



West Central Electric Cooperative

November 2020

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

ElectricNews

Hurricane Laura

WCE crews head south to Louisiana to assist Beauregard Electric Cooperative with devastated system
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Wrap your home in a blanket to insulate against winter cold--here's what you can do...

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Would your home pass an electrical inspection? Here are some tips to ensure your home is safe

WCE offices will be closed

**Wednesday, Nov. 11 for Veterans Day
and**

**Thursday and Friday, Nov. 26-27
for the Thanksgiving holiday**

SAFETY FIRST!

Space heaters can take the chill off of a seldom-used room, but should never be your first choice for home heating. Keep flammable items at least 3 feet away. Plug directly into the outlet. Never leave a space heater unattended. You can find more electrical safety tips online at www.esfi.org



West Central Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Headquarters:

7867 S. Highway 13, P.O. Box 452, Higginsville, MO 64037
816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803 • PAY BY PHONE: 1-855-874-5349

To report outages 24/7:

Call 816-565-4942 or 1-800-491-3803 • or report outages at www.westcentralelectric.coop under "View & Report Outages"

District office:

506 N. Broadway, Oak Grove, MO 64075

Website:

www.westcentralelectric.coop

General Manager:

Mike Gray

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*

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Insulate for winter...

Wrap your





Wrap your house in a blanket

Insulating your house is like wrapping it in a warm blanket. The better the insulation in your “building envelope,” the warmer you’ll feel this winter.

Insulation is measured by R-value: a material’s ability to resist heat flow. The higher the R-value, the greater the insulating power. ENERGY STAR and the U.S. Department of Energy recommend:

Zone 5, Iowa and upper Missouri – R-49 to 60 for uninsulated attic, R-38 to 49 for existing insulated attic and R-25 to 30 for floor; Zone 4, rest of Missouri – R-38 to 60 uninsulated attic, R-38 existing insulated attic and R-25 to 30 floor.

Whether you use cellulose, fiberglass, foam or some other insulating material, here are useful tips from ENERGY STAR, the University of Missouri Extension and www.consumerenergycenter.org on where to insulate:

- Insulate your attic – This can be the most cost-efficient way to cut home heating costs
- Weatherstrip and insulate the attic hatch or door
- Seal holes in the attic that lead down into the house, such as open wall tops and duct, plumbing or electrical runs, with spray foam or rigid foam board
- Keep insulation fluffy to 18 inches or higher for an R-49 in the attic
- Add a vapor barrier where it makes sense to do so: it must be placed nearest the warm side of the space being insulated — under attic insulation and between drywall and insulation in a wall, which may be difficult to do in an existing structure
- Check your crawl space to make sure there is insulation under the floor; if batts are on the ground, tie them up with twine, staples or flexible rods to be in contact with the floor
- Insulate to fill large gaps around chimneys, furnace flues, plumbing pipes, ductwork and light fixtures in attic
- Lay insulation between attic floor joists and on the hatch or door or add more if already there
- Insulate ceilings in unheated basements and around the walls in heated basements or unvented crawl spaces
- Wrap older electric water heaters and those in unheated areas in a blanket of fiberglass (jacket kits are available in hardware or home improvement stores) to reduce heat loss by up to 45 percent. Verify with the water heater manufacturer that adding a blanket will not void your warranty; if you have a natural gas water heater, follow safety procedures in wrapping the heater:
- Don’t forget to insulate these often-neglected areas:
 - Walls separating the living area from the attached garage
 - Walls and ceiling of basement garages
 - Walls and ceiling of dormers
 - Sloping ceiling areas in upstairs rooms where the ceiling has been “clipped” to accommodate roof rafters
 - Narrow cracks around window and door frames
 - Between closely spaced studs at corners of exterior walls or at junctions of exterior and interior walls
 - Ceilings near exterior walls



The first crew heading out Aug. 31 (l-r) Derek Cole, Johnathon Sullins, Billy Mackie and Jesse Underwood.



