



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

West Central Electric Cooperative

December 2017

ElectricNews

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

The times, they are a-changin'!

West Central Electric News will feature a new look in 2018 with full-color pages

Beginning in January, you will notice a whole new look to your West Central Electric News and Rural Missouri magazine. We will be bringing each issue to you in FULL COLOR!

This change will be made possible because of a switch in printing companies by Rural Missouri magazine. Gone will be the newsprint, and in its place will be a true magazine-type paper with full color photos and graphics.

"We are really excited to be able to print our local pages in full-color," Communications Specialist Heather Hoflander said. "I think members will love the new look

of both the cooperative pages and Rural Missouri. It will make our publication more attractive and appealing with full-color photos and vibrant graphics. We will have some great options for bringing you news about your cooperative," she said.

The new features will make production of the local WCE pages easier, and the full-color feature and high-quality magazine-stock paper will not cost your cooperative any additional printing fees.

Changes will be implemented with the January 2018 issue.



Please join us for our annual Member Appreciation Day

8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 13, 2017
at our Higginsville and Oak Grove offices

Visit our offices and register to win:

***\$25 energy credit
on your January 2018 electric bill**

(Four certificates will be given away at each office.)

**Come on in to our offices and join us for coffee,
punch and cookies to celebrate the season!**

***Also register to win limited edition 75th NRECA Anniversary
Willie Wiredhand collectible ornaments**

WCE announces participation in Operation Round-Up

Commitment to our local communities is not only one of the Seven Cooperative Principles, but something that your cooperative board, managers and employees believe in and make a priority every day. In keeping with that commitment, West Central Electric General Manager Mike Gray has announced the cooperative will begin an Operation Round-Up program set to kick off in mid-2018.

"This program will allow the cooperative and its members to make contributions throughout our service area, which will, in turn, strengthen our local communities and the organizations that are a part of them," Gray said.

The program will be an OPT-OUT program in which WCE members will be automatically enrolled. Each month, members' bills will be rounded up to the nearest dollar, with donations being overseen and distributed by the WCEC Operation Round-Up Foundation board of directors. The average member contribution per year will total around \$6 per year, with the maximum being just over \$11. Donations are also tax-deductible.

"A quarter or two each month might not seem like much, but added together from several thousand members over the course of a year means we can work together to help a lot of organizations," Gray said.

Members who do not wish to participate may contact the office and ask to be removed from the Operation Round-Up list.

Contributions will be made to various organizations such as emergency departments, schools, etc.

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, 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

Tips for safe, efficient holiday lighting

This year is rapidly drawing to a close and that means the holiday lighting season is back. If your home space is in need of a decorative refresh, here are some tips to take your artistic stylings to the next level. There are two areas to cover, so let's get started.

SAFETY FIRST

Safety is up first. If your lights are ground mounted or can be installed standing on the floor or ground, you can skip ahead. However, since most decorations involve some installation at height, you need to do the following:

1. Have a ground crew (one or two people) to steady your ladder and pass up the decorations...an invaluable part

of safety and for keeping you supplied with untangled light strings, fasteners and encouragement.

2. Remember to keep a safe distance from your overhead electric service.

3. Don't overreach. If you cannot get to a point with your body completely centered between the sides of the ladder, get down and relocate it.

4. Don't overextend the ladder. If your ladder is too short, rent or borrow a longer one. A ladder extended beyond its working limits is dangerous as is standing on rungs too close to the top.

5. Do not overload circuits by stringing more light sets together than the manufacturer recommends. Check the packaging for details.

6. Check your wires for breaks and cracks in the insulation that can lead to shorts.

Most of these tips apply equally to inside and outside decorating activities.

LIGHT SELECTION

Light selection is next. If at all possible, invest in LED lights this season. Unlike the first versions to hit the market that were characterized by rather harsh and unattractive colors, the newest generation's colors are reminiscent of the incandescent lights of yore.

