April 2021

West Central Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

ElectricNews

Lineworker Appreciation Day

Join us in saluting our linemen on Apri 12 for the great job they do every day!

Want to save money on products and services you use every day just for being a co-op member?

Want to support your local, hometown businesses as well as receive discounts across the country?

Well, you CAN!

The Co-op Connections Card is coming soon for WCE members. Continue to watch this newsletter and our Facebook page for dates and details!

West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Headquarters:
7867 S. Highway 13, P.O. Box 452, Higginsville, MO 64037
816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803 • PAY BY PHONE: 1-855-874-5349

To report outages 24/7:
Call 816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803 • or report outages at www.westcentralelectric.coop under "View & Report Outages"

District office:
506 N. Broadway, Oak Grove, MO 64075

Website:
www.westcentralelectric.coop

General Manager:
Mike Gray

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*

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Important notice regarding email contacts from West Central

Members who have an email address on file with the cooperative will, on occasion, receive notifications from WCE via that address.

Some of the notifications that may be received are listed as: "Bill Available," "Payment Declined," "Credit Card Expired" and "Payment Successful." The email notifications will be generated from the following address: "courier-no-reply@smarthub.com."

To receive these notifications, members will need to make sure they have allowed mail from this sender. The email WILL NOT have the name "West Central" in the address or the reference line.

Please contact WCE at 800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942 regarding questions about email contacts.

Missouri's Green Tax Holiday is 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 if they are ENERGY STAR certified. The first $1,500 of the purchase price of each item is exempt from tax.

- Clothes washers and dryers
- Water heaters
- Dishwashers
- Air conditioners
- Furnaces
- Refrigerators
- Freezers
- Heat pumps

Go to https://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.

ON THE COVER: WCE lineman Wyatt Wilkinson waits for his turn to climb during a pole-top rescue training session at the cooperative headquarters in Higginsville. Pole-top rescue is one of many safety topics discussed and trained for during monthly safety meetings.

Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 12

If you were asked to associate an image or a person with West Central Electric, you would probably picture a lineworker. One of the most visible employees of the co-op, lineworkers work tirelessly to ensure our community receives uninterrupted power 24/7.

"Lineworker" is listed as one of the top 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S. This is understandable as they perform detailed tasks near high-voltage power lines. Regardless of the time of day, having to brave stormy weather and other challenging conditions, lineworkers must climb 40 feet in the air, often carrying heavy equipment to get the job done.

Being a lineworker is not a glamorous or easy profession. It takes years of specialized training, ongoing education, dedication, and equally important, a sense of service and commitment. How else can you explain the willingness to leave the comfort of your home to tackle a challenging job in difficult conditions, when most are sheltering comfortably at home? This dedication and sense of service to the community is truly what sets them apart. That's why we set aside the second Monday in April to celebrate and recognize the men and women who work around the clock to keep the lights on.

While lineworkers may be the most visible employees at West Central Electric, it's important to note that there is a team of highly-skilled professionals working behind the scenes. Engineers provide ongoing expertise and guidance on the operations side of the co-op. Member service representatives are always standing by to take your calls and questions. Our information technology (IT) experts are continuously monitoring our system to help safeguard sensitive data. And these are just a few of the folks who work together to ensure we can deliver the service and reliability you expect and deserve. Without them, our lineworkers wouldn't be able to "bring the light" to our community.

Our dedicated and beloved lineworkers are proud to represent West Central Electric, and they deserve all the appreciation and accolades that come their way on Lineworker Appreciation Day.

On April 12, and any time you see a lineworker, thank them for their exceptional service, and remember that you have a dedicated team of professionals working behind the scenes at the co-op whose commitment to service runs just as deep.

