



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

# West Central *Electric News*

December 2014



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

## Enjoy holiday bling, but save money, too

A little bling is perfectly acceptable for the holidays. Now, you can have your bling and be efficient, too. Here are some tips from the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Savers and from Lowe's:

**Buy LED lights** – Light-emitting diode holiday lights have been around long enough to have been “adopted” by many consumers. Here's why:

- They use 70 percent less energy than traditional lights
- They're brighter, friendly to the

environment and safer because they don't produce much heat

- They last 10 times longer than traditional lights
- They contain no filaments or glass to break
- You can connect up to 24 strands of LEDs end to end without overloading a wall socket — be sure to check your total connected wattage and don't overload your circuit
- LEDs come with three-year warranties

**Get rebates** – LED light strings may cost more than traditional strings, but the Energy Star website at [www.energystar.gov/products/certified-products/detail/decorative-light-strings?fuseaction=find\\_a\\_product.showProductGroup&pgw\\_code=DS](http://www.energystar.gov/products/certified-products/detail/decorative-light-strings?fuseaction=find_a_product.showProductGroup&pgw_code=DS) offers guidance on finding coupons and rebates for LED lights.

**Limit hourly use** – You don't have to light up the neighborhood all night long. Set a timer to turn lights on when it gets dark and off when you go to bed.

Running lights for eight hours or less will save money.

**Use other kinds of decorations** – The holidays aren't all about lights. Be creative and consider alternatives to lighted decorations.

**Unplug the lights** – Unplug them during the day and when you're not home.

**Look for solar** – New lighting displays come with solar-powered options.

**Less is more** – Maybe you don't need a zillion lights this year and can cut back.

## Ahmann appointed to fill unexpired board term

New WCE director Jeremy Ahmann of Odessa officially took his seat on the board during his first meeting Oct. 30 in Higginsville.

An area farmer, Ahmann said he looks forward to working for the members of the cooperative, “as well the opportunity to be a part of ensuring the future success of WCE.”

Ahmann is a 2000 graduate of Wellington-Napoleon High School, and a 2005 graduate of the University of Central Missouri. Ahmann and his wife, Rachel, have three children, Abe, 4;

Emily, 2 and Lauren, 10 months.

He is also a seed salesman and distributor for Lewis Hybrids, Youth Loft Board Treasurer for the Wellington Community Christian Center, and a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Concordia.

Ahmann was appointed by the board of directors to fill the unexpired term of Paul Nolte, whose eligibility to serve as a director was nullified following the passage of a bylaw at the August 2014 annual meeting. The bylaw requires directors to not only be a current mem-

ber of the cooperative, but to have their permanent, primary place of residence on the lines.



Ahmann

### POLE INSPECTIONS BEGIN

Contractors with Lee Inspection Company will spend the next several months inspecting poles in the eastern half of Johnson County including the Burtville, Knob Noster and Montserrat substations.

Approximately 8,000 poles will be inspected between now and the first part of 2015. Inspectors will drive vehicles with “Contractor for West Central Electric Cooperative” signs and will carry badges identifying them as a contractor for the cooperative.

Please direct any questions to WCE at 800-491-3803.

Please join us for our annual

# Member Appreciation Day

8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, Dec. 12, 2014  
at our Higginsville and Oak Grove offices

Visit our offices and register to win:

**\*\$25 energy credit for your January 2015 electric bill**  
(Four certificates will be given away at each office.)

**\*Vizio 28" Smart LED HDTV**  
(one given away, donated by Berry Consulting)

**\*Limited edition Willie Wiredhand collectible ornaments**

**Headquarters:**  
7867 S. Highway 13, P.O. Box 452  
Higginsville, MO 64037  
816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803

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

**PAY BY PHONE: 1-855-874-5349**

**Website:**  
www.westcentralelectric.coop

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

**General Manager:**  
Mike Gray

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

**Board of Directors:**  
Densil Allen, 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



WCE Board President Densil Allen, Jr. (left) presents Paul Nolte with a plaque and gift for his 24 years of dedicated service to the cooperative as a director.

## Paul Nolte is honored for 24 years of service to cooperative

Long-time WCE board treasurer Paul Nolte was recognized for his 24 years of service as a cooperative director during the board's October meeting.

Nolte, who was elected in 1990, also served many years as a member of the John & Kathryn English Memorial Scholarship and West Central Electric Cooperative Scholarship committees, and represented WCE on the NW Electric board of directors.

Nolte said he was honored to serve on the board of directors of a business whose guiding principles align so closely with his personal beliefs.

