



West Central Electric Cooperative

August 2019

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

ElectricNews

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

Youth Tour '19



THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME...Delegates on the 2019 Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. attend NRECA Youth Day. This year's Missouri delegation was 108-strong, and nationwide was one of the largest Youth Tour group in history with more than 1,800 delegates representing cooperatives from across the country. (Additional coverage on page 3.)

Snake in Centerview sub causes a major outage

When you live in a rural area, you never know what you're going to get. Animals and snakes are just part of the territory, but sometimes, they end up where they shouldn't.

On the morning of June 5, almost 1,800 members feeding off the Centerview Substation found that out. A snake crawled into the primary buss wire causing the main substation breaker to open and damage the system. The result was a loss of power for the entire substation.

Power was back on in about an hour, as WCE linemen were able to bypass the damaged equipment and re-energize

the substation until NW Electric could arrive and make permanent repairs. Fortunately, damage was estimated at under \$1,000.

Most members were amused when they found out the cause of such a large outage by such a small creature, but relieved that power was back on quickly.

"We all take our access to electricity for granted," Brian Purinton commented on the cooperative's Facebook post. "I'm personally thankful for all the hard-working men and women that keep the flow of it running through the lines."



YES, THAT'S A SNAKE...This snake caused some damage to West Central Electric's Centerview Substation June 5. Nearly 1,800 members were without power for about an hour.

Annual Meeting is Aug. 2, 2019...

Don't forget to bring your annual meeting registration card to the Multipurpose Building on the campus of the University of Central Missouri Friday, Aug. 2. Registration begins and the meal is served at 5 p.m. The business meeting begins at 7 p.m.

This card must be brought to the annual meeting in order to register for prizes and vote in the board of directors election.

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



OPERATION ROUND UP...Members of the West Central Electric Round Up Foundation presented their latest community grant to the Concordia Senior Center. (L-r) Janice Blackburn, Concordia Senior Center Building Board secretary; Joe Blackburn, senior center building board; Carol Tharp, senior center coordinator; Larry Schnakenberg, senior center board; Sally Davidson, Round Up Board; Vernon Ohrenberg, senior center board president; Margie Storck, Round Up board; Oral Glasco, Round Up Board; Phyllis Hemme, senior center volunteer; Judy Latty, senior center cook and Steve Steen, senior center volunteer. (On scaffolding: Kellen Fiene and Gavin Ohrenberg, who are assisting with the ceiling tile replacement part of the project.)



STILL HAVE TO GET THERE...Despite most of Levasy being underwater in June, linemen still had to respond to calls. WCE lineman Matt Schellman travels by boat courtesy of the Fort Osage Fire Department.

REMINDER TO OUR MEMBERS Regarding Capital Credits...

- Your 2019 capital credit refund appeared as a credit on your July billing statement.
- If a member has multiple accounts, the credit was applied to the largest balance first (based on the previous month) then the next account until fully applied. If there are no current balances on the account, the credit will be applied to the primary account (that holds the main membership).
- If a member has multiple accounts, and would like the credit applied to a different account than the one determined by the cooperative, members may call the office and request a transfer to the account of their choice.
- Members who purchased electricity from the cooperative in 1999 may receive capital credits. If you do not see a credit on your account, and feel you should have, you may contact Michael Newland at 1-800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942.

- Inactive, non-members' checks were mailed July 15, 2019.

Youth Tour is trip of a lifetime for local students



WCE Youth Tour delegates (l-r) Maddi Schuette, Rylie Othic, Logan Tracy and Abby Fowler, visit the United States Capitol Building in Washington, D.C.

“Youth Tour has been one of the best experiences of my life. I have learned to really appreciate how much our country does for us and what our freedom costs. We are able to talk with some of the most influential people in the United States, and I have made amazing new friends!”

—Maddi Schuette
2019 Youth Tour Delegate

What makes electric cooperatives different from other utilities is that “giving something back to the community” is part of their business plan. Why do electric cooperatives bring high school students to Washington, D.C.? Because it is important to learn about the political process and to interact with your government. Students walk away from this week a better leader and with a sense that they can make a difference.

In June, Abby Fowler, Rylie Othic, Maddi Schuette and Logan Tracy joined more than 100 other youth from across Missouri on the national Rural Electric Youth Tour. The tour brought together more than 1,800 high school students from across the nation.