West Central Electric Cooperative Linemen, & Crews

HIGGINSVILLE

Adam Beck
Doug Bird
Randy Burkeybile
Derek Cole
Tucker Crowe
Tiger Fiene
Tim Frerking
Todd Gast
Brandon Heck
Nathan Johnson
Billy Mackie
Robert Minnis
Pete Nelson
Jeff Rhoades
Zac Wallpe

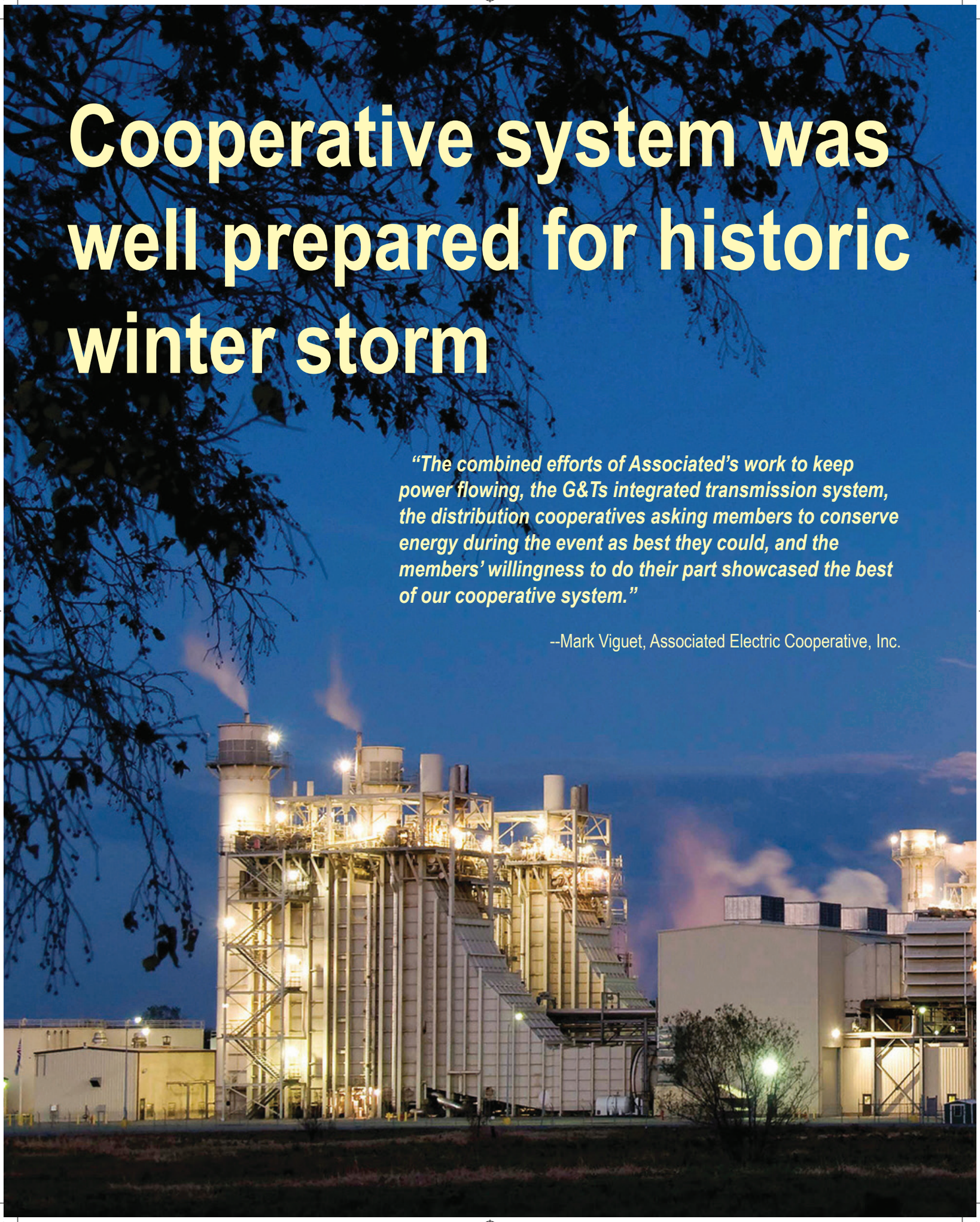
OAK GROVE

Jeff Campbell
Kade Collins
Scott Gard
Matt Schellman
Brandon Steffen
Johnathon Sullins
Matt Truax
Jesse Underwood
Eric Wegener
Wyatt Wilkinson

Cooperative system was well prepared for historic winter storm

"The combined efforts of Associated's work to keep power flowing, the G&Ts integrated transmission system, the distribution cooperatives asking members to conserve energy during the event as best they could, and the members' willingness to do their part showcased the best of our cooperative system."