The second crew heading out the first part of September (l-r) Scott Gard, Adam Beck, Matt Turax and Todd Gast.



The third crew heading out in the middle of September (l-r) Matt Schellman, Brandon Steffen, Nathan Johnson and Wyatt Wilkinson.

Hurricane Laura

Crews from multiple states rotate to Louisiana for several weeks

A dozen linemen from West Central Electric spent weeks rotating in and out of Louisiana helping to rebuild the Beauregard Electric Cooperative system after it was destroyed by Category 4 Hurricane Laura in late August.

More than 1,200 linemen from across the country were on hand at any one time working to assist in the repair effort, including more than 350 linemen from 29 Missouri cooperatives as of late September. Hurricane Laura left all 43,000 of the co-op's members without power and also severely damaged transmission lines.

Lineman Derek Cole was one of WCE's crew spending time in Louisiana assisting with storm repairs.

"The days were long and it was very hot," he said.

Cole said he was amazed at how far the damage spread.

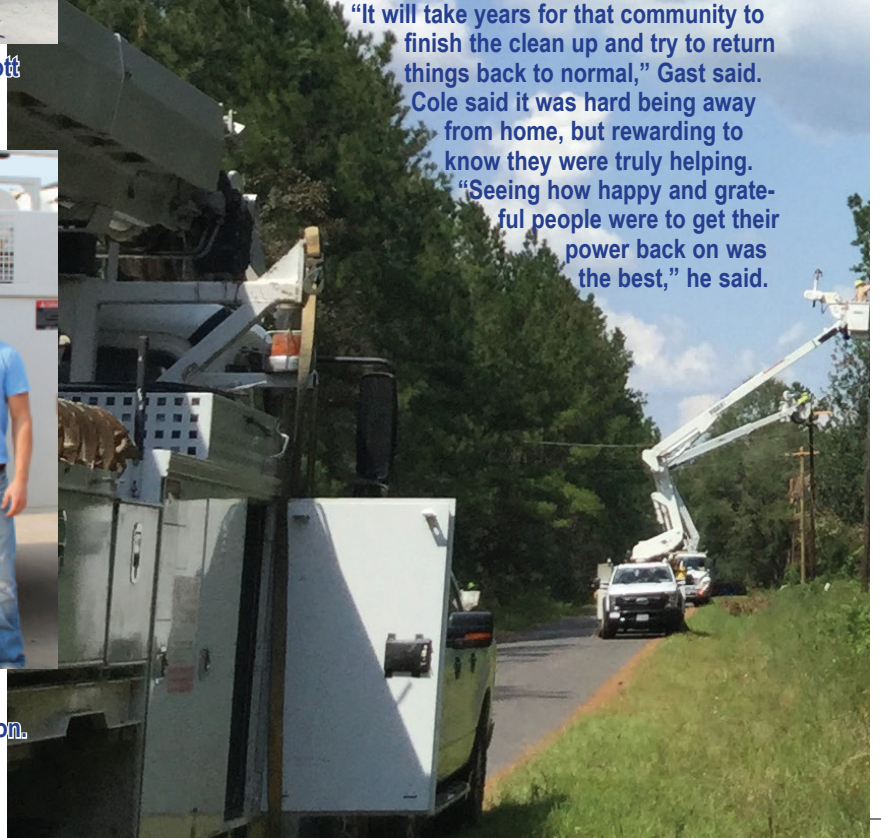
"There were trees down everywhere and homes were destroyed from the trees falling into them," he said. "It was such widespread damage compared to what I've seen around home."

Line Foreman Todd Gast said that although all members will eventually be back on, complete recovery is a long way off.

"It will take years for that community to finish the clean up and try to return things back to normal," Gast said.

Cole said it was hard being away from home, but rewarding to know they were truly helping.