Time and again, delegates both past and present choose the same words to describe their experience, calling Youth Tour “the trip of a lifetime,” and basking in the experiences and friendships they gained while in our nation’s capital.

“Youth Tour has been one of the best experiences of my life,” Schuette said. “It is a great way to make new connections. We are able to talk to some of the most influential people in the United States, and see what life is like in the big city. Along with meeting people on The Hill, I have made amazing new friends -- friendships I know will last forever.”

More than 50,000 students from rural areas and small towns across America have participated in this unique program, with participants going on to become doctors, teachers, aircraft designers and even top legislators in the U.S. Senate. Delegates also return with a new appreciation of America and her history.

“It has been a great opportunity for me to experience D.C. in a whole new way. I have learned to really appreciate how much our country does for us and what our freedom costs,” Schuette said.

WCE has sent 69 area students to our nation’s capital since reestablishing the Youth Tour program at the cooperative in 1992.



Making new friends is a huge part of the Youth Tour. Above, Rylie (fourth from left) and Maddi (second from right), and a host of new friends prepare to board a boat for a moonlight dance cruise on the Potomac River.



Youth Tour delegates had the Newseum all to themselves, as NRECA rented out the facility for the night for students to tour, mingle and learn.



U.S. Representative Vicky Hartzler visits with Youth Tour delegates during their day at the United States Capitol Building.

From the Boardroom...

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held May 23, 2019

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: Max Swisegood, Clark Bredehoeft, Dale Jarman, Richard Strobel, Stan Rhodes, Jeremy Ahmann and Sandra Streit. Also present were General Manager Mike Gray and general counsel Sheri Smiley, and WCE office staff

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

After discussion, the agenda was approved.

THREE-PHASE RATE CLASS DISCUSSION

Craig Woycheese presented the study he conducted on the commercial accounts. He discussed daily service, demand and energy charges. He also discussed consumers with kVA greater than 100 kVA and he made recommendations to the board to expand the capacity requirement in Rate class 503. Following his presentation and recommendations a motion was made to change rate 503 Character of Service to "0 to 300 Kva" and rate 501 Character of Service to "301 KVA to 1499 KVA" which was passed after discussion. Mr. Woycheese then left the meeting.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The board approved its consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of April 19, 2019; expenditures for the month of April 2019; new membership applications; membership terminations and the treasurer's report.

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following April 2019 reports were approved:

Financing and Treasurer's Report: Michael Newland presented the April 2019 Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement. He reviewed the Financial Statistical Report with monthly and annual budget comparisons. He also gave the investment report, presented and reviewed statistical data pertaining to operating revenue, expenses, margins, assets, liabilities, cash flow management, and KWH sales. He discussed line-loss calculations and sales comparisons year-to-date. He also gave the Treasurer's report and presented a Resolution from RUS which was adopted.

Operations and Safety Report: Randy Burkeybile gave the operations and safety report. He discussed crew work and outages in April. He gave the construction retirement, maintenance and operations report and reported on new services built. He also gave the safety report including safety meetings, crew visits and training for the month for employees. He reported on the results of the RESAP audit and the MECIP audit and reported no issues were found. He also reported on the underground inspections being done as well as an Altec truck recall.

Engineering Report: Gray gave the engineering report which included a report on Construction, Retirement, Maintenance and Operations. He reported on new services, outages, pole change outs and maintenance as well as right-of-way crews and a staking report.

Member Services Report: Brent Schlotzhauer presented the member services report. He included a report on Operation Round Up and gave a report on the scholarship presentations made. He also reported that the co-op had purchased an electric vehicle. He gave net metering information and reported on the rebates given. He also gave an update on the Capitol Fish Fry.

NW REPORT

Swisegood presented the NW report for May. He discussed AECL updates, outages, the solar and wind report and margins and expenses. He gave an update on the floods and damage done to NW substations and reported that demand forgiveness will be given to Atchison-Holt Electric Cooperative who was hit the hardest by the flood.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Smiley gave the Nominating Committee Report. She reported that the positions up for election will be unopposed.

