



West Central *Electric News*

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



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

Cleaver makes 'get-acquainted' visit to WCE

Congressman Emanuel Cleaver, representative of Missouri's new Congressional District 5, paid a visit recently to West Central Electric Cooperative in an effort to get acquainted with some of his soon-to-be newest constituents.

New Territory

Cleaver, whose current district includes only urban areas, spent his time gathering information and asking questions about Missouri's rural electric system, of which three counties in his new district will encompass. Recent redistricting (new boundaries will take effect in January 2013) will expand Cleaver's boundaries into Ray, Lafayette and Saline counties, all of which are served largely by electric cooperatives.

"We were very pleased that Congressman Cleaver has shown an early interest in familiarizing himself with the rural areas and, in particular, the cooperatives," WCE General Manager Mike Gray said.

Cleaver said he was grateful for the opportunity to learn about the issues facing members of West Central Electric and the prospect of having an electric cooperative in his district.

"I welcomed the opportunity to meet with (co-op officials) as I enjoy spend-



District 5 Congressman Emanuel Cleaver (second from right) and his district director Geoffrey Jolley (right) visit with WCE General Manager Mike Gray (second from left) and Member Services Manager Steve Moore during a recent get-acquainted visit to the cooperative.

ing time getting to know the people and communities in my congressional district," he said. "While the issues facing West Central Electric Cooperative may be different than those faced by Kansas City Power and Light and Independence Power and Light, who I currently repre-

sent, their issues are no less important to me."

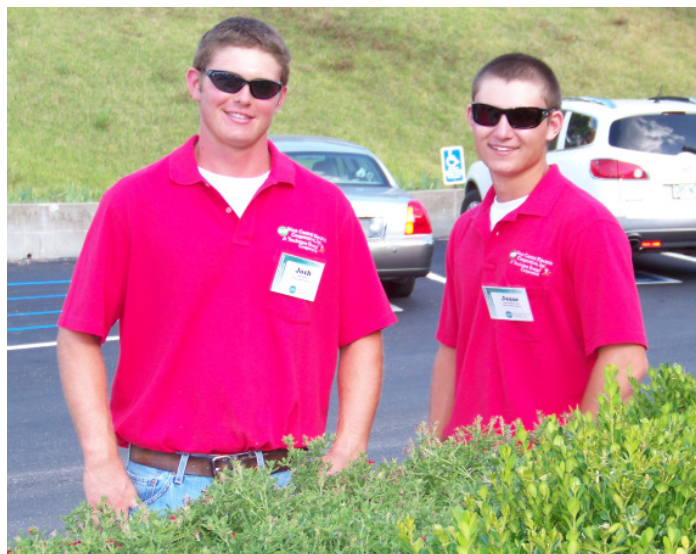
Cleaver said he looks forward to working with WCE's membership to ensure safe and reliable energy sources continue to be available in the future.

"I am hopeful that WCE's members

will find me to be an accessible and responsive representative, and I hope they will feel free to contact me or my staff if they have any questions.

Cleaver's local district office can be reached at 816-842-4545.

Don't forget -- you will receive your Special Annual Meeting Edition of Electric News in the mail in mid-July. Your annual meeting registration card will also arrive via mail along with your electric bill due in August. You must bring this to the annual meeting to receive an election ballot, and to be eligible to register.



WCE apprentice linemen Josh Conner (left) and Jesse Underwood get their feet wet in the cooperative world as interns at the 2010 annual meeting.

Conner, Underwood begin lineman careers at WCE

Josh Conner and Jesse Underwood are West Central Electric's newest employees, each beginning their lineman careers with the cooperative in May.

Both Conner and Underwood were recipients of the WCE/Linn State Technical College Electrical Distributions Systems Scholarship two years ago, and completed internships with the cooperative last summer. They officially joined the ranks of WCE following their graduations from LSTC in May.

Conner, a Carrollton native, will work out of the Higginsville office. He said he appreciates the cooperative's

"incredible generosity in presenting me with such a great opportunity."

Conner, a second-year apprentice, said he looks forward to becoming a successful journeyman lineman someday.

"I want to gain as much knowledge as possible from the linemen at WCE," he said.

Underwood, who hails from Warrensburg, will work out of the Oak Grove office.

"I am very grateful to have this job here at West Central Electric," Underwood said. "I am looking forward to spending time out in the field working towards becoming a journeyman lineman."