Why go the LED route? Longevity and cost of operation are the two key reasons. Unlike incandescent lights, whether the large or mini bulb, LEDs

will last for many, many years. LEDs have no filaments to burn out. Aside from physically destroying the bulb, the LED is amazingly robust. Given the modest number of hours of operation, you can expect LEDs to last seven or more years.

Then there is the cost of operation benefit from LEDs. These gems of technological advancement truly sip electricity. A reasonable estimate of power consumption is 7 watts per 100 lights. How does that compare to the old incandescent? Each of those bulbs used 12 watts so a string of 100 devoured 1200 watts.

Truly want to manage the cost of

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MERRY, BRIGHT AND EFFICIENT HOLIDAY LIGHTING

Decking the halls doesn't have to take a toll on your energy bill! Keep your holiday lighting merry, bright and energy efficient with LED light strands.

- Consider replacing older light strands with new ENERGY STAR LED® lights. LED strands are 70 percent more efficient and last 10 times longer than the age-old standard bulbs.
- You can get the look of cozy lighting with LEDs. Just look for "warm white" on the label.
- Unlike older light strands, LED lights give off virtually no heat, making them safer for kids and pets (and reindeer).
- Save energy by setting a timer for outdoor lighting and decorations. Program the timer so the lights turn on in the evening and turn off later at night when you typically go to sleep.

Source: Dept. of Energy



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVES

Felkins is apointed new ROW coordinator

Dru Felkins has been named the new Right-of-Way coordinator for West Central Electric Coopertive, according to General Manager Mike Gray.

Felkins was hired in 2005 as a computer technician, but has spent the past 12 years doing much more than IT. In addition to helping keep the cooperative's computer systems running properly and efficiently, Felkins has worked with mapping, locates and dispatching during outages.

When the cooperative's subsidiary company, West Central Services, was formed to provide high-speed satellite internet and satellite television services to members, Felkins became a key



Felkins

member of the WCS team, performing installations, making service calls and providing technical support, as well as several other duties.

During his time with the cooperative, Felkins has assisted in other departments and he feels the transition will not be a difficult one to make.

"Even though I have been in the IT Department, I have been working in operations as well for the past 12 years, so the interest was already there," he said of making the decision to try something different. "I hope to be able to mix the two together and hopefully be able to come up with some efficient solutions for handling problem areas."

Felkins said he is looking forwrd to working with members and being able to take care of their needs.

"Being able to meet with members face-to-face will be a good change of pace," he said.

In addition to heading up the cooperative's ROW Program, Felkins will continue to work with the satellite internet program as a part of WCS.



WCE Member Services Manager Steve Moore (left) and Branch Manager Brent Schlotzhauer (right) visit with Rep Dan Houx during the 2017 AMEC Legislative Conference in Jefferson City.

Tips for safe and efficient holiday lighting

From page 2

operating holiday lights? Invest in timers to turn the lights on and off automatically. Really into gadgets? Invest in a smart plug for your lights you can program and control from your smart phone.

Once you have your design finalized and installed, it is my recommendation

to leave as much of the outside portion of lights in place. No, don't be that person who leaves the holiday lights on all year. Simply disconnect them after the holidays, protecting the plugs and sockets from dirt and debris. Think of the reduced stress and risk if you set and forget your design. With the lon

gevity of the LEDs, you can enjoy this freedom and practically eliminate the risks associated with high-wire seasonal gymnastics.

Tom Tate writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

Don't fall victim to scammers

Unfortunately, in today's world, scams are inevitable. Scammers can threaten you with everything from legal action involving the IRS to turning off power to your home.

