



West Central Electric Cooperative

April 2018

ElectricNews

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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

Operation Round-Up program is moving forward

West Central Electric's involvement in the Operation Round-Up program is nearing the final stretch before the program is officially launched later this year, according to General Manager Mike Gray.

The West Central Electric Foundation Board, the group of members who will be responsible for disbursing funds received to area groups and organizations,

was set to meet in mid-March to ratify guidelines and policies.

The Operation Round-Up program will allow members' bills to be rounded up to the nearest dollar each month with proceeds being contributed to area organizations such as emergency departments, schools, community groups, etc. to assist with community projects and programs.

Members are reminded that everyone will be automatically enrolled in this program, however, you may contact WCE with your request to opt out if you do not wish to participate.

The average member contribution will total around \$6 per year, with the maximum being just over \$11. Donations are also tax-deductible.

West Central allocates capital credits for 2017

West Central Electric Cooperative's margins have been allocated to each member/owner who purchased electric energy in 2017, according to General Manager Mike Gray.

Because rural electric cooperatives' business structure differs from investor-owned utility companies, the money WCE makes as margins (profits) is returned to the member/owners who use the service, rather than to unknown investors. The money is used as equity in the cooperative, and is returned to the members over time as determined by your board of directors.

West Central Electric tries to balance the system by staying financially strong while also returning the profits to its members over time. Each year, the board of directors decides how this will be accomplished.

You can calculate your own allocation for the year by using the formula in the box below.

The percentage used in the formula was determined by the total margins (profits) of the cooperative, and the total cost paid for our wholesale power in 2017. This year, your allocated amount for 2017 appeared on the bill you received in April.

If you have a non-rural/residential account, any questions regarding how to calculate your allocation, or if you do not know your year-to-date patronage, contact Sandy Starke at the Higginsville office at 816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803.

Total paid for electricity in 2017
(Beginning with the amount due Feb. 15, 2017,
and ending with the amount due Jan. 15, 2017.)

0.10011213598

2017 allocation
(Applies to rural/residential rate only.)

Example:
\$1,000 total billing for 2017

\$1,000
X
0.10011213598=
\$100.11
2017 allocation



NOT A PRETTY SIGHT...What could have potentially been a disaster was averted when temperatures hovered around the freezing mark instead of plummeting during a cold rainstorm in late February. (Above) Icicles collect on power lines on Jennings Rd., just down from cooperative headquarters in Higginsville.

Cooperative skirts potential weather disaster when ice hits service area

The trucks were loaded, linemen were on standby, and cooperative employees were watching the weather carefully as the potential for a late February ice storm brewed. Fortunately, the "storm" never materialized, and other than a few scattered outages, most of the system remained energized.

"When you are an electric provider, ice is never a pretty sight, but fortunately this storm didn't amount to much more than a thin covering of ice on trees and fences, and some small icicles on the power lines," West Central Electric General Manager Mike Gray said.

The weather event began the night before with heavy rainfall as the tempera-

tures took a nose-dive in the span of less than 48 hours. Crews readied the trucks and waited to see what would happen.

"Because the temperature was just right on the border, I was really just in 'wait-and-see mode,'" said Operations Manager Randy Burkeybile. "We prepared the trucks and crews for the worst, and hoped for the best. The way it was raining, if it had been 2 degrees colder, I would have been really worried."

Burkeybile said on the positive side, the event ended up serving a purpose for newer employees.

"While outages are always an incon-

venience, it has been long enough since we have had the really bad stuff that it was a good drill. for us We have some new linemen and some people in new positions, so they got some good hands-on experience," he said.

Although weather events are inevitable, cooperative personnel are always watching and ready for whatever comes, whether that is repairing a few outages ourselves, or calling for help from fellow cooperatives in the event of a larger-scale crisis.

"Our mission in these situations is to get our members back on as quickly as we safely can," Gray said.

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District office:
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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

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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

Trees can provide shade, but plant away from power lines

March and April are excellent months to plant new trees, keeping in mind

you'll need to water them weekly when you don't get at least an inch of rain.

It'll take a while before trees you plant this spring produce shade, but

they are worth the investment. Shade can reduce solar gain by as much as 9 degrees. And because cool air settles near the ground, air temperatures directly under trees can be as much as 25 degrees cooler than air temperatures above a nearby blacktop.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, strategically placed trees and shrubs can save up to 25 percent of home energy consumption year round and up to 50 percent on air conditioning costs. Even shading your room unit condenser with an awning, cover or shade from plants/trees can increase its efficiency as much as 10 percent.