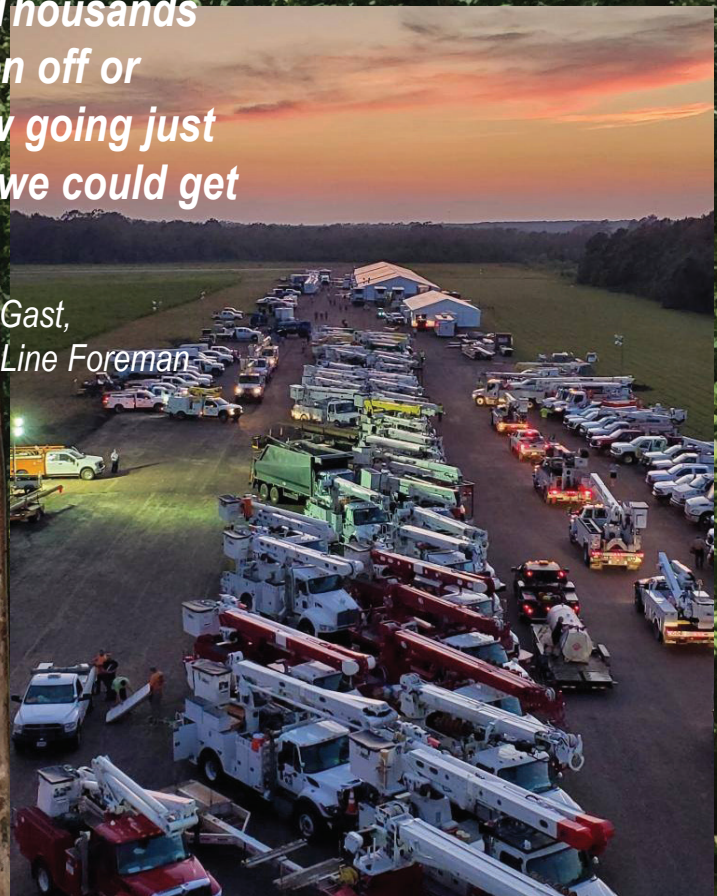
"Seeing how happy and grateful people were to get their power back on was the best," he said.



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"Where we were working, the timber industry is huge, so we were surrounded by 80-to-90-foot tall pine trees. When a tree of that size falls, it takes out everything in its path. Thousands and thousands of trees were broken off or blown down. It made for some slow going just trying to get the trees removed so we could get the power restored."

Todd Gast,
WCE Line Foreman



(Main photo) Bucket trucks lined roads as crews worked to re-string line that was on the ground for miles as they helped rebuild the Beauregard Electric Cooperative system after it was destroyed by Hurricane Laura. (Above right) Tents with extra precautions such as special air filters to help prevent COVID, were set up for crews to live in during their rotations in Louisiana. (Bottom right) An aerial view of "Tent City," courtesy of Boone Electric Cooperative linemen.

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 Michael Newland at 1-800-491-3803 or 1-816-565-4942.

