



West Central Electric Cooperative

May 2026

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

# Electric News

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West Central Electric News  
a news service for the members of



West Central Electric  
Cooperative, Inc.



#### Headquarters

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

**PAY BY PHONE: 1-855-939-3639**

#### To report outages 24/7

Call 816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803  
Report online at  
[www.westcentralelectric.coop](http://www.westcentralelectric.coop) under  
"Report Outage"

#### District office

506 N. Broadway, Oak Grove, MO 64075

#### Website:

[www.westcentralelectric.coop](http://www.westcentralelectric.coop)

facebook Instagram

#### 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*  
Jeremy Ahmann, *Director*  
Colby Dowell, *Director*  
Elizabeth Houtsma, *Director*

*This institution is an equal opportunity  
provider and employer.*

**Owned by those we serve.**

## From the manager's desk

### Member feedback is important for co-op decisions

One of the Seven Cooperative Principles is "Democratic Member Control." In simple terms, this means that the cooperative is owned and governed by those it serves, and each member -- no matter how long you have been connected or how much you spend on electricity -- has an equal say. This is displayed at every monthly board meeting by the directors you have elected to represent you as they make decisions in the best interest of our members and the cooperative.

A crucial component of this process is **feedback from our members** to ensure that cooperative management and directors are representing you well. One way we monitor this is through a member satisfaction survey every two years that produces an ASCI (American Consumer Satisfaction Index) score. This survey consists of various questions and also leaves an option for verbatim comments.

Through this survey, we get to see your opinions on topics like reliability, affordability and renewable resources. It also gives us a glimpse into other questions you may have through a comment section, several of which we have addressed on page 5 of this issue, and in our March 2026 issue.

Just as in past surveys, you have voiced your top concern as reliability, and we hear you. Reliability is also at the top of our list. I'm proud to say that 2025 was one of our most reliable years in recent history as based on our average duration of power interruptions during the year.

This is largely due to decisions made over the past decade by your board of directors for crucial electric system maintenance including pole replacements and tree trimming. In more recent years, it's also large investments in critical infrastructure to better serve you in the future, like the Lone Jack Substation featured in this issue.



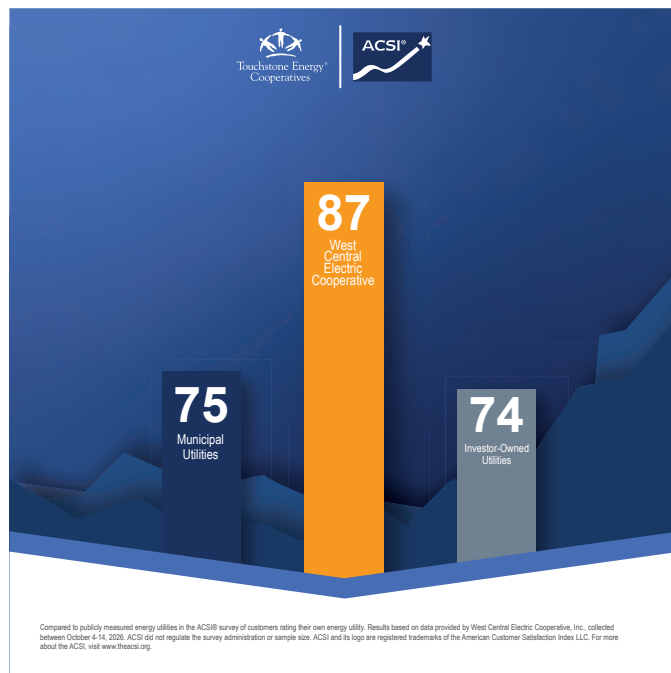
Michael Newland  
General Manager

We also know that affordability is right behind reliability in your concerns. We strive to find the balance to ensure our members have the most reliable service available at an affordable cost. I'm reminded of the quote "Just because we're not sick doesn't mean we can't get better." West Central Electric Cooperative employees and board members embody this desire to strive to serve our members and this feedback helps us carry out that mission.

Thank you to those who took the time to fill out the survey. This allows individual members to let their voices be heard while also letting employees and board members know how we are doing.

I am proud to report that the score WCE members gave us is well above the average. It makes us proud to know that YOU feel we are serving you well. If we can ever do anything to serve you better, please let us know.

Sincerely,  
Michael Newland, CPA  
General Manager



**ON THE COVER: WCE Operations Manager Scott Gard gives a few pointers during a recent crew visit. Job briefings ensure everyone goes home safely.**

## What you need to know



# Strengthening Board Viability Through Ongoing Education

Serving as an electric cooperative director is much more than just attending a monthly meeting to approve the bills and ensure the business is running smoothly. In an ongoing learning process, those elected to serve take on financial decision-making, strategic planning, policy development and much more.

