



West Central Electric Cooperative

April 2020

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

ElectricNews

Changing Lives

Phase 2 of Guatemala project brings electricity and smiles to the lives of those in the village of Trapichitos. Pages 4-5

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Planting something this spring? Make sure you know how far to plant from power lines, and to call 811 before you dig.

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How much do you know about insulating your attic? Types, installation, R-values...there is lots to know and it's all here.

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An outage doesn't always mean your entire house is out. Get an inside look at what happens when a member reports half power.

SAFETY FIRST!

Extension cords are an inevitable part of spring landscaping and other outdoor projects. Be sure to inspect all cords before using them this season. Look for cracks and loose plugs. Also make sure the cord is rated for the tool you intend to use it with.



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*

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ON THE COVER: WCE lineman Matt Truax makes a bracelet out of a piece of rope for one of the Trapichitos, Guatemala children. Truax said the boy kept pointing to the bracelet he was wearing, so he made him one of his own. The team from Missouri was in the country working on a project to wire houses and bring electricity to the residents of the village.

Important notice regarding email contacts from West Central

Members who have an email address on file with the cooperative will, on occasion, receive notifications from WCE via that address.

Some of the notifications that may be received are listed as: "Bill Available," "Payment Declined," "Credit Card Expired" and "Payment Successful." The email notifications will be generated from the following address: "courier-no-reply@smarthub.com."

To receive these notifications, members will need to make sure they have allowed mail from this sender. The email WILL NOT have the name "West Central" in the address or the reference line.

Please contact WCE at 800-491-3803 or 816-565-4942 regarding questions about email contacts.



Planting this spring?

Plant the right tree in the right place

Trees beautify our neighborhoods, and when planted in the right spot, can even help lower energy bills. But the wrong tree in the wrong place can be a hazard--especially to power lines. Follow these guidelines when planting trees:

Large Trees: Trees with a height/spread of more than 40 feet should be planted at least 50 feet from power lines.

Examples are Maple, Oak, Spruce, Pine, Birch, Sweetgum, Linden

Medium Trees: Trees with a height/spread of 25-40 feet should be planted 20 to 50 feet from power lines. *Examples are Washington Hawthorn, Goldenrain tree, Eastern Redbud, American Arborvitae, Dogwood*

Small Trees: Trees with a height/spread of no more than 25 feet should be planted at least 20 feet from power lines. *Examples: Lilac, Star Magnolia, Crabapple*

Never plant anything within 20 feet of a power line, and remember to always call 811 before you dig to locate any buried power lines.



For smart tree-planting tips visit www.ArborDay.org

Insulating your attic

Why would you add insulation to an attic for warmth but also allow cold air in through vents? The U.S. Department of Energy points out that the combination is the key to a durable and energy-efficient house.

Ventilation in winter allows a natural flow of outdoor air to keep the attic cold, reducing the potential for ice damming. Insulation and air sealing also keep attics cold in winter by blocking heat leakage and moist air from conditioned rooms below.

In the summer, the reverse is true. Natural air flow in a well-vented attic moves super-heated air out of the attic, protecting roof shingles and removing moisture. The insulation will resist heat transfer into the house.

Once you know the R-value you'll need, decide on the type of insulation to use. Batts and rolls of fiberglass, mineral wool, plastic fibers or natural fibers are commonly used in attics to fit between studs, joists and beams. Loose fill and blown-in insulation of cellulose, fiberglass or mineral wool is good for unfinished attic floors and hard-to-reach places as is sprayed foam and foamed-in-place.

This link provides more detail about types of insulation for all areas of your house: www.energy.gov/energysaver/weatherize/insulation/types-insulation.

insulation/types-insulation.

If you plan to install the insulation yourself, fiberglass rolls are the easiest to work with.

DOE says to install the new layer of insulation over and perpendicular to the first (the second layer of roll insulation should be unfaced — with no vapor retarder). This will help cover the tops of the joists and reduce heat loss or gain through the frame.

Also, when laying down additional insulation, work from the perimeter toward the attic opening. Never lay insulation over recessed light fixtures or soffit vents. Keep all insulation at least 3 inches away from “can” lights, unless they are rated IC (Insulated Ceiling). If you are using loose fill insulation, use sheet metal to create barriers around the openings. If using fiberglass, wire mesh can be used to create a barrier.

