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Western Welcomes New Employees

Western Cooperative Electric would like to introduce nine new employees hired since August 2006: Stacey Malsam, Shelli Nowlin, Johnny Howard, Bobby Zeman, Terry Kuhn, Reg Flagler, Gene Hedding, Mark Ziembra, and Dustin Wacker.



Dustin Wacker

Dustin Wacker is employed at the Ellsworth warehouse as an apprentice lineman. With previous lineman experience and graduating from Pratt Community Area Vocational School under the Lineman Training Program, responsibilities of being a lineman is nothing new for Wacker.

In his spare time, Wacker enjoys hunting, fishing, and being a volunteer rural fireman.

Gene Hedding is employed at the Plainville warehouse as an apprentice lineman.



Gene Hedding

Even though his secondary education involved vocational training for plumbing, heating, and cooling, Hedding

decided to challenge himself in becoming a lineman.

“Some of my spare time is enjoyed by being a city and rural fireman,” Hedding said, “which includes attending meetings, training, and certification.”



Mark Ziembra

Mark Ziembra is employed at the Olmitz warehouse as a journeyman lineman.

He graduated from Northeast Community College Lineman’s School in Norfolk, NE, with an Associates Degree of Applied Science in the Utility Line Program. Besides being a Cornhusker fan, Ziembra enjoys the outdoors with bow hunting and fishing.

Johnny Howard is employed at the WaKeeney warehouse as an apprentice lineman.



Johnny Howard

Howard enjoys the outdoors not only by living in the rural area, but he also owns livestock. He still finds time for hunting and fishing, along with the duties of

being a Dad.



Bobby Zeman

Bobby Zeman is employed also at the WaKeeney warehouse as an apprentice lineman.

After high school, Zeman attended the Hays Vocational Technical School and studied auto mechanics.

Participating in go-kart racing and driving a four-wheeler brings a smile to his face. Zeman also mentioned that he enjoys the challenging sport of “coyote hunting”.

Shelli Nowlin is employed at the WaKeeney office, and is responsible for customer services and daily clerical duties.



Shelli Nowlin

After serving in the Army Reserves, Nowlin was introduced to the electric utility world long before her employment with Western, as her husband, Bill, is a journeyman lineman for Midwest Energy. Family and church are high on the list of her hobbies.

Stacey Malsam, Manager of



Stacey Malsam

Accounting and Finance, graduated from Kansas State University with a Masters Degree in Accounting and is a Certified Public Accountant.

She has two young children and says that her hobbies include quiet time with a good book.

Malsam is enjoying her time at Western saying, "I have grown to appreciate working with the cooperative family."

Terry Kuhn, material and work order clerk, works from the WaKeeney warehouse.



Terry Kuhn

Kuhn's hobbies include golfing and fishing, but coaching is usually toward the top. He enjoys coaching anything from feder-

ated wrestling to summer ball. Kuhn also allows time in his busy schedule to be a volunteer fire fighter.



Reg Flagler

Reg Flagler, material and work order clerk, also works from the WaKeeney warehouse.

Even though Flagler and his wife have an "empty nest" right now, they are parents of five children, he still lists the kids as a big part of how he enjoys his spare time.

Along with spending time outdoors Flagler said he likes to slip in an occasional fishing trip.

The last year was very active and filled with challenges, storms, and an expanded territory acquisition. "All of these challenges could not have been met without these new employees and our devoted, committed, tenured employees," said Dave Schneider, General Manager.

Energy Efficiency: Up on the Roof

Roofs are perhaps the most important component of an energy-efficient building. Unfortunately, compared to items like doors, windows, and lighting, roofs are generally much less durable and much less energy efficient.

Energy-efficient roof technologies are fairly straightforward. Manufacturers have developed lighter-colored shingles and tiles, usually containing a coating of titanium dioxide, since they absorb less heat than a typical asphalt shingle and can last twice as long. Since lighter surfaces are easily discolored by fungus, a fungicide coating normally gets added.

Many of the new roof coatings are even self-cleaning to retain reflectivity properties and reduce air conditioning requirements. Lighter-colored roofs may be slightly more expensive. However, the small cost difference – \$25 for a 1,000-square-foot roof – will easily pay for itself in one summer.

Roof overhangs are another way to trim summer cooling bills. For many homes and businesses in warmer climates, overhangs reduce solar heat gain and interior temperatures. They can also be designed to let direct sunlight into a living space during winter, but keep things shaded in summer.

Service Awards

Each year Western recognizes employee anniversaries and their dedication to Western.

In December 2007, the following employees were honored for their tenure at Western:

Gary Benisch,
Crew Foreman, 30 years

Donna Mong,
Custodian, 10 years

Kurtis Brock,
Journeyman Lineman, 10 years

These individuals were recognized for their tenure not only to Western but as employees within the electric utility industry:

Jon Mehler,
Journeyman Lineman, 35 years

Mike Rust,
Journeyman Lineman, 35 years

Tyler Renard,
Journeyman Lineman, 5 years

Western acknowledges the hard work of all of our employees without their hard work and dedication the cooperative would not be what it is today.

Time Change

Don't forget to change your clocks on March 9th - **spring** ahead one hour. This is also a great time to change the batteries in your smoke alarms and check your fire extinguishers.

**Have a Happy
St. Patrick's Day!
Monday, March 17**