

April 2023



West Central Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Electric News

Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 10

PAGE 6

PAGE 2

Don't forget to use your Co-op Connections card at this month's featured businesses

PAGE 3

WCE mourns the loss of former general manager Darrel Rinne

PAGES 4-5

Cut your spring bill down to size with these energy efficiency tips

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.



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:

Michael Newland

Board of Directors:

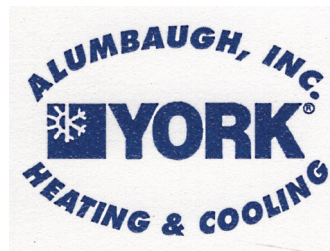
Densil Allen Jr., *President*; Clark Bredehoeft, *Vice-President*; Dale Jarman, *Treasurer*; Robert Simmons, *Secretary*; Stan Rhodes, *Asst. Secretary*; Richard Strobel, *Director*; Sandra Streit, *Director*; Jeremy Ahmann, *Director*; Colby Dowell, *Director*

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

What can your

Co-op Connections card

get you at this month's featured businesses?



\$20 off
a service call
within a 40-mile
radius of
Higginsville

Alumbaugh Heating & Cooling
2011 Shelby St., Higginsville, Mo. • 660-584-3401

Must show Co-op Connections card or app and notify of intent to use card when making appointment

15% off
one food item
Sunday through
Thursday

**limit one per order*



Arcadian Moon
19203 W. Old 40 Hwy., Higginsville, Mo. • 660-584-6661

Must show Co-op Connections card or app

Install the app or visit www.connections.coop to find participating businesses in your area and across the nation

*Find the complete list of local deals at www.westcentralelectric.coop

WCE mourns loss of former co-op GM Darrel Rinne

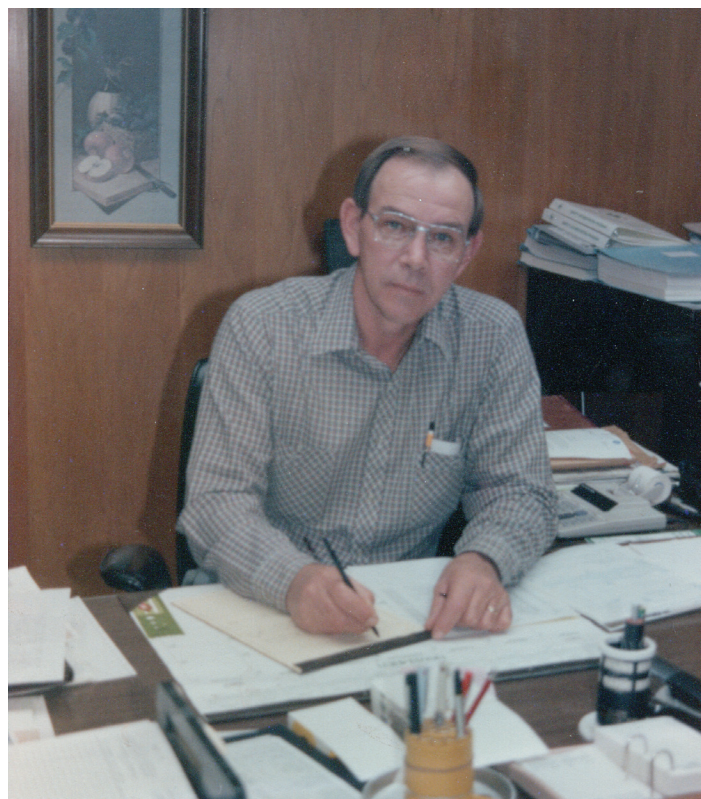
Former West Central Electric Cooperative general manager and long-time employee Darrel Rinne of Higginsville passed away Thursday, Feb. 23. He was 86.

Rinne began his career at WCE as an apprentice lineman in August 1955 working for \$1.10 per hour. He worked his way through the ranks of journeyman, line foreman, line superintendent and assistant manager before being named the general manager in March 1988. He served in that position until his retirement in April 1996 after more than 40 years at the cooperative. Rinne returned in 2002 for a brief stint as interim manager, which fell during the worst ice storm in cooperative history.

During his tenure as general manager, Rinne served several years on the N.W. Electric Board of Directors, the Association of Missouri Electric Cooperative Board of Directors and the Missouri Institute of Cooperatives Board of Directors, as well as the AMEC Executive Committee. Rinne was honored by AMEC with the A.C. Burrows Award for his leadership and his role in going "above and beyond to strengthen and improve economic and social conditions" in the local area.