Cooperative directors are trusted by their members to remain knowledgeable of today's extensive electric utility business, be familiar with the concepts and values that govern cooperatively-owned businesses, and to understand legal and regulatory concepts affecting utilities. They are expected to ensure a culture of safety is maintained, provide direction and plan for the future, as well as advocate for reliable and affordable electricity for members.

"Because monthly board meetings are filled with the traditional reports and orders of business, it is good to have a couple of days at the beginning of the year to sit down and really dig deep into what we are doing for our members," West Central Electric General Manager Michael Newland said about

the annual board retreat held in February.

In addition to the regular monthly board meeting, this year's retreat agenda included a detailed overview from power supplier Associated Electric Cooperative, project updates from transmission cooperative NW Electric Power Cooperative, and a report on the recent analysis of cooperative infrastructure, growth and service reliability from the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation. Directors also took time to discuss how to continue to best serve members in a tense and ever-changing energy environment, and participated in a tour of the Holden Power Plant.

"One of the biggest issues facing co-ops today is the rapidly-growing demand for electricity across various sectors, and how to responsibly meet that demand," WCE Director Elizabeth Houtsma said. "We must explore solutions to providing

that needed energy, while balancing affordability and reliability. In addition we are required to juggle the effects that environmental regulations and federal decision making have on our ability to get the power we need."

**Cooperative Principle #5:**  
"Education, training and information for members, elected representatives (directors), CEOs, and employees help them effectively contribute to the development of their cooperatives. Communications about the nature and benefits of cooperatives, particularly with the general public and opinion leaders, help boost cooperative understanding."

## May is Electrical Safety Month



“Job briefings or ‘tailgate sessions’ ensure everyone understands the task at hand and the job can proceed safely.”

*--Cody Brock, WCE Safety & Compliance Manager*

Reliability of your electric system means more than just ensuring we can provide you all the power you need when you need it. Reliability also means working to ensure your power *stays* on. Though Mother Nature sometimes throws a curveball and causes outages on the system, those outages are minimized during routine maintenance and upgrades by working the lines “hot.”



“In certain situations we may need to blink the power, like when switching a line,” WCE Operations Manager Scott Gard said. “But most of the time we keep the electricity flowing, like when we change out a pole.

“We know blinks are frustrating. Since they are common enough in rural areas because of things that are beyond our control, we try hard to control it when we can,” Gard said.

Working on energized power lines takes an extra amount of caution to secure both the safety of our employees and the safety of our members. Before any job begins, linemen participate in a safety briefing or “tailgate session” where an in-depth discussion about the job is held.

“Job briefings are conducted to align crew members with the task at hand, answer any questions, assign roles and identify hazards of the job,” Safety and Compliance Manager Cody Brock said. “It is important that crews perform job briefings regularly, and adequately, in order to identify changing conditions, various hazards associated with the work they’re conducting, and implement controls to mitigate them.”

From your cooperative

# You asked, we answered!



**THANK YOU** to our members who took time to complete the latest Member Satisfaction Survey last fall. Your responses help us to better serve you. We received some great questions and comments, and would like to provide you with more information on your cooperative and address some of your concerns. Following are some of the comments received by members participating in the survey. If one person asked, chances are there are several more thinking the same thing!

**Concern:** Request positive support for solar/wind, net metering and other energy efficient options.

**Explanation:** West Central Electric does have these options. Missouri's net metering act requires retail electric suppliers to make net metering available to those who have their own electric generation units that meet certain criteria, one of which is that the unit is powered by renewable energy resources. WCE has a net-metering agreement for interconnection of a distributed generation source that reflects the standards set by the Net-Metering and Easy Connect Act (ECA). Net metering is available to customers on a first-come, first-served basis until the total rated generating capacity of the net-metering systems equals 5 percent of the utility's single-hour peak load during the previous year. WCE supports sound renewable energy and encourages our members reach out before investing thousands of dollars to add solar, wind or other renewable energy source to their home. For more information, contact Brent at 800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942, or visit our website net metering page at [www.westcentralelectric.coop/net-metering-and-interconnection-act](http://www.westcentralelectric.coop/net-metering-and-interconnection-act)

**Concern:** I'm on a fixed income. I don't receive a check until the 4th Wednesday of the month which causes me to end up paying a late fee several times a year. Please make an exception for this.

**Explanation:** We actually have four different billing cycles you can choose from to fit your individual needs. Due dates are the 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd of each month, and you can choose your date. Call our office at 800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942 to find out how.