New Hires

Headquarters:
7867 S. Highway 13, P.O. Box 452
Higginsville, MO 64037
1-660-584-2131 or 1-800-491-3803

District office:
506 N. Broadway
Oak Grove, MO 64075
1-816-625-8211

Website:
www.WestCentralElectric.coop

24-Hour Number:
1-800-491-3803

General Manager:
Mike Gray

Board of Directors:
Donna Matthews, President
Max Swisegood, Vice-Pres.
Paul Nolte, Treasurer
Robert Simmons, Secretary
Dale Jarman, Asst. Sect.
Charles Baile, Director
Clark Bredehoeft, Director
Ron Steelman, Director
Stan Rhodes, Director

What do the Declaration of Independence and your local electric co-op have in common?

When Benjamin Franklin signed the Declaration of Independence, he is credited with saying, "We must, indeed, all hang together, or most assuredly we shall all hang separately." That recognition of the need to work together may also be why Franklin, in 1752, founded the first successful cooperative in the United States, the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire, which still operates today.

The principles behind the Declaration of Independence that form the basis of American democracy also form the basis of cooperatives. A cooperative is owned and democratically controlled by the people who use its services. Each member has one vote regardless of their stake; that is, some members can not buy more control than anyone else. This stands in stark contrast to investor-owned businesses where only shareholders have a vote in how the business is run; and even among shareholders, some have more votes than others depending

The Declaration of Independence declared the equality of rights of its citizens.

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NEW PAYMENT OPTION...West Central Electric Cooperative now offers members another convenient payment option for their monthly bills. A drive-up drop box has been installed at the headquarters location in Higginsville. Members may still use the inside drop box in the vestibule of the building if they wish.

Capital credits checks will not be mailed as originally announced

Following their monthly meeting in May, West Central Electric's board of directors opted to change plans for the mailing of capital credits checks to members who have money coming.

It was stated in the June newsletter that checks would be mailed July 1. Because of the cost-savings, directors voted to instead credit members' accounts.

"Mailing the 10,049 checks to our active members would have cost the cooperative more than \$6,500," WCE General Manager Mike Gray said.

Capital credits will appear as credits to members accounts on the bills they receive Aug. 1.

Members who purchased electricity from the cooperative between 1993 and 2010, will receive capital credits. If you do not see a credit on your account, and feel you should have, you may contact Sandy Starke at 1-800-491-3803 or 660-584-2131.

Give your home's electrical system its own 'annual physical check-up'

Snap, crackle, and pop belong in your cereal bowl, not in the electrical outlets and fixtures in your home. When your home's electrical circuitry is unhealthy, it may tell you with the loss of power to a circuit, electrical shocks to you and your family, or sparks and flames. Needless to say, none of those is acceptable, so use this checklist to avoid future problems:

Electrical outlets – Check for loose-fitting plugs, which can be a shock or fire hazard. Replace missing or broken wall plates so wiring and components are not exposed. If you have young children in the home, cover unused outlets with plastic safety caps.

Plugs – Never force them into outlets. Don't remove the grounding pin (third prong) to make a three-prong plug fit a two-prong outlet. Avoid overloading outlets with adapters and too many appliance plugs.

Cords – Make sure they are not frayed or cracked, placed under carpets or rugs, or located in high traffic areas. Do not nail or staple them to walls, floors or other objects.

Extension cords – Use them only on a temporary basis - they are not intended as permanent household wiring. Make sure they have safety closures to protect young children from shock and mouth burn injuries.

Light bulbs – Check the wattage to make sure light bulbs match the fixture requirements. Replace bulbs that have higher wattage ratings than recommended. Make sure they are screwed in securely so they don't overheat.

Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs) – Make sure GFCI outlets are installed in your kitchen, bathrooms, laundry, workshop, basement and garage as well as on outdoor outlets. Test them monthly to ensure they're working properly.

Circuit breakers and fuses – Fuses should be properly sized for the circuit they are protecting. If you don't know the correct rating, have an electrician identify and label the correct size to be used. Always replace a fuse with the same size you are removing. Check that circuit breakers are working properly.

Appliances and electronics – If an appliance repeatedly blows a fuse, trips a circuit breaker or has given you an electrical shock, immediately unplug it and have it repaired or replaced. Look for cracks or damage in wiring and connectors. Use surge protectors to protect expensive electronics.

Electrical wiring - Wiring defects are a major cause of residential blazes. Check periodically for loose wall receptacles, loose wires, or loose lighting fixtures. Listen for popping or sizzling sounds behind walls. Immediately shut off, then professionally replace light switches that are hot to the touch and lights that spark and flicker.

Service capacity – As you continue to upgrade your home with more lighting, appliances and electronics, your home's electrical service capacity may become overburdened. If fuses blow or trip frequently, have a professional electrician determine the appropriate service requirements for your home.