"I am very thankful that I had the opportunity to serve this cooperative," Nolte said. "I am a big believer in the cooperative way of doing business and

was always proud to be a part of West Central Electric."

Nolte said he wishes the cooperative nothing but the best in the future.

"I fully expect the board of directors to continue to make a top priority of providing good, dependable service at reasonable rates for its members," he said.

Nolte left the board in August when the passage of a bylaw at the 75th annual meeting deemed him ineligible to serve. The bylaw requires directors to have their permanent, primary place of residence on cooperative lines. Nolte, although a current cooperative member and area farmer, lives within the city limits of Higginsville.

## Can you help us locate these people?

The following members have capital credit refund checks due them. Checks mailed to the last address on file for these members have been returned. If you can provide a current address for any of the members listed below, or the name of an heir if the member is deceased, please contact Sandy Starke at 1-800-491-3803 or 1-660-584-2131.

*(This list is continued from the  
November Electric News issue.)*

Schick, Lilly	406.65	Simpson, J L & Jennifer	170.64	Tarlton, Janet	50.47	West Plains Co	34.43
Schooley, Michael	106.94	Simpson, Regina	92.04	Taunton, Michael & Tara	162.35	Westerfield, Richard & Frances	0.16
Schultz, Ronald	143.03	Simpson, Ronnie & Mayetta	235.05	Temple, Mary	318.99	Westerhold, Sondra	6.01
Schreier, Cora	260.82	Sims, Howard Jr	77.25	Therriault, Billie	12.35	Westpfahl, Gary	153.87
Schrock, David & Catherine	42.67	Sims, Roberta Ann	77.23	Thierner, Everett	226.35	Wheatley, David & Darlene	39.83
Schrock, Jimmie & Teresa Mark	16.03	Sims, Vernon & Kathlene	155.04	Thomas, Angie	49.85	Wheeler, Donald	25.94
Schroeder, Jeff	101.78	Singleton, Paula	7.57	Thomas, Tim & Linda	82.82	Wheeler, Lawrence	80.88
Sciolaro, Dana	115.48	Sinks, Darrell	283.89	Thompson, Cheryl	231.22	White, Jason & Marie	38.79
Scott, Dana	114.76	Sinks, Kerry	68.71	Thompson, John Jr	103.81	Whitehair, Joseph	104.40
Scruggs, Gordon	198.67	Sivils, Crystal	15.00	Thorley, Barbara	335.99	Whiteman Park MHP	154.12
Seward, Cassie	180.30	Skaggs, Cary	36.37	Thornberry, Gary	5.73	Whiting, Gerald & Patricia	124.49
Shane, Kenneth	179.28	Skaggs, James	48.38	Thornton, Ronald & Melissa	48.03	Whitten, Thomas & Elanore	148.12
Shaver, Vicki	21.04	Skroh, Greg	20.17	Tittle, Donald Ray	79.55	Wilkinson, Lance	22.66
Shaw, John	0.47	Skymeadow Development Inc	228.80	Tittle, Donald Ray & Rebecca	57.65	Williams, Diane	30.67
Shaw, Ronald	42.41	Smith, Kenneth Jr & Nicola	59.33	Tjardes, Boyd	16.18	Williams, Jim	266.36
Sheil, John	402.80	Smith, Robert	102.37	Towne, Mitchell & Keri	50.86	Williams, John & Carleda	82.29
Sherman, Andrew & Jennifer	177.69	Smith, Rodney David & Stacey	143.67	Travis, John & Christine	213.37	Williams, Ronald	33.71
Sherrieb, Rhonda	68.91	Smith, William	92.84	True, Robert	370.14	Williams, Scott & Kelly	115.26
Shirley, M Ryan	48.33	Snelling, Verlyne	120.06	Tweedy, Rhonda	135.94	Williamson, Donald Est	41.09
Shoberg, Carl & Quatteria	139.19	Spann, Erin	63.02	Tweedy, W A Jr	80.80	Wilson Vending	223.72
Shorter, Christopher & Chris	90.21	Spears, Bill & Barbara	165.89	Tyree, G P	90.19	Wilson, Christopher	27.61
Shull, Clyde	31.00	Spencer, Patricia	146.45	Uptegrove, Larry	41.14	Wilson, George	135.08
Shumate, Charles Jr	11.56	Spracklin, Robert & Mary	68.54	Valdes, Manuel & Madelis	115.46	Wilson, Melody	92.44
Shumate, Joyce	14.31	Squire, Ron & Jeannie	85.49	Vaughn, Billy & Jeannie	136.19	Wimberly, Howard	2.03
Siegfried, Doug	67.30	Stacker, Clarice	260.57	Vaughn, E Dion & Brenda	268.17	Wingfield, Brenda	5.28
Simmons, James & Kimberly	34.91	Steelman, Annette	110.23	Veach, Julianna	205.60	Wiseman Farms	32.35
		Stegner, Mark	47.14	Viles, R David Jr & Jennifer	140.09	Wright, Brandon	156.58
		Stephan, David & Kelly	45.93	Vorick, Gary	30.11	Wright, Brandon & Christy	128.60
		Stevens, Terrie	56.88	Vorwork, Stanley	38.01	Wright, Norman & Janice	143.46
		Stevenson, Clifford & Terry Stev	334.51	Voyles, Donald & Terry Voyles	8.72	Wright, Robert & Susan	267.49
		Stockdall, Glen & Mary	49.82	Waddell, Dirk	74.05	Wyatt, Ronald & Bonnie	187.95
		Stockdall, Lenard	242.87	Wade, Larry	85.68	Wyborny, Curtis	5.84
		Stockdall, Tom & Roxanne	283.92	Wagner, Charlotte	24.83	Wynn, Heather Marie	28.46
		Stocklaufer, Gary	37.95	Walch, Gerrie	6.46	Yeager, Donald & Dara	261.45
		Stockus, Anthony	12.76	Walls, Linda	112.35	Younce, Amy	45.31
		Stork, Chip & Shanceen	121.62	Warner, Vallah	1.56	Young, Sonya	224.11
		Stout, Geneva	164.02	Warren, Chester	78.18	Young, Timothy & Cindy	392.72
		Stukes, Richard	26.27	Weaver, Julie	10.88	Zahara, Richard & Dana	172.75
		Surls, Charles & Diane	159.51	Weber, Thomas & Dianna	173.79	Zellmer, Ami	15.07
		Swab, Joseph & Lisa	102.24	Weisenberger, Andrea	47.06	Zimmerman, Bryan	13.61
		Swindler, Michael	45.01	Weisenberger, Thomas	107.57	Zimmerman, Sherry	15.30
		Tadlock, Scott & Toni	68.24	Welch, John & Dorothy	391.94		