Adkins, Marcella R	94.48	Holdshoe, Paul F Jr & Judith	42.34
Alvarez, Ricardo	13.61	Horn, Cameron & Doetzer, Colby	8.05
Ampungan, Brandon & Alexandra	93.35	Huttinger, David K & Julie	118.88
Anderson, Brandi	1.51	Impastato, Raymond & Phegley, Ta	21.61
Andrae, Tammy J	0.08	James, Mark A	20.76
Antonson, Erik D & Jenny M	14.12	Johnson, Mel & Anna	116.70
Athans, James Jr	12.20	Johnson, Samuel & Margo	0.88
Bardwell, Michael E	1.27	Klotz, Michael P & Heather	63.37
Birenbaum, Mathew	18.85	Landis, John E	17.02
Borovsky, Alan & Jessica	82.00	Long, Anthony	0.90
Brandt, Courtney	139.26	Lutman, Travis P & Domonique	104.50
Brown, Justin R & Amanda C	38.25	Mccune, John D	151.19
Buczinski, Brian A & Stephanie	109.17	Mcdaniel, Michael	0.58
Burnett, Carroll L	14.81	Nalls, Andrea E	37.11
Burnham, Julie A	56.86	Ollie, Ryan D & Rachel S	34.60
Burns, Katherine M	47.40	Olson, Curtis	0.11
Buso, Zackery	141.51	Patricelli, Christopher J	30.12
Carter, Joshua D	61.04	Patrick, Joseph P	170.37
Casteel, Logan D	18.28	Pena, Antonio	0.19
Caswell, Tori L	56.76	Persinger, Penny	0.61
Clements, Rebecca E	6.22	Pollard, Matthew E	42.87
Coen, Brian V Sr	36.83	Porter, Wesley	21.69
Coffel, Jason M & Nichole R	123.65	Postlethwait, Bryon & Brozi, Silv	12.09
Coggin, Jeffrey & Debbie	1.63	Rabbass, Troy D	27.07
Cook, Janice E	16.68	Ramos, Jessica E	57.31
Courtney, Michael T & Shelley	20.41	Rawlins, Ed E	15.51
Craig, Clifford O & Diana L	0.36	Reed, Ronny E	0.44
Crawford, Marilyn	82.15	Rene, Marie F	67.36
D'Agostino, Eric T	180.93	Rice, Julie M	15.30
Dean-Buchanan, Natalie J	64.24	Robinson, James Jr	81.67
Dodd, James W	3.92	Schlup, Nathaniel L	22.92
Dunn, Keith & Morris, Lorena	0.81	Seymour, Deanna G	47.01
Farley, Janet C	86.53	Shanks, Michael D	42.33
Farmer, Rhonda K	8.91	Sheets, Ginny L	8.45
Fite, Christopher B	97.79	Stark, Ron	2.37
French, Al M	6.10	Stevens, Jason R	46.30
Galea, Katie M	7.62	The ToyBoxC/O Tillman, Virgil	65.35
Galliher, Sandra S	19.73	Thomas, Danny L & Nancy	33.72
Garren, Brandon L	125.51	Thomas, Leroy W & Dianna	0.37
Glidewell, Lisa	115.06	Thompson, Paul E	83.72
Gregory, David W & Betty	27.03	Tompkins, Ivan W & Marva	95.45
Grose, Kiara N	15.39	Watson, Rebecca	0.13
HammondsSpec.Inc, Hammond, J	147.43	Wells, Daniel	102.46
Harreld, Brittany	92.67	Weygandt, Dustin J	24.74
Harvey, Joseph	8.48	Wheeler, Kyle M & Alicia M	49.68
Helton, Gary L	41.53	White, Richard H	47.79
Herrell, Seth A	176.55	Wolfe, Thomas H & Kayla H	38.15
Hohimer, Rosemarie	0.84		

Prepare for winter savings...

Simple steps can cut your heating bill down to size

Most fireplaces are escape hatches for heat and a wide-open door for cold air in winter. The U.S. Department of Energy offers these tips for changing those dynamics:

- Keep your fireplace damper closed unless a fire is burning; keeping the damper open is like keeping a window wide open during the winter; it allows warm air to go right up the chimney

- When you use the fireplace, reduce heat loss by opening dampers in the bottom of the firebox (if provided) or open the nearest window slightly — approximately 1 inch — and close doors leading into the room; lower the thermostat setting to between 50 and 55 degrees

- If you never use the fireplace, plug and seal the chimney flue

- If you use the fireplace, install tempered glass doors and a heat-air exchange system that blows warmed air back into the room

- Check the seal on the fireplace flue damper, and make it as snug as possible

- Purchase grates made of C-shaped metal tubes to draw cool room air into the fireplace and circulate warm air back into the room

- Add caulking around the fireplace hearth

Where to look for household air leaks:

ENERGY STAR identifies these common sites for air leaks. Stop the leaks with insulation, weatherstripping, wraps or caulking.

- Behind kneewalls
- Attic hatch
- Wiring holes
- Plumbing vents
- Open soffit (the box that hides recessed lights)
- Recessed lights
- Furnace flue or duct chaseways (the hollow box or wall feature that hides ducts)
- Basement rim joists (where the foundation meets the wood framing)
- Windows and doors

Would your home pass an electrical inspection?