For more guidance on do-it-yourself insulating, go to www.energystar.gov/sites/default/files/asset/document/DIY_Guide_2016.pdf.



West Central Electric Cooperative Round Up Foundation Board members present a check for \$1,000 to members of the Binding Hearts Quilt Ministries. (L-r) Round Up Board member Donna Matthews; Binding Hearts committee members and quilters Mary Butt, Alice Martin, Cindy Schwagerman, Emaline Schwagerman and Jan Owen; Round Up Board member Sally Davidson and Round Up Board President Dennis Knipmeyer.

Round Up Funds Awarded

BINDING HEARTS QUILT MINISTRIES

Binding Hearts Quilt Ministries of the Warrensburg Seventh Day Adventist Church recently received \$1,000 from the West Central Electric Cooperative Round Up Foundation to help purchase supplies to make quilts.

The group makes quilts to give to women who are passing through Survival House, fleeing from abusive situations, many times with only the clothes on their backs.

The West Central Electric Round Up Foundation was established in 2017. Members who choose not to opt out have their bill rounded up each month to the nearest dollar, with proceeds benefiting community projects. Applications are available at www.westcentralelectric.com along with a list of the program requirements.

Changing

Heading toward the southern tip of North America, Missouri linemen knew they were embarking on a journey to change lives. What they may not have quite expected, however, is that their lives would change also.

For West Central Electric lineman Matt Truax, it was what he hopes is just a beginning.

"It was rewarding to be in the inauguration and see the entire town get together to thank us, but being there for those two weeks really humbled me. It makes me even more proud to be an American and realize the freedom we have," he said. "It was an awesome experience and I would love to do it again."

A love of travel and a desire to experience the differences in cultures led Truax to apply for the opportunity to be a part of the Missouri Electric Cooperatives' international program's trip to Trapichitos, Guatemala. The group was Phase 2 of a project to wire houses and provide street lights to the village which had been serviced with electricity in January.

"We hung street lights and service drops to each house, installed their meter and completed the inside wiring. Each home got 4 lights, 2 light switches and 2 receptacles," he said, as the men watched a typical day unfold. "Every morning the women of the village took a pot of corn to the community grinder, which was very noisy! Throughout the day we were able to watch them make blankets and belts. The kids were getting to school as we were loading our trucks up for the day. A lot of the men helped us with our daily tasks, while others still had their own daily jobs to attend."

As is the norm on the international trips, the children of the village made quite an impression on the men, and they were fascinated by the men as well.

"Every evening, we played with the kids. They got out of school around noon and it seemed they waited on us to quit working so they could get some candy and play," he said. "There were several great kids but one teenage kid really stood out to me. Although we couldn't understand each other we figured out a way to communicate and he worked his tail off and tried so hard to get in the work and learn from us."

When the project wrapped up early, some of the men went to wire the churches in town, while others decided to build a swingset for the children.

"We loaded the lumber which some of the locals cut fresh from some trees. All the lumber and cuts were made using a chainsaw, very impressive," Truax said. "The idea came about because we were coming to an end with our work a couple days early and we needed something to keep us busy. So we put some money together to buy the lumber and thought a swing set would be a great addition for the kids."



Lives

"They were very happy and they played hard. I'm sure they would love to play video games if they had them but they knew how to have fun, it was very nice playing outside with them, anything and everything could entertain them," Truax said.

Trying to communicate with the locals sometimes proved difficult, even with translators, but they made it work.

"We tried talking with a few of the adults on our translator apps, but since some of the older the locals spoke their own native language that was different from Spanish, the app did not always work well," he said.

The most surprising fact?

"They slept on just wood. They had wood bed frames with no padding or anything. And the kitchens were just dirt floors with a wood burning stove, we actually got to see them smoking meat to preserve it. Essentially making jerky," he said.

One of the best memories?

"I watched the Chiefs win the super bowl and we were actually able to watch it in English!"



(Clockwise from top right) WCE Lineman Matt Truax works to wire a house in Trapichitos, Guatemala. The team and a small villager. Two young Trapichitos residents wait for the electricity to come to their house. After finishing the project ahead of schedule, the men gather leftover materials and construct a swingset for the village children. (Opposite page) Truax wiring an outdoor light fixture.