Plant trees on the south and southwest corner of your house to provide welcome shade in a few years. In fact, a 6- to 8-foot deciduous tree planted near your home will begin shading windows the first year. Depending on the species and the home, the tree will shade the roof within 10 years. Trees native to your area will have a better chance of surviving and thriving.

When looking to plant trees, first take into consideration where power lines are located and which trees can be planted in those areas. The chart to the left gives examples of different types of trees and how far they should be planted from power lines given their projected height and spread. Before planting, you also need to have underground utilities located. Be sure you call Missouri One Call at 1-800-DIG-RITE or 811 before digging to ensure you don't dig into buried utilities.

Trees, shrubs and groundcover plants also can shade the ground and pavement around your home. This reduces heat radiation and cools the air before it reaches your house. Use a large bush or row of shrubs to shade a patio or driveway. Plant a hedge to shade a sidewalk. Build a trellis for climbing vines to shade a patio area. Plant vines to shade walls. Plant shrubs near the foundation to shade walls and windows. However, avoid allowing dense foliage to grow immediately next to the house where wetness and continual humidity could cause problems.

Plant the Right Tree in the Right Place

For more tips on smart tree planting in your community, contact your local electric cooperative or visit www.ArborDay.org.

Trees beautify our neighborhoods, and when planted in the right spot, can even help lower energy bills. But the wrong tree in the wrong place can be a hazard... especially to power lines.

LARGE TREES

Height/spread of more than 40 feet, such as:

- Maple
- Birch
- Oak
- Sweetgum
- Spruce
- Linden
- Pine

MEDIUM TREES

Height/spread of 25 to 40 feet, such as:

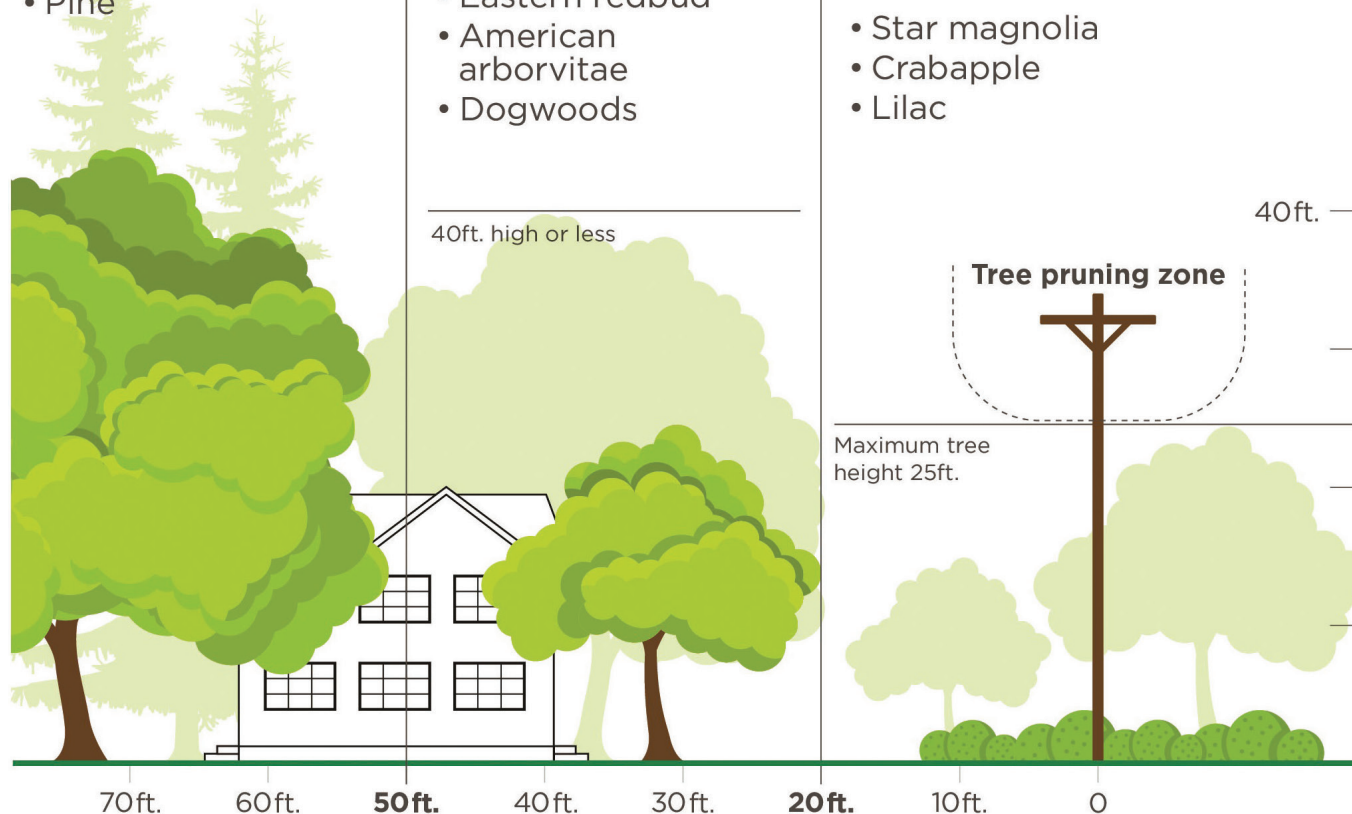
- Washington hawthorn
- Goldenraintree
- Eastern redbud
- American arborvitae
- Dogwoods