## From the Manager...

# WCE members--your cooperative thanks you!

One year ago in the December issue of *Electric News*, I reported to you that electric cooperatives were disappointed—but not surprised—that the administration officially abandoned an all-of-the-above energy strategy for a new, all-but-one approach that effectively removes coal from the nation's fuel mix in the future.

As you know from all of the hype over the last year, the

EPA's policy set stringent limits on carbon dioxide emissions from future coal or natural gas plants which are impossible to meet with existing technology. It wasn't long before the agency then set its sights on existing plants.

At that time, we urged our members to stand with us and send a message to the EPA telling them we need an all-of-the-above approach to providing electricity.

Throughout the next year, cooperative members across the nation jumped head-long into the effort, sending their own messages to the EPA via the Cooperative Action Network. The comment period, set to expire in September, was extended through December 1. This

stemmed from several groups who got state senators from around the country involved, and who formally sent letters to the EPA asking for an extension because of the complexity of the rule.

Between the start of the campaign and press time (Nov. 1), cooperative members nationwide sent more than 1 million contacts to the EPA regarding regulations on new and existing power plants. Missouri sent more than 305,000 and contacts from WCE members numbered 7,610.

THANK YOU for taking the time to get involved and making YOUR voice heard on an issue that could seriously affect YOUR electric rates.

As you have seen in your newsletter, on your bills and in other information and correspondence from your cooperative this year, we are wrapping up the celebration of our 75th year of serving you, our members. Our theme for the year was "Members first. From day one." We have worked hard for you this past year, especially regarding the EPA issue and how it will affect electric rates for our members. We will continue to work hard into the future on this and any other issue that comes up that affects our members, your electric rates and your daily lives.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

## 12 tips to make your holidays safe

From the Consumer Protection Agency and the Consumer Energy Center for keeping safe during the holidays:

1. Sweep out your chimney – about 40 percent of home heating fire incidents are due to chimney fires
2. Install a smoke alarm
3. Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens or flammable materials

4. Before firing up the fireplace, remove all greens, boughs, paper and decorations from the area, and use a fire screen when the fireplace is lighted