--Mark Viguet, Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc.



As many across the country experienced rolling blackouts and loss of power for extended periods during February's winter blast, cooperative systems were prepared, and were able to keep their members' power flowing even as other systems were forced into planned outages.

"As a power generator, preparedness is part of what we do well," said Mark Viguet senior manager of Corporate Communications for Associated Electric Cooperative. "Using our energy emergency plan is like breaking the glass to get a fire extinguisher. Bottom line, we don' have to use it very often — it's rare, but we are prepared. Employees worked the energy emergency plan and the execution of that plan prevented rolling blackouts."

The extended period of near- and below-zero temperatures, combined with ice and several inches of snow pushed power generation units to their limits. According to AECI, on Feb. 16 the cooperative system set a new peak of nearly 5,600 MW. The previous peak was 5,100 MW during the polar vortex of January 2018. Following that event, AECI upgraded gas units to handle extremely low temperatures in order to best be prepared for future weather events. Generating units are prepped for cold weather weeks in advance of winter, Viguet said, both of which aided in the success of the power supply during this unusual cold snap.

"The energy availability problem grows even more critical if a unit goes offline in these circumstances, likely due to a combination of prolonged subzero temperatures with icing of equipment, snowfall or natural gas pipeline interruptions," he said. "Through the diligent efforts of Associated's power plant employees, the plants remained online throughout the event. Associated's five coal generating units stayed online throughout the severe weather, as did the majority of natural gas units."

The cooperatives' diverse power portfolio was a major factor in getting members through this winter storm without power outages. AECI maintains a balanced generation portfolio including coal, natural gas, wind and hydropower to generate power and to support reliability and affordability. Coal power is usually the most reliable, followed by hydro and then natural gas generation. The coal power plants typically have enough coal on site for about 60 days of generation, according to AECI.

Cooperative natural gas units also are reliable assets, but during this event, natural gas used to make electricity was also in high demand for home heating. AECI's transportation rights on gas pipelines, which other utilities do not have, also played a factor in the reliability of getting natural gas to the power plants. Contracted wind generation, which is an intermittent source anyway, produced very little electricity during peak periods, mainly because icing and heavy snowfall impacted wind turbines.

"The cooperative's extensive transmission system provides numerous interconnections with other utilities, which allowed us to import energy from other utilities during the storm," Viguet said. "Associated and its six G&Ts own and operate more than 10,000 miles of high-voltage transmission lines."

In the end, power generation, transmission and distribution tiers of the cooperative system all pulled together to avoid service interruptions to members. AECI worked with other utilities, the RTOs and the distribution cooperatives like West Central to maintain the integrity of the interconnected regional electric grid—a complex balancing act to manage through an emergency like this, Viguet said.

"The combined efforts of Associated's work to keep power flowing, the G&Ts integrated transmission system, the distribution cooperatives asking members to conserve energy during the event as best they could, and the members' willingness to do their part showcased the best of our cooperative system," Viguet said.

So when the next polar vortex threatens to lower the boom on Missouri, cooperative members can rest assured their power supplier is ready.

Background photo: Recognized nationally for its low emissions and efficient performance, Chouteau Power Plant is a combined-cycle, natural gas plant with the capacity to provide 1,062 megawatts to member systems.