**Concern:** Please be the cheapest you can without compromising reliability.

**Explanation:** We understand times are challenging for everyone, and we recognize that you count on us to make sure you have the energy whenever and wherever you need it. We want you to feel confident that we are making every effort to be transparent regarding the facts and reasoning behind the decisions your directors make regarding electric rates, operation costs, etc. so you can understand what goes into your electric bill.

**Concern:** Our rates have increased too much. Understand costs have risen, but wondering if company has gotten best prices on supplies and equipment.

**Explanation:** We know that rising costs are hard on everyone, and it is our responsibility to make sure we are doing everything we can to keep your rates as low as possible without compromising reliability or safety. We continually explore options for the sources and suppliers of the materials we purchase, as well as extending the life of the equipment we do have as long as safely possible. In the past few years, we have doubled down on increasing efficiency in our cooperative and reducing costs in our operations. We have continued to use our older equipment until it became a liability rather than an asset and we needed to replace it. We continually analyze our materials and supplies to ensure we are good stewards of your money.

**Concern:** Give a discount to prepaid customers.

**Explanation:** Because we are a member-owned, not-for-profit cooperative, our rates are set at the lowest we can set them while still being able to support the co-op financially, maintain our system and provide our members with safe and reliable power. For this reason, offering prepaid members a discount is not financially possible. The prepaid option was created to allow members an alternative to paying a deposit resulting from their credit assessment, or as a convenience for members wanting to "pay as they go" for their electric service. WCE does, however, have a discount relating to electric usage that is worked into our rate schedule. All residential members receive a discounted rate for usage exceeding 800 kWh during the month.



# Site of Lone Jack Substation begins to take shape

“Each time you turn on a light, the electricity has to cross over many pastures, fields and yards to get to you. It takes the cooperation of landowners working together with the cooperative to make that happen,” *WCE Engineering Manager Pete Nelson said.*



(Top and above) Site work has begun for the new Lone Jack Substation, which will support current and future growth in this developing area of WCE co-op country.

As West Central Electric continues investing in system reliability, work began earlier this year at the site of the future Lone Jack Substation.

The substation, owned by transmission cooperative NW Electric, is located on the south side of Highway 50, just east of the Johnson County line. The addition of the new substation will “shore up” WCE’s ability to provide reliable service for the existing and future members in the Lone Jack area, Engineering Manager Pete Nelson said.



Clearing of trees and brush began in December 2025, and WCE has begun construction of underground feeders. NW Electric will begin actual construction this summer with the goal of having the substation online by the end of 2026.

“In a perfect world, there would be no need for power lines to cross property to get the power where it needs to be, but since that isn’t the case, we all need to work together to ensure everyone can enjoy the benefits that electrical service provides,” Nelson said.

# New Employee Spotlight



## Cody Brock • Safety & Compliance Manager

Cody Brock of Bogard, Mo., has been named the cooperative's new safety and compliance manager. Brock comes to West Central Electric with several years of experience in the safety industry, and said he is excited to be able to put that to use in the co-op world.

"I am looking forward to working with everyone to maintain a great safety culture so we can all go home safely to our families," Brock said.

Brock said he has enjoyed learning the dynamics of the electric cooperative system, and appreciates being a part of WCE.

Brock and his wife, Lauren, have two daughters, Parker and Hallie, and are expecting baby number three any time.

# WCE Life Support Notification

## Request to add Life Support Equipment Notification to Account

*(Please fill out all information completely.)*

Name to appear on list:

Name on WCE account:

Account number:  Location Number:

BEST phone number to reach you:  Email:

Life support equipment requiring electricity to operate:

Mail to Heather Hoflander, West Central Electric Cooperative, 7867 S. Hwy. 13, Higginsville, MO 64037, or email [heather@wcecoop.com](mailto:heather@wcecoop.com)

- Please fill out all information completely and send to WCE at 7867 S. Hwy. 13, Higginsville, MO 64037 or email [heather@wcecoop.com](mailto:heather@wcecoop.com)
- The Life Support Equipment List is used by cooperative personnel in the event of a planned outage, for example, during extensive repairs or maintenance. The list is not used as a priority list to get service turned back on in the event of an outage. The extent of damage dictates the timeframe for repairs.

- Inclusion on the list does not waive disconnection for non-payment.
- If you have family members who no longer need to be included on this list, please notify us.
- Members relying on oxygen or equipment such as dialysis are urged to have a back-up plan (back-up tanks or generator) in the event of an extensive and lasting outage.

## From the WCE boardroom

### Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held Feb. 26, 2026.