SMALL TREES

Avoid planting within 20 feet of power lines. When planting within 20 feet is unavoidable, use only shrubs and small trees.

Height/spread of no more than 25 feet such as:

- Star magnolia
- Crabapple
- Lilac



Be safe! Always call 811 before you dig to locate any buried utility lines.

Source: The Arbor Day Foundation and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association



A LOT OF RAIN, A LITTLE ICE...(Above) Trees begin to collect ice early in the day on Feb. 20 as cooperative crews watch and wait. (Right) Lineman Brandon Heck prepares the truck before responding to outages. Fortunately, the storm didn't materialize as it could have, and the cooperative experienced only a few outages that were repaired quickly.



Lineworker Appreciation Day

April 9, 2018

The power behind your power

As April arrives, it brings with it the showers that produce spring flowers. It also heralds the beginning of a potentially stormy season that can inherently include power outages. While West Central Electric strives to provide reliable electricity to our members, there are times when Mother Nature has other plans. Most of us can ride out a storm from the comfort and convenience of our homes. However, there is a group of professionals that spring into action when the weather takes a turn for the worst – co-op lineworkers.

One of the most dangerous jobs

Braving stormy weather and other challenging conditions, lineworkers often must climb 40 or more feet in the air, carrying heaving equipment to restore power. Listed as one of the 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S., lineworkers must perform detailed tasks next to high voltage power lines. To help keep them safe, lineworkers wear specialized protective clothing and equipment at all times when on the job. This includes special fire-resistant

clothing that will self-extinguish, limiting potential injuries from burns and sparks. Insulated and rubber gloves are worn in tandem to protect them from electrical shock. While the gear performs a critical function, it also adds additional weight and bulk, making the job more complex.

In addition to the highly visible tasks lineworkers perform, their job today goes far beyond climbing to the top of a pole to repair a wire. They are also information experts that can pinpoint an outage from miles away and restore power remotely. Line crews use their laptops and cell phones to map outages, take pictures of the work they have done and troubleshoot problems. In our service area, co-op lineworkers are responsible for keeping 2,500 miles of lines working, in order to bring power to more than 13,800 meters, 24/7, regardless of the weather, holidays or personal considerations.

While some of the tools that lineworkers use have changed over the years, namely the use of technology, the dedication to the job has not. Being

a lineworker is not a glamorous profession. At its essence, it is inherently dangerous, requiring them to work near high voltage lines in the worst of conditions, at any times of the day or night. Crews often work around the clock to restore power. While April is known for spring showers, there is also a day set aside to “thank a lineworker.”

Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 9. So during the month of April, if you see a lineworker, please pause to say thank you to the power behind your power. Let them know you appreciate the hard work they do to keep the lights on, regardless of the conditions.



Line Foreman Billy Mackie prepares to answer an outage call.

Anne Prince 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 January 24, 2018

The meeting, was called to order by President Densil Allen Jr. 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, Sandra Streit and Jeremy Ahmann. Stan Rhodes was absent. Also present were General Manager Mike Gray, Office Manager Sandy Starke and general counsel Sheri Smiley.

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 Jan. 4, 2018 expenditures for the month of December 2017; new membership applications; membership terminations and the treasurer's report.

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following December 2017 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 and the written monthly Construction, Retirement, Maintenance and Operations Report.

SAFETY REPORT

Gray gave the safety report for the month of December.

REVIEW AND APPROVE 2018 BUDGET

The 2018 budget was approved as presented.

REVENUE DEFERAL

The board approved a revenue deferral for 2017 as recommended by Gray. Gray recommended that \$750,000.00 be referred. The deferral amounts will be disclosed in the financial statements as follows:

- * Opening balance by year
- * Amount deferred by year
- * Amount recognized to revenue
- * Balance at the end of the year

NW REPORT

Swisegood presented the NW report for January, including AECl updates, NW out-ages, financial to date and revenue deferral.