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

MEDIUM TREES

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

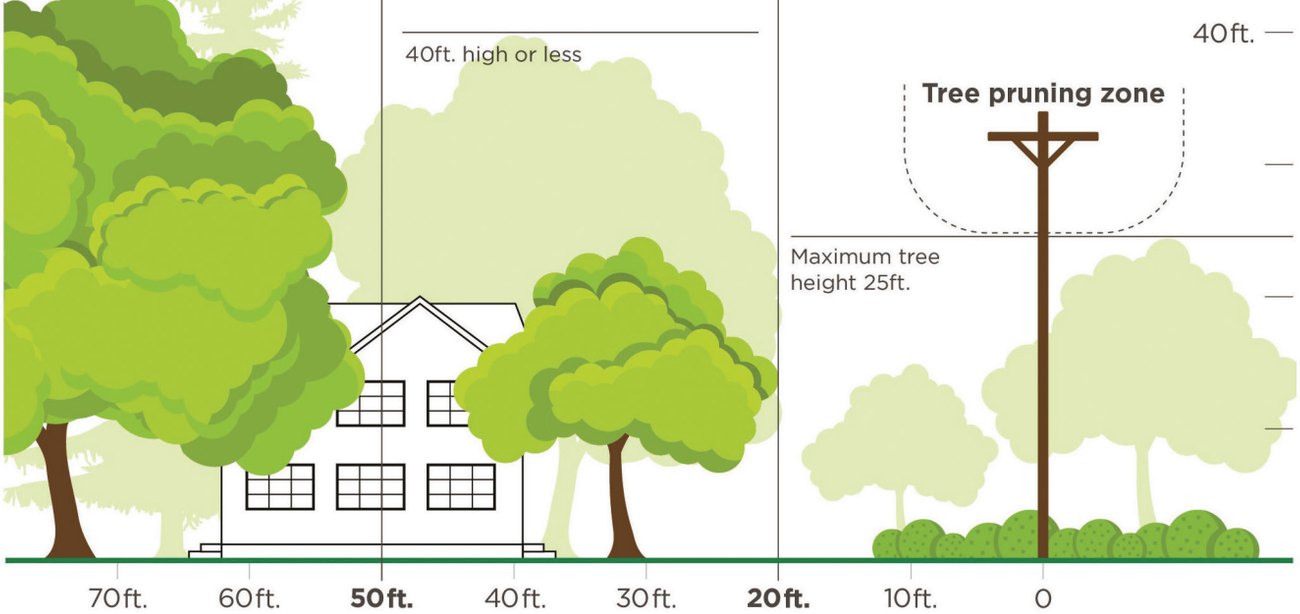
- Washington hawthorn
- Goldenraintree
- Eastern redbud
- American arborvitae
- Dogwoods

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

Electricity 101

All you need to know about electricity

You're likely reading this in your distribution cooperative's newsletter. You may say you know all you need to know about electricity. Or you may say you depend on your electrician or local cooperative to take care of that. Regardless, you can have some fun with the terminology and more importantly better understand where electricity comes from.

It helps to refresh on the basics of how electricity is produced. There are lots of online sources, books and curriculum from which to learn how electricity is created. Among them is www.eia.gov (U.S. Energy Information Administration) for an explanation of how electricity is generated. Associated Electric Cooperative's website, www.aeci.org, features information specific to electric cooperatives.

First, electricity is considered a secondary source of energy because it is created from primary sources of energy, such as fossil fuels, nuclear fission or renewable energy. Except for lightning and static electricity, electricity doesn't exist in nature.

Second, coal and natural gas power plants, wind farms and hydroelectric power dams are electricity generating sources used to provide power for members.

Third, the generation process varies with type of fuel. For example, let's use coal as the fuel and a power plant like Thomas Hill Energy Center and New Madrid Power Plant. In these plants, coal is ignited and converted to steam inside a boiler. The steam drives a turbine that in turn drives a generator where mechanical energy is transformed into electrical energy.

The latter is accomplished through the power of magnets. In 1831, Michael Faraday created the first electric generator, known as a Faraday disk. Inside the disk, magnets move around a loop of wire made of metals such as copper or aluminum. The movement creates an electric current that flows on the wire. Voila: electricity!

Finally, the electricity generated is transmitted to electric cooperative members like you through substations and thousands of miles of power lines. In 2019, the EIA reported about 3.9 trillion kilowatt hours of electricity were generated in the U.S.

Electricity terms defined

There are hundreds of "electricity words" that electricians, line technicians, electrical engineers and others must learn and use. We won't tackle that many here but will cover terms most practical for electric co-op members to know.

