to end without overloading a wall socket — be sure to check your total connected wattage and don't overload your circuit
6. LEDs come with three-year warranties

Get rebates — LED light strings may cost more than traditional strings, but the ENERGY STAR website at www.energystar.gov/products/certified-products/detail/decorative-light-strings?fuseaction=find_a_product.showProductGroup&pgw_code=DS offers guidance on finding coupons and rebates for LED lights.

Limit hourly usage — Set a timer to turn lights on when it gets dark and off when you go to bed. Running lights for eight hours or less will save money.

Use other kinds of decorations — The holidays aren't all about lights. Be creative and consider alternatives to lighted decorations.

Unplug the lights — Unplug them during the day and when you're not at home.

Look for solar — New lighting displays now come with solar-powered options.

Less is more — Maybe you don't need a zillion lights this year and can cut back.

12 tips for holiday safety

Here are some tips from the Consumer Protection Agency and the Consumer Energy Center for keeping safe during the holidays:

1. Sweep out your chimney — about 40 percent of home heating fire incidents are due to chimney fires.
2. Install a smoke alarm.
3. Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens or flammable materials.
4. Before firing up the fireplace, remove all greens, boughs, paper and decorations from the area, and use a fire screen when the fireplace is lighted.
5. Only use lights that have been tested for safety; look for a label from an independent testing lab.
6. Check out lights, plugs and sockets before placement on your house or tree.
7. Never use electric lights on a metallic tree.
8. Turn off lights on trees and other decorations when you go to sleep or leave the house.
9. For outdoors, use only lights marked for outdoor use; use insulated staples or plastic attachments to hold in place.
10. A metal tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights; to avoid this possibility, use colored spotlights above or beside a tree but never

HOLIDAY LIGHTING SAFETY TIPS

1. Consider purchasing LED holiday lights; they are cool to the touch and more energy efficient than incandescent bulbs.
2. Test holiday lights by connecting each strand before hanging them.
3. Make sure there are no broken bulbs or damaged or frayed cords. Discard any defective strands.
4. Use holiday lights that include the Underwriter's Laboratories (UL) label.
5. Avoid resting bulbs on tree needles and branches. Try using a clip to keep the bulbs upright.
6. Do not overload electrical outlets or extension cords.
7. Turn off all indoor and outdoor holiday lighting before leaving the house or going to bed.

AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

fastened to it.

11. Use no more than three traditional strands per extension cord — replace traditional lights with light-emitting diode

lights, and you won't have to worry about overloads.

12. Keep "bubbly" lights away from small children.

Giving back is the cooperative way

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which has awarded hundreds of thousands of dollars over the years to area students to assist them in a higher education.

Our commitment is also global. We have donated equipment and sent lineworkers overseas so they can help bring power to thousands of people who have never experienced the benefits of electricity. In August, WCE journeyman lineman Brandon Steffen traveled to Bolivia with the NRECA International Program.

So many families go without on a daily basis and struggle to make ends

meet. This struggle can be especially hard during the holiday season.

There are many ways you can give back to the community that go

beyond dollar donations. Take some time to go through your closets and find clothes that no longer fit or have lost their use. Bag those items up and

take them to your local Salvation Army, Goodwill or church clothing drive. Volunteer for a local food or toy drive, deliver meals to the sick and the elderly, or simply make a meal for a neighbor in need.

No matter how great or small the act, every time we give back, we strengthen our community. So take the time to give back this holiday season. You'll be glad you did.

Meghaan Evans writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.



From the Boardroom...

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held September 22, 2016

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, Dale Jarman, Richard Strobel, Stan Rhodes, Clark Bredehoeft and Sandra Streit. Also present were General Manager Mike Gray, Admin. Asst./Benefits Admin. Kim Lewis and General Counsel Shawn Battagler.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

After discussion, the agenda was approved.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The board approved its consent agenda consisting of: the minutes of the regular meeting of Aug. 25, 2016, expenditures for the month of August 2016, new membership applications and membership terminations.

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following August 2016 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.

NRECA REGION 8 MEETING VOTING DELEGATE

Jarman was appointed as the voting delegate to the CFC meeting and Simmons was named alternate.

AMEC ANNUAL MEETING VOTING DELEGATE

Bredehoeft was appointed as the voting delegate to the AMEC annual meeting with Max Swisegood as alternate.

AMEC BOARD MEMBER

Bredehoeft was elected to serve as AMEC board member with Gray as the alternate.

AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft reported on his attendance and shared highlights of the recent meeting including dues increase, transfer of funds from integrity fund, grassroots efforts, training, the Missouri State Fair, board training and campaign finance ballot initiative.

N.W. ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE, INC. REPORT

Swisegood and Gray reported on their attendance and shared highlights including PURPA information from AECL counsel, storms, Platte-Clay solar output, wind production, compensation consultant and cost of service study.

BOARD MEETING AND RETREAT DATES

Gray presented a calendar of future meeting dates: Board meetings will be held Nov. 22, Dec. 22, Jan. 26, 2017 and retreat Jan. 27, 2017.

EXECUTIVE SESSION--WAGE & SALARY COMMITTEE REPORT

The board entered into executive session to hear the Wage and Salary Committee Report. Following the executive session, the board resolved to accept the report from the committee and the payroll budget was established accordingly.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray presented his monthly report to the board which included updates on building renovation and construction.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

MEETING ADJOURNED

*IMPORTANT NOTICE * to members when making payments by phone

When making a payment using the automatic payment number, please double-check electric account numbers and bank account numbers to make sure they are correct. One missed number will result in payments being posted to the wrong electric account.

Net Metering & Interconnection Act

West Central Electric Cooperative has a net metering agreement for interconnection of a distributed generation source.

Our policy, agreement and application now reflect the new standards set by the Net Metering and Easy Connection Act as of January 1, 2008.

For more information, contact our Higginsville office at 800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942.

West Central Electric Cooperative's Christmas & New Year's Holiday Closings:

Friday, Dec. 23, 2016
Monday, Dec. 26, 2016
Monday, Jan. 1, 2017

Outage calls will be taken by dispatchers at 1-800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942 or online at www.westcentralelectric.coop

FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • August 2015

	This month	YTD 2016	YTD 2015
Revenue	2,438,442	17,791,160	17,487,683
Power Bill Expense	1,456,472	11,149,732	11,017,208
Operation & Maint. Expense	296,965	1,784,744	2,054,667
Depreciation Expense	167,808	1,326,154	1,270,234
Interest Expense	88,545	798,167	766,672
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	2,009,790	15,058,797	15,108,781
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	166,878	601,898	351,471
Other Margins	4,988	115,845	107,644
TOTAL MARGINS	171,866	717,743	459,115