5. Only use lights that have been tested for safety; look for a label from an independent testing lab

6. Check out lights, plugs and sockets before placement

7. Never use electric lights on a metallic tree

8. Turn off lights on trees and other decorations when you go to sleep or leave the house

9. For outdoors, use only lights marked for outdoor use; use insulated staples or plastic attachments to hold in place

10. A metal tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights; to avoid this possibility, use colored spotlights above or beside a tree but never fastened to it

11. Use no more than three traditional strands per extension cord – replace traditional lights with light-emitting diode lights, and you won't have to worry about overloads

12. Keep "bubbly" lights away from small children

### 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 916-565-4942.

## Electricity generation vs. environmental protection:

### Answering your questions regarding regulations and how they could affect your electric rates

Have you been wondering what is with all the fuss on the environmental issues and coal generation? Do you want to know why the cooperatives don't just replace coal generation with wind power? Are you confused by the term "clean coal?" These are questions many members may have regarding the recent EPA proposed environmental regulations.

Wrapping up the series this month, *Electric News* features a series answering these and many more questions regarding the generation of electricity vs. environmental protection.

#### New sources of generation •How much money will Associated need for capital investments in the coming years?

The current long-range financial forecast has projected capital expenditures for generation, transmission and environmental projects of nearly \$500 million in the next decade.

#### •Are you still planning to participate in a new nuclear unit?

Our generator, Associated Electric Cooperative, is part of a coalition of electric providers, business leaders and labor interests that supports keeping

nuclear energy an option for Missouri. However, Associated is not at this time committing to build or partner in a nuclear unit. If the choice to build or partner in a nuclear plant is made, it would be made because it represents the lowest-cost option for co-op members in our three-tiered system, Missouri consumers and the state as a whole.

Missouri's power demand is growing, and the majority of Missouri's coal-fired generating plants will soon be over 40 years old. In addition, existing and potential federal environmental regulations could make it more costly to operate existing coal plants or even lead to shutdowns. As these factors persist, Missouri's utilities, regulators and consumers could find nuclear to be the best option for the state.

The benefits of a nuclear reactor project in our generator's service area include increased carbon-free generation resources, energy security and thousands of jobs.

#### •Why don't you invest in renewable energy resources instead of nuclear?

This is happening. In 2013, 16 percent of our generator's electricity to serve

member load was produced by renewable resources, including wind and hydropower.

(Additional information on renewables was printed in Part I of this series that ran in the August 2014 issue of *Electric News*.)

#### •What other alternative energy sources may be options in our area?

Wind energy and run-of-river hydro-generation are probably the most promising options in our service area at this point. With changes in economic and technology conditions, more alternative energy sources could become competitive.

The cost of solar energy is trending down, and your wholesale generator has researched its potential for serving members. However, at this time, utility-scale solar projects are not economical for serving members.

While energy efficiency is not an alternative energy source, it does have potential for reducing members' electric use and bills.

#### •If hydropower is lower cost and environmentally friendly, why

#### aren't more dams being built?

Renewable hydropower has been an important part of Associated Electric's energy mix for decades. Large-scale, federally owned hydropower projects in Missouri, Oklahoma and Arkansas provide emissions-free electricity for co-op customers. Low-cost hydropower helps offset more expensive generation, and because it can be brought on line quickly, it is a valuable resource when demand is highest.

Locations for building hydropower projects (dam and associated reservoir) are very limited. Adding hydropower dams is constrained by a lengthy permitting process and potential environmental impacts.

These large hydropower projects also do not qualify to meet renewable requirements in legislation that is under consideration. A few developers in Missouri are working on underwater stream turbines and low-head hydro projects that do not require new dams and may have a lower environmental impact. Low-head hydro projects are generally those where the elevation of the water above the entry to the turbine is less than 60 feet.

## From the Boardroom...

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held September 25, 2014

The meeting was called to order by President Densil Allen. Robert Simmons, Secretary of the Cooperative, caused the minutes of the meeting to be kept. The following Directors were present: Max Swisegood, Dale Jarman, Richard Strobel, Densil Allen, Robert Simmons, Stan Rhodes, Clark Bredehoeft and Sandra Streit. Also present were General Manager Mike Gray, Admin. Asst./Benefits Admin. Kim Lewis and attorney Matt Krohn.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

After discussion, the agenda was approved.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The unapproved minutes of the regular meeting of the board of directors held August 22, 2013, were approved.

### REVIEW OF EXPENDITURES FOR AUGUST

An itemized list of expenditures for August was presented to the board, and the payment of the bills was ratified.

### REVENUE DEFERRAL

Directors discussed revenue deferral and directed Gray to research options.

### APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following August 2014 reports were approved: Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement including the Financial Statistical Report with month and budget comparisons and statistical data pertaining to operating revenue, expenses, margins, assets, liabilities, and KWH sales; Treasurer's Report; the written monthly Construction, Retirement, Maintenance and Operations Report and the Safety Report, which included no lost time accidents during the month.

### MEMBERSHIPS

The applications submitted for membership in the cooperative were accepted and approved. Directors reviewed a list of requests for termination of membership in the cooperative which, along with their requests that their billings be deducted from their deposits and the remainder, if any, be refunded to them, were accepted and approved.

### N.W. ELECTRIC POWER COOPERATIVE, INC. REPORT

Gray and Swisegood reported their attendance and shared highlights of the September board meeting.

### AMEC REPORT

Gray and Bredehoeft reported on their attendance and shared highlights of the recent meeting.

### APPOINTMENT OF CFC VOTING DELEGATE FOR REGION 8-10 MEETING

Robert Simons was appointed the voting delegate and Max Swisegood was appointed alternate.

### SICK LEAVE POLICY

Directors approved a policy regarding non-union employee sick leave.

### RETIREE HRA PLAN

The board approved a resolution regarding the retiree HRA plan.

### WAGE AND SALARY COMMITTEE

Directors approved recommendations from the Wage and Salary Committee.

### MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray reported on the board retreat scheduled for Jan. 22 and board meeting on Jan. 23; the AMEC meeting to be held in St. Louis; a possible Thomas Hill tour and honoring former director Paul Nolte for his years of service on the board.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The open director seat was discussed and directors agreed to fill the vacant seat.

### NEW BUSINESS

None.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

Directors met in closed session and reconvened into open session following their discussion.

### MANAGER'S SALARY

Directors approved an increase in the manager's salary.

### MEETING ADJOURNED

#### FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • August 2014

	This month	YTD 2014	YTD 2013
Revenue	2,176,224	18,137,940	17,414,281
Power Bill Expense	1,326,388	10,791,466	10,377,692
Operation & Maint. Expense	262,040	1,431,537	1,892,843
Depreciation Expense	153,810	1,371,184	1,181,062
Interest Expense	111,504	1,013,904	889,819
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	1,853,742	14,608,091	14,341,416
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	57,068	1,407,486	999,341
Other Margins	3,908	86,129	147,288
TOTAL MARGINS	60,976	1,493,615	1,146,629

### **\*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.

## No-cost and low-cost energy conservation

With finances tight, everyone seems to be looking to save money this coming winter according to Bob Schultheis, natural resource engineering specialist with University of Missouri Extension.

"No one thing will magically cut energy expenses a lot, but attention to many little things can all help add up to greatly-reduced costs," said Schultheis.

The place to start is with the biggest energy wasters in the home. In many cases, a person can spend less than \$100 and cut their utility bill by at least 25 percent with these basic actions.

**FIRST:** Insulate the water heater in the home if it's warm to the touch on the outside. "It is also a good idea to turn your water heater down to 120-130 degrees," said Schultheis.

**SECOND:** Weatherstrip exterior door and window gaps to reduce heat loss. "A one-eighth inch wide gap around a door is the same as a 6-inch-diameter hole through it," said Schultheis.

**THIRD:** Install foam gaskets under electrical outlet plates on exterior walls and put plastic plugs in unused sockets to reduce cold air invasion.

**FOURTH:** Caulk all outside joints where dissimilar materials meet. Use acrylic latex tube caulk and expandable foam to fill the gaps. "Do this in places like where wood meets masonry and where pipes go through concrete," said Schultheis.

**FIFTH:** Give the home furnace its annual tune-up and change or clean the filter.

**SIXTH:** Put tight-fitting doors on fireplaces to slow heat loss.

**SEVENTH:** Put foil tape or air duct sealant on HVAC metal ductwork joints.

**EIGHTH:** Check to make sure you have the recommended insulation levels in your home. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, the minimum insulation levels for Missouri homes are R-49 in the ceilings, R-18 in walls, and R-25 in floors over crawlspaces. Insulation is measured in R-value or resistance to flow of heat. Higher numbers are better.

"When you are making this upgrades remember, you're not saving any money until you have recaptured the money you spent to do the energy conservation measure," said Schultheis.

**West Central Electric  
Cooperative's Christmas & New  
Year's Holiday Closings:**

**Wednesday, Dec. 24, 2014**

**Thursday, Dec. 25, 2015**

**Thursday, Jan. 1, 2015**

**Outage calls will be taken by  
dispatchers at 1-800-491-3803.**