Ampere (A) – A measure of how much electricity moves through a conductor and indicates the size of circuit breakers and fuses. An ampere equals 1 watt under the pressure of 1 volt.

Circuit – Electricity must have a complete, closed path before its electrons can move. A circuit is that path. The switch or on-off button on electrical devices closes (turns on) or opens (turns off) the circuit in the device. Circuits can be in series, parallel or in any combination of the two. In old-fashioned incandescent light bulbs, light is produced as electricity flows through a tiny wire in the bulb, which gets hot and glows. An incandescent light bulb burns out when the tiny wire inside the bulb breaks, which opens the circuit.

Circuit breaker – An automatic device for stopping the flow of current in an electric circuit. To restore service, the circuit breaker must be reset (closed) after correcting the cause of the overload or failure. Circuit breakers are used in conjunction with protective relays to protect circuits from faults.

Current – The flow of an electric charge through a conductor. An electric current, measured in amperes, can be compared to the flow of water in a pipe.

Electricity – The movement of electrons between atoms when magnets circle loops of wire.

Grid – A vast network of substations, transformers and power lines that deliver electricity over millions of miles of lines in the U.S.

Frequency – The number of cycles in a current per second. Measured in Hertz. If a current completes one cycle per second, then the frequency is 1 Hz; 60 cycles per second equals 60 Hz.

Fuse – A circuit-interrupting device consisting of a strip of wire that melts and breaks an electric circuit if the current exceeds a safe level. To restore service, the fuse must be replaced using a similar fuse with the same size and rating after correcting the cause of failure.

Generator – A device that converts mechanical energy into electrical energy. Households may use generators when the power goes out for prolonged periods of time.

Insulator – Any material where electric current doesn't flow freely, such as glass, rubber and air. Think of the old-fashioned glass insulators you occasionally find in use or in flea markets or museums.

Kilowatt (kW) – 1,000 watts, the basic measurement of electricity.

Kilowatt-hour (kWh) – The amount of power in a kilowatt and the time in hours. Equal to 1,000 watt-hours. One kWh is 1 kilowatt generated or consumed for one hour. Your cooperative sells its energy in units of kWh, so your monthly energy bill shows your consumption in kWh.

Load – Anything that consumes electrical energy, such as lights, transformers, heaters and electric motors.

Meter – Your cooperative measures your electric consumption through a meter device typically located outdoors where the power line enters the property. Automated reader devices report electricity use back to the utility. More recently, electronic smart meters report use wirelessly.

Substation – A set of equipment that "steps down" high-voltage electricity carried on transmission lines to lower voltage electricity suitable for the consumer.

Transformer – An electrical device that transfers electricity from one circuit to another or to multiple circuits.

Volt (V) – An electromotive force that acts like water pressure and causes electrons to flow. Voltage measures the potential for current flow and may exist between objects without an actual flow of current.

Voltage – An electromotive force that acts like water pressure and causes electrons to flow. Voltage measures the potential for current flow between objects without actual flow.

Watt (W) – Named for James Watt, who invented the steam engine, a watt is the standard unit of electrical power. A watt is equal to 1 ampere under the pressure of 1 volt. That's not very much power and typically the power consumption of only small devices is measured in watts The consumption of larger devices is measured in kilowatts, which is 1,000 Watts. Even larger measurements are megawatts (MW) and gigawatts (GW). One MW is 1,000 kW (1 million W). One GW is 1,000 MW (1 million W).

Watt-hour (Wh) – A unit of electrical energy equal to the energy of 1 watt taken from an electric circuit for one hour. On your energy bill, the amount of electricity you consumed is measured in kilowatt (1,000 watts)

From the WCE Boardroom...

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held Jan. 28, 2021

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: Densil Allen Jr., Max Swisegood, Clark Bredehoeft, Richard Strobel, Stan Rhodes, Sandra Streit, Dale Jarman, Robert Simmons and Jeremy Ahmann. Also present were General Manager Mike Gray, CFO Michael Newland and general counsel Sheri Smiley.

