



West Central Electric Cooperative

January 2021

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

ElectricNews

Youth Tour is on!

Plans are to go full
steam ahead with both
Youth Tour and CYCLE

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WCE crews assist with Hurricane Zeta recovery; Storm-naming system goes to Greek alphabet for only second time in history

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We're looking for a few great youth leaders! Could YOU be the next WCE delegate on the Rural Electric Youth Tour or CYCLE?

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Don't space out when using space heaters this winter. Here are some smart tips for using space heaters and electric blankets safely



Energy Efficiency *Tip of the Month*

Even in January the sun can help warm you home. Open curtains on your south-facing windows during the day to allow sunlight to naturally provide heat. Just be sure to close them at night to reduce the chill. You might even be able to lower your thermostat when taking advantage of this natural heat source.

***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.

**Pay-by-Phone:
855-874-5349**

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.

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.**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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

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.



Hurricane Zeta



In typical 2020 fashion, WCE crews no more than returned from assisting with Hurricane Laura restoration in Louisiana, than Hurricane Zeta hit Alabama.

Missouri crews, including WCE linemen assisted Clarke-Washington Electric Membership Cooperative in Jackson, Alabama. The cooperative lost all 14,000 of its meters during the storm.

WCE's crew heading out to help included Jesse Underwood, Brandon Steffen, Adam Beck and Billy Mackie. Incidentally, the crew had only been back a few weeks after working two weeks in Louisiana on Hurricane Laura repairs.

The history of naming storms goes back decades, and was designed to make it easier to track storms occurring in the same area simultaneously. According to the National Hurricane Center, "the use of short, distinctive names in written as well as spoken communications is quicker and less subject to error than the older, more cumbersome latitude-longitude identification methods.

"The use of easily remembered names greatly reduces confusion when two or more tropical storms occur at the same time. For example, one hurricane can be moving slowly westward in the Gulf of Mexico, while at exactly the same time another hurricane can be moving rapidly northward along the Atlantic coast. In the past, confusion and false rumors have arisen when storm advisories broadcast from radio stations were mistaken for warnings concerning an entirely different storm located hundreds of miles away."

Storms are pre-named, and the list is repeated every six years. After all 21 names on the list have been used, storms are named using the Greek alphabet. In 2020, not only did the naming system go through all the pre-determined names, but also well into the Greek alphabet. According to NOAA, the Greek alphabet has been used only one other time in recorded history -- in 2005 when Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma came in as three of the most intense hurricanes on record.

During that year, the list made it to "Zeta" on Dec. 30. In 2020, Zeta developed in October.



Top photo: Brandon Steffen works on repairing a line in Alabama.
Middle photo (l-r): WCE linemen Jesse Underwood, Brandon Steffen, Adam Beck and Billy Mackie prepare to head to Alabama.
Bottom photo (l-r): Billy Mackie and Brandon Steffen load equipment for the trip.

West Central Electric Cooperative's Youth Tour & CYCLE 2021!

West Central Electric is pleased to announce that even with the uncertainty of the COVID situation, at this point, the 2021 Youth Tour and CYCLE will go ahead as planned! We truly believe in this program and the opportunities it offers the delegates who are able to attend. Therefore, we have decided as a statewide group to plan for normal and alter as needed. Some things may need to look different, but we will do our best to make this happen, and to ensure your students stay safe.

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 Alaska to Wyoming and in between. Cooperatives from the state of Missouri will send more than 100 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?

Plans may have to be altered due to COVID restrictions, so be open to changes. The dates should not change, however. The tour has been split into two groups this year to cut down on numbers of students in the same place at the same time. This year's Youth Tour for Missouri will be **Tuesday, June 15-Monday, June 21, 2021**. Missouri delegates will meet in Jefferson City on Tuesday, June 15 for a banquet and orientation before traveling by plane to Washington, D.C. June 16. Delegates and their families will also have the opportunity to participate in Family Capital Day sponsored by West Central Electric, and spend the day in Jefferson City on their own mini-Youth Tour.



2019 Youth Tour delegates visit the United States Capitol Building during the Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. The 2020 tour was cancelled due to COVID, but will hopefully go on as planned for 2021. (L-r) Maddi Schuette, Rylee Othic, Logan Tracy and Abby Fowler.

What will we do?