Rinne is survived by his wife, Juanita; daughters Diann Rinne and Gloria (Terry) McCormack; sons Bruce Rinne and Roger Rinne (Edee McArtor); grandchildren and great grandchildren Preston (Mary) Rinne and their son Joseph; Clara (Jordan) Salyer and their children Atticus, Ellynore and Paxten; Jessica (Kris) White and their children Abby and Oliver; Tessa McCormack (Chad Begeman) and their son, Hudson; sister Doris Bird; brothers Delmar (Lynn) Rinne, Robert "Bob" (Karen) Rinne and Howard Rinne.

Visitation was held Feb. 28 with funeral services held March 1.



Darrel Rinne served as general manager of WCE from 1988 to 1996.

Important information on padmount stickers

Decals remind members of proper landscape distances from padmount transformers

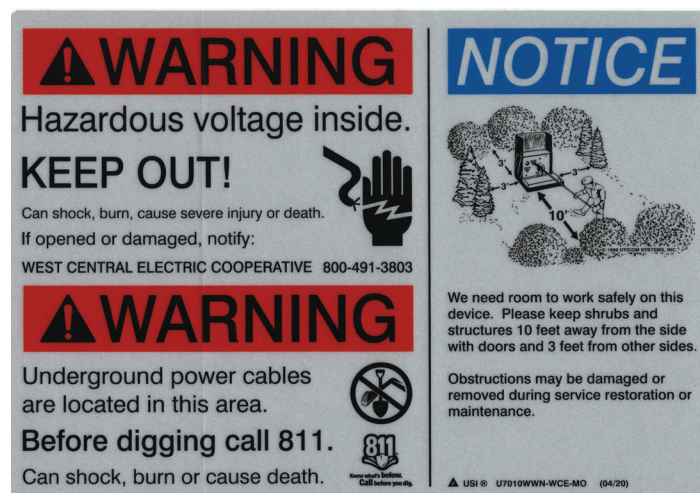
Green utility boxes, known as pad-mounted or padmount transformers, are part of the supply chain that helps provide power to your neighborhood. Those boxes sit on an easement, which allows us access to them.

What are the green boxes for? Their job is to step down high-voltage electricity to a lower voltage needed for the underground wires supplying power to the lights and appliances in homes.

While you may be familiar with the "10-ft Rule" that reminds members to stay at least 10-feet away from power lines when working with equipment and machinery, you may not be aware that rule also applies to equipment such as padmount transformers.

Please do not paint, enhance, block or otherwise obstruct padmount transformers. By respecting all utility equipment, including meters and transformers, you can help keep the power on and your local utility workers safe.

"Linemen need adequate room to be able to work safely around padmount transformers, and when members landscape around transformers it not only causes problems for workers but it can also be a safety hazard if you are digging in the vicinity of power lines," WCE Safety and Engineering Manager Pete Nelson said.



The above sticker appears on all WCE padmount transformers, providing safety warnings and information regarding clearance.

Nelson reminded members that landscape requirements are at least 10 feet away from the door-side of a padmount transformer and at least three feet away from other sides. Any time you plant a tree or shrub or dig a hole for a post or structure, be sure to call 811 to have underground utilities located.

Spring into efficiency

Cut your spring bill down to size with these energy-saving ideas

Here comes spring! Time to shut down the furnace, take down plastic sheeting over windows and schedule an air conditioning checkup. These spring projects will improve the energy efficiency of your home:

Schedule a home energy audit – First things first. An audit will tell you how to prioritize fix-it projects. Check with your cooperative about free or low-cost audits.

Tighten up your house – If you failed to do this last fall, you can reap the same benefits now by prepping for spring and summer. Milder temperatures now make this an ideal time for outdoor improvements before the heat sets in. Warm air moves to cold air, so it makes sense all year to seal cracks and openings to prevent warm air from inside leaking outside.

Look for air leaks around doors and windows – that could save as much as 30 percent on your energy bill, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Once you've fixed the air leaks, insulate; it will reduce the workload on your air conditioner. Here's insulation guidance from ENERGY STAR: Zone 4 (Eastern Oklahoma and most of Missouri) – attic, R38-60; wall cavity, R13-15; floors, R25-R30

Shade windows – If you have south- or west-facing windows that get a lot of direct sun, add an awning, drapes or protective film to shield those windows. Insulated drapes are a good investment for summer and winter. Plant trees, vines or shrubs to naturally shade windows over time. March and April are good months to do that.