Utility scams often involve an individual or group posing as an employee of your electric cooperative. The scammer may use threatening language in order to frighten you into offering your credit card or bank account information. Don't fall victim to these types of scams. Understand the threats posed and your best course of action:

- If someone calls your home or cell phone demanding you pay your electric bill immediately, gather as much information as you can from that individual, hang-up the phone and contact the local authorities. Scammers often use threats and urgency to pressure you into giving them your bank account number or loading a pre-paid credit or debit card (such as a Green Dot card). West Central Electrric will never ask you to offer up personal finance information

over the phone. If you have any doubts about your utility bill, contact our office either in person, or over the phone at 800-491-3803.

- If someone comes to your home claiming to be an employee of West Central Electric and needs to collect money or inspect parts of your property, and you are unsure, call us to verify they are, in fact, an employee. If they are not, call local authorities for assistance and do not let the individual into your home. WCE employees will never ask for access to the inside of your home.

There are other types of scams consumers should watch out for:

- Government agencies like the IRS will never call to inform you that you have unpaid taxes or other liens against you. You will always receive this type of information in the mail. If someone calls claiming to be the IRS, hang-up immediately.

- If you receive an email from an unknown sender; an email riddled with

spelling errors and typos; or an email threatening action unless a sum of money is paid, do not click any links provided within the email, and do not respond to the email. Simply delete the email, or send it to your spam folder.

- If someone calls your home claiming to have discovered a virus on your computer, hang-up. This caller's intent is to access personal information you may be keeping on your computer.

WCE wants to make sure you avoid any and all types of scams that could put you or your financial information in jeopardy. If you have any questions or would like more information about how you can protect yourself from scammers, call us, or visit our website [include phone number/website address].

Meghaan Evans writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

From the Boardroom...

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held September 28, 2017

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, Stan Rhodes, Clark Bredehoeft and Sandra Streit. Also present were General Manager Mike Gray and General Counsel Sheri Smiley.

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 Aug. 24, 2017, expenditures for the month of August 2017, new membership applications and membership terminations.

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following August 2017 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.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Gray presented the Legislative Report and a report on the Sho-Me lawsuit, solar and the lineman's rodeo.

AMEC REPORT

Bredehoeft and Gray reported their attendance to the N.W. meeting. Highlights included an AECI update and a report generated by CFC on NW's ranking for cost of service. They also reported on the Chapel Hill tower, drone training and recent storm damage.

OPERATION ROUND-UP

The committee report will be given at the October board meeting.

POLICIES 3.14 AND 5.13

Gray and Smiley presented new policies 3.14 and 5.13 regarding FEMA procurement and conflict of interest policies. After discussion the policies were adopted as presented.

CFC DELEGATE

Gray was elected to be the CFC voting delegate.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray presented the monthly manager's report. Items of interest included the NRECA Clean Power Plan, attorney's fees, the review by Federated and the septic system.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The board entered into executive session.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Following executive session the meeting was adjourned.

Gray named to AMEC committee

General Manager Mike Gray has been appointed as a district representative to the Training and Development Committee of the Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives. AMEC is the service organization of the state's 47 electric cooperatives which serve more than 560,000 rural members.

As a member of the Training and Development Committee, Gray will be responsible for activities relating to improving the professional and technical abilities of electric cooperative employees and directors. These activities include workshops and conferences developed by AMEC and the national association.



Gray

*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.

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.

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

Monday, Dec. 25, 2017
Tuesday, Dec. 26, 2017
Monday, Jan. 1, 2018

Outage calls will be taken by
dispatchers at 1-800-491-3803 or
816-565-4942 or online at
www.westcentralelectric.coop

FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • August 2017

	This month	YTD 2017	YTD 2016
Revenue	2,259,707	17,909,165	17,791,260
Power Bill Expense	1,329,493	10,763,572	11,149,732
Operation & Maint. Expense	253,913	1,916,645	1,784,744
Depreciation Expense	174,690	1,378,343	1,326,154
Interest Expense	103,107	854,849	798,167
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	1,861,203	14,913,409	15,058,797
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	121,108	756,442	601,998
Other Margins	13,131	188,178	115,845
TOTAL MARGINS	134,239	944,620	717,843