Rain...



Snow

Our linemen are always there

Join us in saluting the ones who answer the call any time, anywhere

Lineworker Appreciation Day • April 13, 2020



Day...



Night...



An 'outage' can also mean you are getting only partial power

Outages can be caused by a variety of issues from a storm to a wasp, but sometimes an issue arises that causes a member to experience partial power.

"In this case, a member had half power to a structure," WCE Serviceman Robert Minnis said. "When that call comes in, we check at the meter, check at the home, and then locate the fault."

After isolating the location of the bad wire and digging it up, the wire was found to be burned up.

"This can be caused by a variety of things from lightning to a nick in the wire's insulation from a rock rubbing against it due to freezing and thawing over time," Minnis said.

Sometimes a line will be hit when digging so it is always vital to contact Missouri One-Call at 811 for a locate before digging for any reason.

Top image shows the burned out wire after digging it up.

Middle image shows the wire after repair.

Bottom image shows a close-up of the burned up wire next to an undamaged wire. The white area in the top wire is corrosion of the aluminum conductor.



FROM THE WCE BOARDROOM...

Regular meeting of the Board of Directors held Jan. 28, 2020

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: Densil Allen Jr., Max Swisegood, Clark Bredehoeft, Richard Strobel, Stan Rhodes, Sandra Streit, Dale Jarman Robert Simmons and Jeremy Ahmann. Also present were General Manager Mike Gray, Manager of Accounting Michael Newland and general counsel Shawn Battagler.

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 December 2019; expenditures for the month of December 2019; new membership applications and membership terminations.

APPROVAL OF REPORTS

The following December 2019 reports were approved:

Financing and Treasurer's Report: Michael Newland presented the December 2019 Operating Report (RUS Form 7) and Comparative Operating Statement. He reviewed the Financial and Statistical Report with monthly and annual budget comparisons. He reviewed the kilowatt hours sold. 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 year-end financials from West Central Services.

2020 Budget: Newland and Gray reviewed three options for the 2020 Budget and recommendations from management and staff. The board resolved to adopt 2020 Budget Option 1, as presented.

Scholarship Funds: Newland presented a proposal to change the way scholarship funds are managed.

Operations and Safety Report, Engineering Report and Member Services Report: The board received and accepted written reports.

NW REPORT

Swisegood and Gray reported on the January NW meeting. They reported on windfarms, solar, margins, outages, gave an AECl and a Touchstone Energy update, and noted the passing of Dianne Arthur. They also reported on the upcoming February meeting in Jefferson City.



ROUND UP FOUNDATION REPORT & APPROVAL OF NEW MEMBERS

Streit presented the Round Up Foundation Report. She reported on board vacancies. Vivian Bumgarner, Steve Kropp, and Devin Graf were approved as new members. Streit also reported on a donation made by the foundation.

FEBRUARY MEETING DATE

The February 2020 meeting date was changed to Feb. 25.

DONATION TO AMECPAC

The board approved a donation in the amount of \$500 to AMECPAC.

LEGAL REPORT

Battagler presented a report on legal matters. Items of interest included: FMCSA clearing house; 2020 Census issues; OSHA safety incentive programs; and Visa/MasterCard class action.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Gray presented his monthly Manager's Report. Items of interest included: medical marijuana grow facilities applications; NW legislative dinner; discussions regarding potential new loads; and retreat discussions.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Gray discussed some right-of-way issues. The Board gave guidance to management on handling the issues.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No executive session was called.

MEETING ADJOURNED

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

FINANCIAL REPORT • Statement of Operations • December 2019

	This month	YTD 2019	YTD 2018
Revenue	\$2,685,976	\$29,469,891	\$29,037,976
Power Bill Expense	1,383,877	17,303,873	17,721,935
Operation & Maint. Expense	495,983	7,187,015	6,665,149
Depreciation Expense	190,453	2,222,386	2,135,565
Interest Expense	127,299	1,422,972	1,650,097
Total cost of Srvc. (Total Expense)	2,197,612	28,136,246	28,172,746
Operating Margins (Revenue less Expenses)	488,364	1,333,645	865,230
Other Margins	1,215,452	1,468,221	1,234,015
TOTAL MARGINS	\$1,703,816	\$2,801,866	\$2,099,245