APPOINTMENT OF WCE ROUND UP FOUNDATION BOARD

Pursuant to the bylaws of West Central Electric Round Up Foundation, Inc., the following directors were appointed for the following terms: Scott Stewart, 4 years; Donna Matthews, 4 years; Dennis Knipmeyer, 4 years; Luann Stillwell, 3 years; Sally Davidson, 3 years; Margie Storck, 3 years; Randy Dowell 2 years; Orel Glasgow 2 years; Shelly Draecktrah 2 years. Sandra Streit was appointed to serve as the ex-officio member of the Board.

Policy 3.15

Directors passed Board Policy 3.15, which sets out the procedure for opt in and opt out of West Central Electric Round Up Foundation, Inc.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray presented his monthly Manager's Report. Items of interest included: discussion on the Hwy 13 roadway improvement project, members concerns, and the Spirit Trail.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MEETING ADJOURNED

Following the executive session, the meeting was adjourned.

FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • December 2017

	This month	YTD 2017	YTD 2016
Revenue	1,771,646	25,963,152	26,623,091
Power Bill Expense	1,602,439	16,237,184	16,621,520
Opertion & Maint. Expense	424,993	2,873,105	2,809,681
Depreciation Expense	176,663	2,082,301	2,002,737
Interest Expense	69,034	1,237,780	1,223,947
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	2,273,129	22,430,370	22,657,885
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	(748,628)	210,162	732,967
Other Margins	807,004	1,101,117	947,970
TOTAL MARGINS	58,376	1,311,279	1,680,937

Tree trimmers will be out this spring

Beginning in April, contractors for West Central Electric will be out in the service area asesing trees and doing necessary trimming to keep right-or-ways clear, according to Right-of-Way Coordinator Dru Felkins.

Areas included are Oak Grove, Levasy, Chapel Hill and Lone Jack. Calls and fliers will notify affected members prior to the work beginning. Questions may be directed to Felkins at 800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942.

Changes in DD light program announced

Beginning April 1, West Central Electric will no longer repair members' privately-owned dusk-to-dawn lights installed on WCE meter poles or tran-former poles. Lights that are currently installed will be allowed to remain through the life of the pole, and will not be rein-stalled when the pole is replaced. From that point, members will no longer be

allowed to install personal lights on coopertive poles. Members who would like to have dusk-to-dawn lights may rent a coopera-tive light to be installed on either the meter pole or the transformer pole. The monthly charge for a DD light is \$9.20 per month, and includes all electricity used by the light as well as any neces-sary repairs.

Missouri Green Tax Holiday will continue April 19-25

Once again, Missouri's annual Show-Me Green Sales Tax Holiday will be held April 19-25. You can save on sales tax for qualifying ENERGY STAR-certified appliances in participating counties and cities. The following items qualify for the retail tax exemption as long as they are ENERGY STAR certified. The first \$1,500 of the purchase price of each item is exempt from tax.

- Dishwashers
- Air conditioners
- Furnaces
- Refrigerators
- Freezers
- Heat pump

Go to <http://dor.mo.gov/business/sales/taxholiday/green/> to find out if your city, county or tax district will participate in the holiday. You'll find answers to other questions about the holiday there as well.

• Clothes washers and dryers

• Water heaters

Thunderstorm safety tips courtesy of the American Red Cross

When thunderstorms are rolling your way, stay safe with these helpful tips from the American Red Cross:

- Listen to local news or NOAA Weather Radio for emergency updates. Watch for signs of a storm, like darkening skies, lightning flashes or increasing wind.
- Postpone outdoor activities if thun-derstorms are likely to occur. Many people struck by lightning are not in the area where rain is occurring.
- If a severe thunderstorm warning is issued, take shelter in a substantial building or in a vehicle with the win-dows closed. Get out of mobile homes that can blow over in high winds.
- If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to be in danger from light-ning. If thunder roars, go indoors! The National Weather Service recommends staying inside for at least 30 minutes

after the last thunder clap.

- Avoid electrical equipment and tele-phones. Use battery-powered TVs and radios instead.
- Shutter windows and close outside doors securely. Keep away from win-dows.
- Do not take a bath, shower or use plumbing.
- If you are driving, try to safely exit the roadway and park. Stay in the ve-hicle and turn on the emergency flashers until the heavy rain ends. Avoid touch-ing metal or other surfaces that conduct electricity in and outside the vehicle.
- If you are outside and cannot reach a safe building, avoid high ground; water; tall, isolated trees; and metal objects such as fences or bleachers. Picnic shel-ters, dugouts and sheds are NOT safe.

Source: American Red Cross