Get a smart thermostat – They can save as much as 10 percent a year on heating and cooling by turning your thermostat back 7 to 10 degrees for 8 hours a day from your normal setting, according to DOE. Use one that can automatically set back the heating and cooling system 2 to 3 degrees when you're not home, then back to your desired temperature when you get home. The ideal spring and summer temperature setting is 78 degrees. For every degree above 78 you set the thermostat at, you could save 6 to 8 percent of your energy bill! Remember, the

smaller the difference between the indoor and outdoor temperatures, the lower your overall cooling bill will be. Also avoid setting your thermostat at a colder setting than normal when you first turn on your air conditioner. It will not cool your home any faster and could result in excessive cooling and unnecessary expense. Check with your cooperative on available rebates through Take Control & Save for smart thermostats.

Service and/or upgrade your AC – Maintaining your air conditioning system extends the life of the system and saves you money in the process. DOE recommends using the first day of spring as a reminder to check the system's evaporator coil. Remember not to locate lamps or TV sets near your room air-conditioning thermostat. The thermostat senses heat from these appliances, which can cause the air conditioner to run longer than necessary. Also vacuum your air intake vents regularly to remove any dust buildup. Don't block airflow through registers with furniture and other objects.

Buy a ceiling fan – A fan will allow you to raise the thermostat by about 4 degrees without feeling the difference. And you'll use about 4 percent less energy for every degree change. Turn off ceiling fans when you leave the room. Remember, fans cool people, not rooms, by creating a wind chill effect.

Seal the garage – Your attached garage may leak more conditioned air than any other part of your home. Add weatherstrips to the bottom of the garage door and the door into your house.

Change filters – Replace last year's air conditioning filters now.

Install window treatments – About 30 percent of your home's energy is lost through windows, says DOE. Go to www.energy.gov/energysaver/energy-efficient-window-coverings to learn more about window treatments to slash this loss through interior drapes, protective films, exterior shades, shutters, awnings and storm windows,



Shade your house

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

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. Here are some suggestions:

- 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 but avoid allowing dense foliage to grow immediately next to the house where wetness and continual humidity could cause problems



Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 10

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 takes years of specialized training, ongoing education, dedication, and equally important, a sense of service and commitment. 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 lineworkers are proud to represent West Central Electric, and they deserve all the appreciation and accolades that come their way on Lineworker Appreciation Day.

West Central Electric Cooperative Linemen, & Crews

HIGGINSVILLE

Adam Beck

Derek Cole

Tucker Crowe

Tiger Fiene

Tim Frerking

Scott Gard

Todd Gast

Brandon Heck

Nathan Johnson

Conner Lamphier

Cabot Long

Dylan Lilleman

Billy Mackie

Pete Nelson

HIGGINSVILLE

Jeff Rhoades

Zac Wallpe

OAK GROVE

Jeff Campbell

Kade Collins

Scott Gard

Matt Schellman

Zach Smith

Brandon Steffen

Johnathon Sullins

Jesse Underwood

Eric Wegener

Wyatt Wilkinson

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:

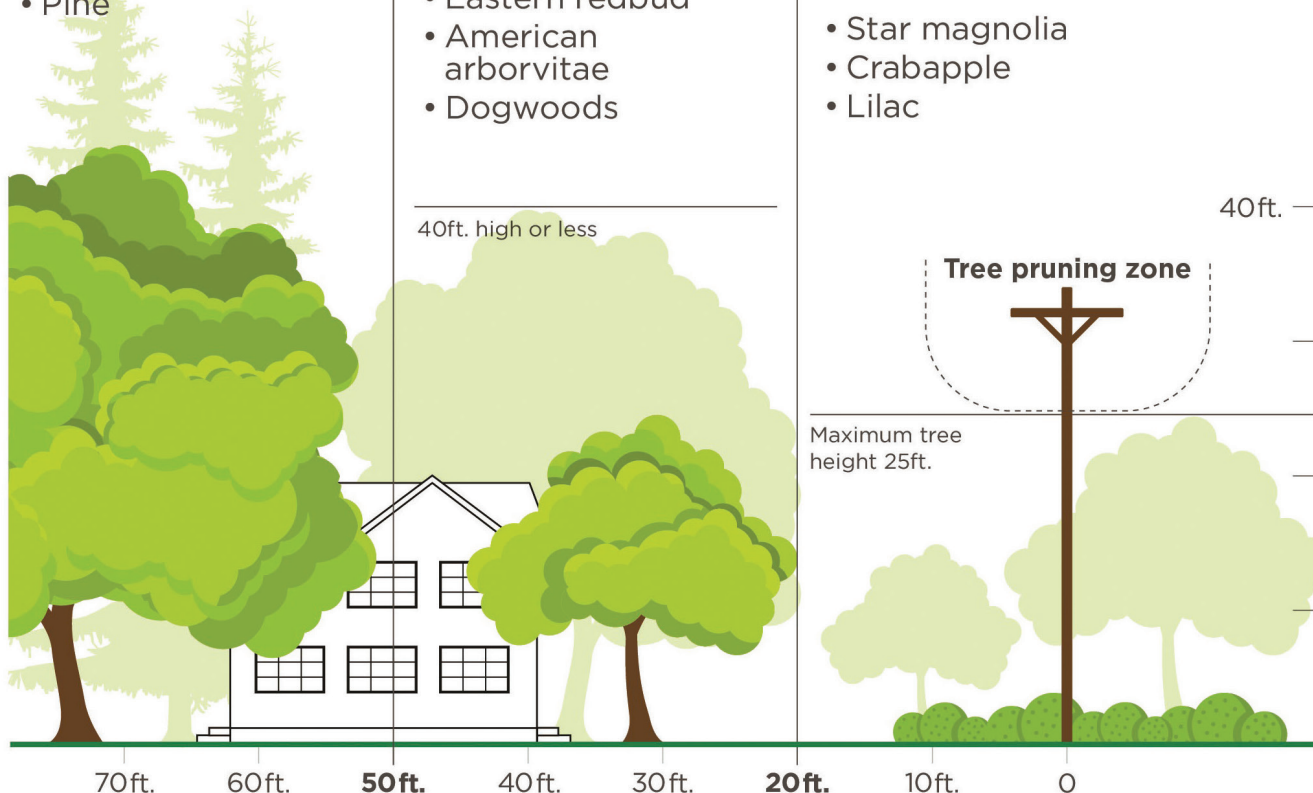
- Washington hawthorn
- Goldenraintree
- Eastern redbud
- American arborvitae
- Dogwoods

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

FROM THE WCE BOARD

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held January 26, 2023

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: Clark Bredehoeft, Richard Strobel, Stan Rhodes, Sandra Streit, Dale Jarman, Jeremy Ahmann, Colby Dowell, Allen and Simmons. Also present by phone was General Manager Michael Newland.

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 Dec. 29, 2022; expenditures for the month of December 2022; new membership applications and membership terminations.

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following January 2023 reports were approved:

Financing and Treasurer's Report: Newland presented the December 2022 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. KRTA ratios were reviewed. He discussed setting new peaks with the cold December weather.

Operations Report: Scott Gard provided a written Operations Report. Work is being done on a subdivision outside of Warrensburg. Brush crews and a right-of-way report were given. Work is also being done on the Fayetteville substation.

Safety and Engineering Report: Pete Nelson provided a written Safety and Engineering Report. Safety meetings were reported on. Crew inspections were held and no safety violations were observed. Make-ready work was reported on along with issues with pole shortages

Member Services Report: Brent Schlotzhauer provided a written Member Services Report. His report included Roundup enrollment and amount collected, an update on net metering, rebates offered by AECI and an update on the electric vehicle.



AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft gave a report on the executive committee meeting he attended on Jan. 4. The employee handbook and policies are being reviewed. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Feb. 1.

NW ELECTRIC REPORT

Simmons gave a report on the meeting he and Newland attended. Sites for a new substation were discussed. The legislative discussion and net metering was also reported on.

APPOINT NRECA VOTING DELEGATE AND ALTERNATE

Dowell was appointed as the NRECA voting delegate and Simmons as the alternate.

ROUNDUP FOUNDATION REPORT

Streit gave a foundation report including the amounts awarded.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Newland presented the monthly Manager's Report. The Lone Jack sub was discussed and the anticipated growth in that area. A potential new business park was reported on. The budget will be completed for February and the board retreat was discussed. The board's self-assessment was discussed and will be brought back next month to complete.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The board entered executive session at 11:15 a.m. and adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

MEETING ADJOURNED

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • December 2022

	This month	YTD 2022	YTD 2021
Revenue	\$3,297,058	\$33,220,176	\$29,865,894
Power Bill Expense	1,878,196	18,994,257	17,197,005
Operation & Maint. Expense	1,153,852	8,270,633	6,960,436
Depreciation Expense	219,455	2,560,041	2,434,344
Interest Expense	119,673	1,382,428	1,408,952
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	3,371,176	31,207,359	28,000,737
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	(74,118)	2,012,817	1,865,157
Other Margins	1,018,238	1,265,928	1,105,492
TOTAL MARGINS	\$944,120	\$3,278,745	\$2,970,649