Keep your safety checklist, make notes, and refer back to it every time you give your home an electrical review. It



Make sure Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters are installed anywhere where there are water sources – bathrooms, laundry rooms, garages and outdoors.

will help you ensure you don't miss anything and will serve as a good resource in the future. For more electrical safety information, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.

MULES & JENNIE Business Meeting begins at 7 p.m.

West Central Electric Cooperative's 72nd Annual Meeting

Friday, August 5, 2011

University of Central Missouri Multipurpose Building, Warrensburg

- *Free buffet dinner
- *Informational booths and displays
- *Directors' & Bylaws election
- *Kids' safety area where you can meet Rural Missouri's Buddy Bear and register for cool prizes!

*Changes for 2011 -- In our quest to save our members' money and keep rates as low as possible, we have made a few changes to the annual meeting. In lieu of traditional annual meeting giveaways, we have opted this year to give you **FREE ELECTRICITY** instead of free gift items. Watch for your **SPECIAL ANNUAL MEETING EDITION OF WEST CENTRAL ELECTRIC NEWS** (coming soon) for more details...

Summer interns Eisenbath and Luebbert are anxious for cooperative experience

Two Linn State Technical College Electrical Distribution Systems students will be getting some hands-on experience this summer through an internship program at WCE. Tanner Eisenbath and Jon Luebbert joined West Central Electric in May.

Eisenbath, a native of Troy, Mo., says he is looking forward to learning more about becoming a lineman during his time at the cooperative.

"My future goal is to gain successful employment as a lineman," he said.

Jon Luebbert calls Jefferson City, Mo. his hometown, and also looks to success as a lineman as his future career.

"I am excited to learn the traits of being a lineman and learning about the different systems," he said.

Both Eisenbath and Luebbert will work with crews on various jobs throughout the cooperative service area.



Eisenbath



Luebbert

WCE Life Support Equipment list will be updated

In an effort to better serve its members, West Central Electric Cooperative updates the Life Support Equipment List every June.

"Although we add new entries to the Life Support Equipment List as members call and request to be placed on the list, we seldom get members calling to let us know they need to be removed," Director of Communications Heather Hoflander said. "In an effort to keep the list as up-to-date as possible, we create a new list every year in June."

Members are asked to fill out the following form, and mail it to West Central Electric NO LATER THAN July 31, 2011 to ensure their

name appears on the new list.

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 reason this is not a priority service list is because in the event of an outage, repairs have to be made in a certain order," Operations Manager Mark

Zeikle said. "It does no good to go out and repair an individual service when the main line is down. Until the main line is repaired, there won't be any power to the individual line."

available.

Please keep in mind that if we do not hear from you by July 31, 2011, your name will be removed from the current Life Support Equipment List.

Members requesting their name be placed on the Life Support Equipment List should mail the following form to the Higginsville office. If you or a family member is on oxygen, please let us know how many hours of back-up you have

If your name needs to remain on the WCE Life Support Equipment List, You MUST fill out the following form and mail it to West Central Electric Cooperative before July 31, 2011, or your name will be removed from the current list.

Request for 2011-12 Life Support Equipment List inclusion

(Please fill out all information completely.)

Name to appear on list: _____

Name on WCE account: _____

Account Number: _____ Location Number: _____ Phone Number: _____

Life support equipment requiring electricity to operate: _____

If on oxygen, how many hours back-up? _____

Please fill out all information completely and mail to Heather Hoflander, West Central Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 452, Higginsville, MO 64037.

What do Declaration of Independence and your electric co-op have in common?

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zens and that people had the right to organize to secure their futures when their rights were infringed upon. At the time the Declaration was written, democracy was a pretty untested idea

— but the founders of our country were determined to make it work.

So when you celebrate the many liberties and rights we enjoy with our families and friends this year, think about those principles that inspired our

Founding Fathers. They also inspired the pioneers who established electric cooperatives—folks who were determined to provide safe, reliable, and affordable power to secure the futures of rural communities.

West Central Electric Cooperative has always operated under the principles of democracy, and we are dedicated to fulfilling that promise as we serve members today and in the future.

Here are **10** easy ways to cool down and beat the heat this summer...