If you're getting ready to sell your home or just wondering how electrically sound it is, there are some general guidelines out there to assess the condition of your home's wiring and electrical bones. Although it varies depending on where you live, most local codes follow the National Electric Code (NEC).

The NEC is an industry-specific, jargon-filled document that outlines required practices for all aspects of residential and commercial electrical installation. Don't worry, you don't have to google it and read it from cover to cover, but know that your local code could vary. Local code always wins out when there are variances, so be sure to check with your qualified electrician or local building department (start with your city or town) for specific code requirements.

Electrical malfunction is dangerous. U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated average of 45,210 reported U.S. home structure fires involving electrical failure or malfunction per year from 2010 to 2014, according to the National Fire Protection Agency. The home fires resulted in 420 deaths, 1,370 injuries and an annual \$1.4 billion in direct property damage.

In general, here are some all-house guidelines that an inspector would look for; remember they may or may not align with your local electrical code but they are NEC-mandated.

If your home has any of the following defects, it may not pass an electrical safety inspection:

- Old knob-and-tube, along with BX cable wiring, common in the U.S. from about 1880 to 1930
- New lights and receptacles installed into old wiring
- Overcrowded wires; i.e. too many wires bundled together producing excess heat
- Spliced wires that were illegally installed (they must be installed by an approved method)
- Broken or missing carbon monoxide detectors or smoke alarms (whether smoke alarms must be hard wired depends on the age of the home and in most cases, whether any home improvement projects required a permit)
- Non-insulated/non-contact-rated recessed lights that touch attic insulation, which is a fire hazard
- Improper overcurrent protection, which means the breaker or fuse is too large for the wire rating
- Improper Grounding and Bonding of electrical panels and devices

Some other room-specific things to look for include:

Kitchen

- Does your electric range, cooktop or oven have a dedicated 240-volt circuit?
- Is the breaker for the range, cooktop or oven sized correctly?
- Does your island have its own outlet? (The NEC has outlet requirements for kitchen islands, peninsulas and countertops.)
- Does your microwave, refrigerator, microwave and garbage disposal each have its own circuit?

Bathroom

- Are outlets GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupters)? GFCIs are designed to protect people from electric shock around water.
- Do your combination fan/lights have their own 20-amp circuit?
- Do the light fixtures in the shower or tub area have a "lens" cover? Are they moisture resistant?

Other Rooms (living, dining, family, bedrooms)

- Does each room have a wall switch installed beside the entry door?
- Are outlets installed no farther than 12 feet apart?
- Are ceiling fixtures controlled by a wall switch and not just a pull chain?

There are also hallway, staircase and garage code requirements, as well as those for the electrical service panel and wiring. Check with your qualified electrician or the city or town where you live for specific code requirements in all areas of your home.

Arc-Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCI)

Many prominent electrical and homebuilding experts believe that using arc-fault circuit interrupters (AFCI) in these areas of homes has a significant impact on homeowner safety and that they reduce the number of lives lost in home electrical fires.

An AFCI is designed to detect series faults, line to neutral faults and line to ground faults, effectively stopping a fire before it starts.

For more about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Top 10 Home Electrical Safety Tips

- use a qualified electrician for repair work
- repair loose outlets; replace cracked, worn electric cords
- watch for hot or discolored switch plates, flickering lights, or buzzing sounds.
- get regular check-ups for older homes
- use bulbs with correct wattage for the fixtures
- if children are present install tamper resistant outlets to protect against shock
- unplug electrics if you smell something burning
- use extension cords temporarily, not as permanent wiring
- educate the household on electrical safety
- keep cords out of walkways and high traffic areas

Learn more about home electrical safety at SafeElectricity.org

FROM THE WCE BOARDROOM...

