


Western Cooperative Electric NEWS



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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Owned by Our Members, Committed to Our Communities

October is National Cooperative Month and as Western Cooperative Electric and thousands of cooperatives across the nation celebrate this special event, let us recognize the contributions electric cooperatives give to our local economics.

Electric cooperatives are an integral part of the \$325 billion U.S. electric utility industry. They play a critical role in our nation's economy and in local communities. Electric cooperatives are:

- Private independent electric utility businesses,
- Owned by the consumers they serve,
- Incorporated under the laws

of the states in which they operate,

- Established to provide at-cost electric service,
- Governed by a board of directors elected from the membership, which sets policies and procedures that are implemented by the cooperatives' professional staff.

Western Cooperative Electric has a nine-member Board of Trustees elected from the membership.

As a distribution cooperative, we deliver electricity to our members. In addition to electric service, many electric cooperatives are involved in community devel-

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Cooperative Facts at a Glance

- There are 864 distribution and 66 generation and transmission cooperatives that serve over 40 million people in 47 states. Western serves 11,370 consumers.
- To perform our mission, electric cooperatives own and maintain 2.5 million miles, or 42 percent, of the nation's electric distribution lines, covering three quarters of the nation's landmass. Locally, Western owns and maintains 3,883 miles of electrical lines.
- Cooperatives employ 67,000 people in the United States, including Western's 52 employees.
- Nationwide, cooperatives retire more than \$500 million in capital credits annually. Since it was founded, Western has refunded \$12.7 million in capital credits to you, our members.



Economic Impact.

From Main Street storefronts to Fortune 500 companies, cooperative business creates jobs and economic growth.
We generate over \$273 billion in revenues annually.
We employ more than half a million Americans.
Our payrolls top \$15.5 billion a year.



Cooperatives.

Owned by Our Members,
Committed to Our Communities.

Western Sends Line Crews for Hurricane Recovery

Western Co-operative Electric linemen joined more than 60 volunteer linemen and dozens of trucks from 13 Kansas electric cooperatives to assist in recovery efforts from Hurricane Gustav in Louisiana.



Crews from 13 Kansas electric cooperatives gathered September 5 in Cherokee, KS, prior to heading to Louisiana to assist in recovery efforts from Hurricane Gustav.

The Kansas crews assisted Dixie Electric Membership Corp. (DEMCO), headquartered in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. This electric cooperative estimated they had thousands of electric poles damaged or destroyed by the hurricane.

“Hurricane Gustav was more devastating to Louisiana’s electric co-ops than Katrina or Rita, primarily because DEMCO, our largest co-op at roughly 100,000 meters serving a seven-parish territory near the Greater Baton Rouge area, reported 100 percent outages with extensive damage to trees, homes and businesses,” said Billy Gibson, director of communications for Louisiana Electric Cooperatives.

“Our crews had to clear fallen trees and other debris so that power lines could be restrung,” said Dave Schneider, Western’s Manager. “Their biggest challenge was working around all of the debris in unfamiliar territory.”

“The linemen faced working conditions that include standing water and mountains of debris,” said Schneider.

The line crews brought their

cots and sleeping bags, and took down their own supplies of water and other essentials. This lesson was well learned, by the linemen who gained experience in this type of recovery effort following Hurricane Katrina.

The Kansas Electric crews returned home on September 17. After helping, DEMCO recover from the hurricane damage.

Electric cooperatives have always offered assistance to neighboring systems and to other states in times of crisis. In addition to sending volunteer crews, Kansas electric cooperatives are also collecting donations to help the hurricane victims.

“The dedication of these linemen is tremendous,” Schneider said. “A lot of these linemen have just come through two of the most devastating ice storms in Kansas cooperative history. Many of these linemen are still working on restoring and rebuilding their own power lines, but they are willing to travel and help with the monumental task of restoring entire power systems that were downed by Hurricane Gustav.”

Owned by Our Members, continued

opment and revitalization projects, e.g., small business development and jobs creation, improvement of water and sewer systems, and assistance in delivery of health care and educational services.

Western assists in purchasing new fire trucks, and hospital renovation; has a revolving loan fund available to stimulate private investments and complement local lenders for the creation of jobs; supports area high schools with student activities and promoting electric car programs; and awards educational trips to Colorado and Washington, D.C., in addition to cash scholarships to area high school juniors.

Western Cooperative Electric’s commitment to the communities in which we live and serve is twofold; through the cooperative and also at the individual employee level.

Western Cooperative Electric can make a difference not only through its commitment to community but also its commitment to YOU the member.

7 Cooperative Principles

1. Voluntary and Open Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Members’ Economic Participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training and Information
6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives
7. Concern For Community