While in Washington, D.C., delegates will have the opportunity to meet with their senators and representatives. In the past, we have visited historic memorials such as the Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Iwo Jima and Vietnam memorials. We have had favorite Washington, D.C. landmarks are on the agenda, including Mt. Vernon, the Smithsonian museums, Ford's Theatre, the Washington Monument and Arlington National Cemetery. Delegates have enjoyed a moonlight cruise on the Potomac River and a MLB game or 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 is currently scheduled for July 21-23 in Jefferson City. WCE will send **FIVE DELEGATES** to this conference sponsored by the Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives. They will join more than 100 other delegates from across the state. Students will hear amazing speakers, participate in team-building and leadership activities, and get a chance to author, present and debate their own bill on the floor of the Missouri House of Representatives.

For more information on both of these programs, contact your high school English teacher, FFA advisor, or Heather Hoflander at West Central Electric Cooperative in Higginsville at 1-800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942, or heather@wcecoop.com.



2019 CYCLE delegates visit the Missouri State Capitol Building. (L-r) Josh Cymer, Lucas Coulter and Gus Cooper.

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:

“What my local electric cooperative can do for me”

Students will discuss the different programs, scholarships, opportunities, etc. that West Central Electric offers to students in our area.

For more information:

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

DEADLINE: Feb. 12, 2021.

Don't space out when using space heaters

Smart tips for using space heaters and electric blankets

Many people turn to space heaters or electric blankets for added warmth in the winter. Safe Electricity reminds those who use space heaters and electric blankets to keep safety considerations in mind and use these devices with caution.

When buying a space heater or electric blanket, check for approved safety certification marks to verify that the product has been tested for safety. Look for a space heaters and electric blankets with safety features, including an automatic shut off. Be very cautious about buying used space heaters or electric blankets. They may not have up-to-date safety mechanisms. Your safety is worth the investment in a new heater or blanket.

Safe Electricity shares the following tips for using space heaters and electric blankets:

- Review and follow all manufacturer directions.
 - Plug space heaters and electric blankets directly into outlets; avoid using an extension cord.
 - Always remember to turn off space heaters and electric blankets when not in use. Never leave one of these devices on unattended or after going to bed.
 - Many fires start when flammable products are placed too close to heating devices, such as space heaters. Space heaters should be kept at least 3 feet from blankets, clothing, paper, and other flammables.
 - Place space heaters out of high-traffic areas and on a level, hard, non-flammable floor surface — NOT on carpets, furniture, or counter-tops.
 - Be aware of pets and children near heating appliances. Pets should never be allowed to sleep on top of electric blankets.
 - Keep space heaters and electric blankets away from water. If they become wet, do not turn them on to dry.
 - Regularly examine cords to make sure there is no cracking or fraying. Do not use damaged appliances. Also inspect your electric blanket to ensure that it is not worn or damaged. It should not have any charred or dark areas. Replace old or damaged blankets.
 - Store your electric blanket in a manner which avoids creasing. If it cannot be stored flat, loosely fold or roll the blanket in a cool, dry closet.
- To learn more on how to avoid electrical hazards, visit SafeElectricity.org.

feeling chilled?

HEAT YOUR SPACE SAFELY



- 

Keep flammable items at least 3 feet away
- 

Place on a flat, level surface
- 

Make sure the cord is not frayed or cracked
- 

Plug it directly into an outlet
- 

Follow all instructions and use models endorsed by a reputable testing lab
- 

Do not use an extension cord or power strip, which can overheat
- 

Do not use around small children or pets
- 

Do not use one with a damaged plug or prongs

Safe Electricity.org®

Engineering Manager Disberger announces retirement in February

After 33 years at West Central Electric Cooperative, Engineering Manager Dan Disberger has announced his retirement effective February 5, 2021.

Disberger was hired at WCE as an apprentice in January 1988, and worked his way through the ranks to his current position. He achieved journeyman status in 1990, and then worked as a serviceman for three years before being named line foreman. He assumed his current position of engineering manager in September 2011.

Through the years, many changes have taken place in the electric industry, but Disberger said nothing stands out more in his mind than the advancements in safety and technology.

"Our ability to do the job safer and easier is much different than it was 30 years ago because of advancements in equipment and safety practices," he said. "And, the convenience of doing things electronically is also much different. Before, everything was done with a pencil. Today, very little is done with a pencil."

Looking back on his time at WCE and the memories that stand out, Disberger said working Hurricane Katrina repairs in 2005 probably left the greatest impression on him.

"A lot of days we don't count our blessings, but seeing what those people had left after Katrina...", he recalled. "We complain every day about how bad we have it, but to see them with absolutely nothing was heartbreaking."

He said the appreciation the hurricane victims had for those sent to help was also memorable.