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held Aug. 27, 2020

A meeting of the board of directors of West Central Electric Cooperative was held at the offices of the Cooperative, in Higginsville, Missouri, at 10 a.m. on Thursday, Aug. 27, 2020, 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. Stan Rhodes, asst. secretary of the cooperative, caused the minutes of the meeting to be kept. The following directors were present: Densil Allen Jr., Max Swisegood, Clark Bredehoeft, Richard Strobel, Stan Rhodes, Sandra Streit, Dale Jarman and Jeremy Ahmann. Robert Simmons was absent. Also present were General Manager Mike Gray, CFO Michael Newland and general counsel Sheri Smiley.

RURAL UTILITIES SERVICE

Bryan Bacon of RUS gave the financial forecast presentation for the Cooperative. He discussed a potential loan of \$12 million dollars to the Cooperative and went through the assumptions that were done to service the debt. He also discussed equity, how this would impact operating margins, net margins and cash margins. He then left the meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

After discussion, upon motion made by Swisegood seconded by Strobel and passed, the amended agenda was approved.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The board approved its consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of July 23, 2020; expenditures for the month of July 2020; new membership applications and membership terminations.

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following July reports were approved:

Financing and Treasurer's Report: Newland presented the July 2020 Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement. He reviewed the Financial and Statistical Report and Treasurer's Report with monthly and annual budget comparisons. He also gave the investment report. He presented and reviewed statistical data pertaining to operating revenue, expenses, margins, assets, liabilities, cash flow management, and KWH sales and ratios. He reported on July 2020 financials from West Central Services and discussed the loan from RUS. A motion was made and seconded to approve the \$12 million dollar loan from RUS.

Review of Audit RFPs and Selection of Auditor: Newland presented four RFP's that had been received for audit services. After review of all of the audits the board approved staying with Kevin Kelso as the auditor.

Review and Approve Round Up Foundation Bylaw Change:

Tabled until next month.

Operations and Safety Report: Randy Burkeybile provided a written Operations and Safety Report. His report included the following: a crew update, outages on Aug. 10 and Aug. 15 from storms, and a report on fleet maintenance. He also reported on safety meetings, crew visits and safety audits of the trucks. Gray discussed the poten-



tial of sending crews to Louisiana for hurricane relief.

Engineering Report: Dan Disberger provided a written Engineering Report. He reported on the following: staking projects and gave a Right of Way report.

Member Services Report: Brent Schlotzhauer presented a written Member Services Report. He reported on Operation Round Up, gave an update on scholarships, discussed billing reports and gave net metering reports. He also gave an update on Energy in Today's Classroom.

NW REPORT

Swisegood presented the NW Report. Items of interest included: outages, margins, solar, and reliability. He discussed deferred revenue and the building facilities. No lost time accidents had been reported. He discussed a wage and salary study that had been completed and gave an update on AECI and their margins.

ANNUAL MEETING

Gray reported that 735 ballots had been returned by mail. The final count for directors was: 561 for Densil Allen, Jr., 543 for Robert Simmons, and 520 for Richard Strobel. The board will discuss if a reorganization meeting will be held at the next meeting.

NRECA ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

Ahmann, Bredehoeft, and Rhodes gave a report on the meeting that they had attended in the spring prior to COVID-19.

LEGAL REPORT

Smiley presented a report on legal matters.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray presented his monthly Manager's Report. He announced that the Wage and Salary Committee would meet Sept. 17.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive session was called at 11:55 a.m. and was dismissed at 12:12 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned.

FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • July 2020

	This month	YTD 2020	YTD 2019
Revenue	\$2,685,026	\$17,848,878	\$17,354,423
Power Bill Expense	1,550,230	10,144,464	10,443,944
Operation & Maint. Expense	523,059	4,112,143	4,568,473
Depreciation Expense	194,874	1,348,795	1,279,413
Interest Expense	117,686	833,292	828,842
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	2,385,849	16,438,694	17,120,672
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	299,177	1,410,184	233,751
Other Margins	7,990	88,966	163,707
TOTAL MARGINS	\$307,167	\$1,499,150	\$397,458