ANNUAL MEETING DISCUSSION

Gray led the discussion on the current meeting plans. A discussion was held regarding a possible survey to give to the members.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray presented his monthly Manager's Report. Items of interest included the signs on the building and he said that the existing sign will be refurbished. He reported on the Guatemala project and one lineman who had volunteered. He discussed the lineman's rodeo. He gave an update on the medical marijuana seminar that was given. He also reported on member comments and gave an Oak Grove building update and reported that there may be a July opening.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

MEETING ADJOURNED

FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • April 2019

	This month	YTD 2019	YTD 2018
Revenue	\$1,986,675	\$10,914,141	\$11,001,695
Power Bill Expense	1,239,179	6,280,078	6,277,001
Operation & Maint. Expense	495,440	2,545,934	2,013,741
Depreciation Expense	182,240	724,858	705,755
Interest Expense	126,963	471,952	414,885
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	2,043,822	10,022,822	9,411,382
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	(57,147)	891,319	1,590,313
Other Margins	26,887	119,509	70,006
TOTAL MARGINS	\$(30,260)	\$1,010,828	\$1,660,319

Brandy Dukes joins West Central in Higginsville office

Brandy Dukes is West Central Electric's newest office associate, working out of the headquarters office in Higginsville.

Dukes is a customer service representative, and assists members with account questions, setting up or disconnecting service, making payment arrangements and many other duties related to serving cooperative members.

"I look forward to gaining experience about electric cooperatives while learning as much as possible to provide the best for the team and its members," she said.

Dukes is a WCE member, and lives near Mayview with her husband, Robert, and their daughters McKenzie and Hailey.



Dukes

Area floodwaters receding, but dangers still remain

(SPRINGFIELD, ILL.) —It could be caused by heavy rains, rising river levels, or melt water—flooding. According to the Federal Emergency Disaster Agency (FEMA), floods are one of the most common hazards in the United States. Some floods happen very quickly and some slowly, but in either case they can pose electrical dangers for you and your family.

Molly Hall, executive director of the Energy Education Council's Safe Electricity program says, "If flood waters have made it into your home, it is critical to be alert to electrical equipment that could be energized and in contact with water, as it can create a serious danger of electrocution."

The prospect of an electrical accident is probably not top of mind when you are dealing with flooding in your home, but it is the first thing you should think of before you step into a flooded area. Hall adds, "If there is any question the water could be energized, do not enter the area."

Here are some additional suggestions from Safe Electricity to help keep you and your family safe during a flood:

Never attempt to turn off power at the breaker box if you must stand in water to do so. If you cannot reach your breaker box safely, call your electric utility to shut off power at the meter.

Never use electric appliances or touch electric wires, switches, or fuses when you are wet or when you are standing in water.

Keep electric tools and equipment at least 10 feet away from wet surfaces. Do not use electric yard tools if it is raining or the ground is wet.

In addition to the dangers flooding presents in a home, there are many others to consider during a flood, like:

Never drive into flood waters because it is very difficult to tell by sight how deep floodwaters are. It only takes 6 inches of water for your car to lose

control and stall. Your car could be swept out of control and into electrical dangers.

Also, do not enter flood waters on foot or in boat. Flood waters hold unknown dangers. The water could be energized or could sweep you into electrical equipment. Just 6 inches of moving water can knock you off your feet.

If you see downed power lines or damaged equipment, stay away, warn others to stay away, and notify the authorities.

If you are in a flood-prone area, there are some steps you can take before flooding begins. One action you can take is to have a sump pump with a back-up battery in case the power goes out so that an alarm alerts you of flooding. Additionally, you can elevate the water heater, electric panel, and furnace to keep them clear of potential flood waters. The Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) is also a great resource to access when it comes to natural disasters. Visit the EDEN website at eden.lsu.edu to find disaster preparation and recovery information specific to your state.

Safe Electricity also recommends installing ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) on outdoor outlets and indoor outlets in areas of the house that are prone to flooding such as the basement. GFCIs should also be installed in rooms with heavy water use such as the laundry room, bathroom, and kitchen areas.

For more information on avoiding electrical hazards during a flood, visit SafeElectricity.org.

The Energy Education Council is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to promoting electrical safety and energy efficiency. Established in 1952, the Council is headquartered within University of Illinois Extension and serves as a forum for diverse utility and energy organizations to collaborate on the mutually vital issues of efficiency and safety. EnergyEdCouncil.org.