As he prepares to enjoy relaxing, hobbies and travel during his retirement, Disberger said he will miss not only the comradery with his fellow employees, but also the co-op members.

"From members to employees, it just seems like one large family," he said.

Disberger lives in Higginsville with his wife, Shelley. They have one son, Trevor.



Disberger

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.

FROM THE WCE BOARDROOM...

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held Oct. 22, 2020

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, Stan Rhodes and Jeremy Ahmann. Sandra Streit appeared by phone. Also present were General Manager Mike Gray, general counsel Sheri Smiley, office staff of WCE and Kevin Kelso, CPA.

REORGANIZATION MEETING

Sheri Smiley conducted the reorganization for officers for the remainder of 2020 and 2021. After secret ballot the following officers were announced:

Densil Allen, Jr.: President Clark Bredehoeft: Vice President
 Robert Simmons: Secretary Dale Jarman: Treasurer
 Stan Rhodes: Assistant Secretary

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 Sept. 24, 2020; expenditures for the month of September 2020; new membership applications and membership terminations.

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following September 2020 reports were approved:

Financing and Treasurer's Report: CFO Michael Newland presented the September 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; reported September 2020 financials from West Central Services; discussed how the work done by the linemen who went to help with the hurricane disaster would be reimbursed. He reported the potential for paying for costs of the West Central Round Up Foundation expenses against donated capital was possible. He consulted with both legal counsel and with Kevin Kelso, the auditor. A motion was made and seconded to pay the Foundation expenses out of the West Central Electric donated capital fund. After discussion, the motion passed. The Bylaws for the foundation will be revised to reflect this and be brought back next month for approval. A discussion was also held regarding Certificate of Deposit rates.

Operations and Safety Report: Operations Manager Randy Burkebile provided a written Operations and Safety Report including: a crew update, outages for the month, a report on current COVID-19 numbers at the cooperative and how the office is handling quarantines; inspections and crews sent to Louisiana for hurricane relief; safety meetings, crew visits and safety audits as well as lineman and employee updates.

Engineering Report: Engineering Manager Dan Disberger provided a written Engineering Report including: staking projects and a Right-of-Way report.

Member Services Report: Brent Schlotzhauer presented a written Member Services Report including: Operation Round Up. He reported that AMEC will give virtual training in the fall and updated on the NISC software system.

ROUND UP REPORT

Streit gave the foundation report including applications that were processed at the Oct. 12 meeting.



NW REPORT

Swisegood and Gray presented the NW Report. Items of interest included: outages, margins, solar, wind, and reliability. An update was given on the back up secured buildings for operations and that the airplane had sold. A strategic planning meeting will possibly be held in January depending on COVID. The budget meeting and policies were discussed. The AECl discount was also discussed.

AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft gave an AMEC Annual Meeting update. He discussed their COVID response and reported that after the reorganization meeting that the same officers were elected. He also reported on the monthly board meeting for AMEC and reported that they passed the proposed budget and he provided written staff reports.

NRECA REGION 8 -10 MEETING REPORT

Gray gave an update for the October meeting. He discussed the speaker and handed out resolutions that were passed for review.

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Jarman discussed new requirements for the scholarship applications and tests that would be accepted. A discussion was then held regarding dollar amounts that may be available with the donated capital. The board approved placing \$20,000 from the donated capital account to the scholarship committee and they can decide how it will be distributed.

LEGAL COUNSEL REPORT

Smiley gave the legal report.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray presented his monthly Manager's Report. He discussed the yearly donation to the Missouri State Fair Ambassador program and the board approved \$500.00. He will meet with Everygy Oct. 28 to discuss territorial issues. The January board retreat scheduled for January will be put on hold due to COVID.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive session was called at 12:10 p.m. and was dismissed at 12:20 p.m.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Following the executive session, the meeting was adjourned.

FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • September 2020

	This month	YTD 2020	YTD 2019
Revenue	\$2,274,752	\$22,586,589	\$22,122,982
Power Bill Expense	1,281,917	12,872,417	13,089,635
Operation & Maint. Expense	609,712	5,239,486	5,671,178
Depreciation Expense	196,098	1,740,207	1,654,155
Interest Expense	<u>124,061</u>	<u>1,075,694</u>	<u>1,067,406</u>
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	2,211,788	20,927,804	21,482,374
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	62,964	1,658,785	640,608
Other Margins	<u>56,692</u>	<u>152,602</u>	<u>235,790</u>
TOTAL MARGINS	\$119,656	\$1,811,387	\$876,398