A meeting of the board of directors of West Central Electric Cooperative was held at the Hilton Garden Inn in Independence, Jackson County, Missouri, at 3:30 p.m. Feb. 26, 2026, pursuant to the bylaws of the cooperative and previous resolution of the board of directors. The meeting was called to order by President Densil Allen Jr. Attorney Sheri Smiley caused the minutes of the meeting to be kept. The following directors were present: Allen Jr., Clark Bredehoeft, Richard Strobel, Dale Jarman, Robert Simmons, Jeremy Ahmann, Stan Rhodes and Elizabeth Houtsma. Colby Dowell was absent. Also present was General Manager Michael Newland.

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

#### APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The board approved its consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting on Jan. 22, 2026; expenditures for the month of January 2026; new membership applications and membership terminations, and the treasurer's report.

#### FINANCING AND TREASURER'S REPORT

CFO Rebecca Hoeflicker presented the January 2026 Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement. She reviewed the Financial and Statistical Report and Treasurer's Report with monthly and annual budget comparisons. She also gave the investment report. She presented and reviewed statistical data pertaining to operating revenue, expenses, margins, assets, liabilities, cash flow management, and KWH sales and ratios. She reported on interest rates, the impact of large loads on the budget and projections for February. She gave updated budget numbers. She reviewed investments. Equity by year was reported on. Kevin Kelso is working on inventory counts for audits and she explained how and why adjustments were made on inventory in the audit. New services connected were reported on. The financial reports were accepted as presented.

#### APPROVAL OF STAFF REPORTS

The following staff reports were approved:

##### Operations Report

Operations Manager Scott Gard provided an oral report to supplement his written operations report. He reported on crews, mechanic and fleet, and outages and causes. He also reported on new subdivisions. Pole change-outs, transformer changes and line switching were reported on.

Safety and Engineering Report: Engineering Manager Pete Nelson provided an oral report to supplement his written safety and engineering report. Subdivisions were discussed. The Holden sub work and raising lines over Highway 13 was reported on. Safety and Compliance Coordinator Cody Brock gave a safety report. Safety meetings and crew visits were reported on. He also reported on the hours worked and miles driven with no lost time.

Member Services Report: Member Services Manager Brent Schlotzhauer provided a written member services report. He provided updates on Operation RoundUp, the communication department activities including Youth Tour presentations, West Central Electric Scholarship applications and phone directory advertising were dis-



cussed. Net metered solar systems and rebates, the NISC bill redesign, the AMEC Legislative Conference and an MSR team meeting were reported on. Chamber meetings attended were reported on. Issues with the U.S. Mail and slow delivery were reported on.

#### NW BOARD REPORT

Simmons and Newland gave the NW board report. They reported on Lone Jack, margins, deferred revenue, equity and the AECI report.

#### AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft provided an AMEC report and reported on the legislative conference. He also gave departmental reports for AMEC.

#### NRECA DIRECTORS CONFERENCE

Simmons gave an update on the NRECA Directors Conference and the speakers.

#### APPOINT NW VOTING DELEGATE AND ALTERNATE

Strobel was appointed as the voting delegate and Houtsma as the alternate.

#### APPOINT CRC VOTING DELEGATE AND ALTERNATE

Simmons was appointed as the delegate and Strobel as the alternate.

#### APPROVE AMEC PAC CONTRIBUTION

The board approved a \$2,000 to the AMEC PAC.

#### LEGAL REPORT

Smiley gave the legal report for the month.

#### MANAGERS REPORT

Newland gave the manager's report. He had provided a written report to the board prior to the meeting. Locates were discussed and using a locating company is being considered. He gave an update on the costs, liability and references. A contractor accident was reported on where the contractor is taking responsibility. Following the manager's report, Ahmann left the meeting.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

#### NEW BUSINESS

No new business was brought forward.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session was called at 4:18 p.m. and was out at 4:55 p.m.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

### January 2026 Statement of Operations

|   | This month         | YTD 2026           | YTD 2025           |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Revenue</b>                                | <b>\$4,779,245</b> | <b>\$4,779,245</b> | <b>\$4,439,753</b> |
| Power Bill Expense                            | 2,663,959          | 2,663,959          | 2,547,564          |
| Operation & Maintenance Expense               | 677,706            | 677,706            | 724,712            |
| Depreciation Expense                          | 225,979            | 225,979            | 215,362            |
| Interest Expense                              | <u>151,771</u>     | <u>151,771</u>     | <u>144,772</u>     |
| <b>Total cost of Service (Total Expenses)</b> | <b>3,719,415</b>   | <b>3,719,415</b>   | <b>3,632,410</b>   |
| Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)     | 1,059,830          | 1,059,830          | 807,343            |
| Other Margins                                 | <u>49,311</u>      | <u>49,311</u>      | <u>21,561</u>      |
| <b>TOTAL MARGINS</b>                          | <b>\$1,109,141</b> | <b>\$1,109,141</b> | <b>\$828,904</b>   |