Summer's heat is here. To cool down without busting your electric budget, follow these 10 tips from www.freshome.com and other sources:

- 1** Cut the humidity — Humidity makes you feel warmer. Reduce indoor humidity by avoiding heat-producing activities during the day, such as drying clothes, taking showers and cooking. If you can't avoid doing them during the day, extract the humid air they create with ventilating fans.
- 2** Add insulation — Upgrading from 3 inches to 12 inches of insulation in your attic could cut cooling costs by 10 percent.
- 3** Seal the leaks — Add weatherstripping and caulking around windows, doors and electrical outlets to keep the

- outdoor heat — and cold — out and not in your house. Energy Star and the Environmental Protection Agency estimate you can save up to 20 percent on heating and cooling costs by sealing your home and also adding insulation.
- 4** Get rid of landscaping rock, cement and asphalt — These materials when unshaded and located on the south and west sides of your house will radiate heat into it.
- 5** Pull down the shades — Or drapes or blinds. These simple measures for blocking sunlight into your house can save up to 45 percent in cooling costs, estimates energy-efficiency consultant Robin Green. If you're buying new, go with lighter versus darker colors to reflect more heat away from the house.

- 6** Get a ceiling or portable fan — This affordable and energy-efficient appliance can make a room feel 6 or 7 degrees cooler. Even air movement of 1 mph can make you feel 3 or 4 degrees cooler.
- 7** Keep heat away from your air-conditioning thermostat — Make sure lamps, televisions and other heat-producing appliances aren't located near the thermostat. The heat they produce can make your air conditioner work harder because the thermostat thinks your house is warmer than it really is.
- 8** Get rid of incandescents — Replace them with compact fluorescent light bulbs, which produce the same light but use

- a fifth of the energy and produce less heat.
- 9** Don't cook in the heat of the day — Avoid lots of cooking during the day; instead, do it at night when it's cooler and always vent the hot air outside. Use the microwave or grill outside.
- 10** Go light — With the paint on your roof, that is. If you have a flat roof, paint it with reflective paint or paint it white, and the rooms under the roof will be cooler. There are lots of ways to beat the heat this summer without costing you a fortune in energy costs.

Doug Rye Says...

Lessons learned from home makeovers...

Electric cooperatives continue to do home makeover projects to demonstrate how members can save energy. In my opinion, the 2008 and 2009 makeover houses done by the electric cooperatives in Arkansas were two of the very best examples of how to make existing houses more energy efficient, more comfortable and have lower monthly utility bills. On a scale of 1 to 10, I think that they are both 10s. What a great educational tool to show others what can be done to improve existing houses.

You may find this hard to believe but I, yes I, "the King of Caulk and Talk," still learn from these experiences. There was no insulation in the exterior walls of the 2009 house except for one room, which had been added onto the original house. It had 2-inch fiberglass batts.

There are millions of houses in our country that need, but don't have, exterior wall insulation. I get calls at my office regularly about that problem. In the past, it has been quite difficult to

insulate existing walls. While plans were being made on the ways to make the 2009 house more energy efficient, the planners found a product called Retro-Foam. The name indicates that it is foam for retrofitting. It proved to be a perfect solution for this house. Installation was fast and clean with very little waste, mess or cleanup.

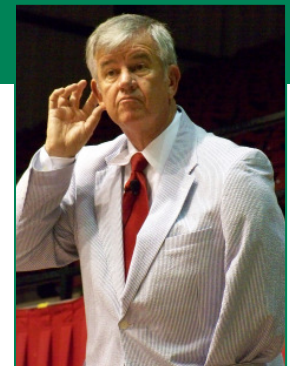
It was this simple. Two-inch holes were drilled in each stud cavity about 4 feet from the floor. A flexible hose was then inserted into the hole and pushed down to the floor. A white foam, which has the consistency of shaving cream, was injected in the cavity until the foam started coming out of the hole. The hose was then pushed up into the cavity until it touched the top plate and foam was installed to fill that part of the cavity.

A 2-inch plug was then inserted into the hole. It took about two minutes to fill that cavity. All of us who were watching this process were very impressed. It only took a few hours to insulate the exterior

walls of the entire house. Because the house was to receive new vinyl siding, we drilled the holes right through the wood lap siding. If we were intending to re-use the existing siding, we would have removed one piece, drilled through the wall sheathing, installed foam, and then replaced the piece of siding. The family told me this past winter that it was like living in a totally different house. Can you imagine the difference?

I also have learned that this can be a great application for brick veneer houses. In this case, small holes are drilled in the mortar joints and foam is injected into the entire airspace behind the brick. I am anxious to see this done soon. Do you know why? It is because one of these two processes may be just right for your house. As always, call me at the office if you have questions. In the meantime, try to stay cool.

Doug Rye, a licensed architect living in Saline County, Ark., and the popular host of the "Home Remedies" radio



show, works as a consultant for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas to promote energy efficiency to cooperative members statewide. To order Doug's video or ask energy efficiency-related questions, call Doug at 1-501-653-7931. More energy-efficiency tips, as well as Doug's columns, can also be found at www.ecark.org

Listen to Doug Rye's "Home Remedies" show Saturday mornings from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. on KXXK Radio, 105.7 FM.