COOP CONNECTIONS CARD PRESENTATION

Member Services Manager Brent Schlotzhauer and a representative of NRECA gave a presentation on the benefits of the Co-op Connections Card, including the marketing and discounts available, and the mobile app that is available. Co-op members would never be contacted and no information is shared regarding the member. The cost is $237 for every 1,000 cards and a $500 set up fee. The board consensus was for the co-op to offer this service to the membership.

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 December 2020; expenditures for the month of December 2020; new membership applications and membership terminations.

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following December 2020 reports were approved:

Financing and Treasurer's Report: Newland presented the December 2020 Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement. He reviewed the Financial and Statistical Report and Treasurer's Report with monthly and annual budget comparisons. He also gave the investment report. He presented and reviewed statistical data pertaining to operating revenue, expenses, margins, assets, liabilities, cash flow management, and KWH sales and ratios. He reported on December 2020 financials from West Central Services.

Revenue Deferral: Gray and Newland discussed the recommended 2020 revenue deferral. They recommended deferring $750,000.00 that will be brought back in during 2021. A motion was made and passed to accept the staff's recommendations for revenue deferral. Gray will also talk with Toth about the cost of doing an updated cost of service study.

2021 Budget: The 2021 budget had been presented to the board members prior to the meeting. Newland discussed assumptions, budgeted revenue and expenses, historical data for the past five years, budgeted margins and capital credits and taxes. The 2021 budget was approved as presented.

Reaffirm RUS loan

Newland reported that RUS was requesting the board to reaffirm the loan as presented in November for $12 million. Board approved.

Operations and Safety Report: Randy Burkeybile provided a written Operations and Safety Report. His report included the following: a crew update, outages for the month, a fleet report, and a work place accident that had occurred during the ice storm when a tree was cut. He also reported on the safety meetings that were held.

Engineering Report Dan Disberger provided a written Engineering Report. He reported on the following: staking projects, pole inspections, new services and change services. He reported on three new subdivisions in Warrensburg. Disberger is retiring this month and the board thanked him for his many years of service to the co-op.

Member Services Report: Schlotzhauer presented a written Member Services Report. He reported on Operation Round Up. He reported on how CYCLE and Youth Tour opportunities to classrooms was being presented due to COVID. He reported on energy audits that were done and net metering applications were reported on. He discussed how the office handled calls from the ice storm in January and how they could do those from home during off working hours. He gave a cost comparison of electric cars versus gasoline powered cars.

NW REPORT

Swisegood and Gray reported on the January board meeting. They reported on outages, wind, gave a wrap up of outages for the year, gave a solar report, the policy changes were discussed, and reported on how the annual meeting will be held this year.

ROUND UP FOUNDATION REPORT

Streit presented the Round Up Foundation Report. She reported that the last meeting was held via Zoom and that they awarded two awards

APPROVE 2021 BOARD MEETING DATES

The following 2021 board meeting dates were approved:

2/25/21 3/25/21 4/22/21 5/27/21 6/24/21 7/22/21
8/26/21 9/23/21 10/28/21 11/30/21 12/21/21

APPOINT VOTING DELEGATE FOR NRECA ANNUAL MEETING

Gray was appointed as the voting delegate.

LEGAL REPORT

Smiley presented a report on legal matters.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray presented his monthly Manager's Report. He gave a COVID update for the office and discussed how the office is adjusting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No executive session was called.

MEETING ADJOURNED

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

FINANCIAL REPORT • ***Statement of Operations*** • December 2020

	This month	YTD 2020	YTD 2021
Revenue	**$2,000,282**	**$28,836,291**	**$29,469,891**
Power Bill Expense	1,612,949	16,959,826	17,303,873
Opertion & Maint. Expense	418,414	6,722,868	7,187,015
Depreciation Expense	198,116	2,332,035	2,222,386
Interest Expense	126,579	1,432,212	1,422,972
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	**2,356,058**	**27,446,941**	**28,136,246**
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	(355,776)	1,389,350	1,333,645
Other Margins	992,267	1,164,330	1,468,223
TOTAL MARGINS	**$636,491**	**$2,553,680**	**$2,801,868**