

**WESTERN
COOPERATIVE
ELECTRIC**

WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC NEWS

Local Students Attend Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp

“The Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp was a trip I will never forget,” 2009 camper, Colton McNinch, Arnold, said. “I have learned so much and met so many amazing people.”

McNinch along with Dal Schultz, Grainfield, were two of five winners of the 2009 Western Cooperative Electric Youth Contest.

Colton and Dal chose to attend the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp held July 11-17, 2009, at the Glen Eden Resort in Steamboat Springs, CO.

They joined 27 other Kansas participants and more than 70 high school students from Colorado, Oklahoma, and Wyoming at the Cooperative Leadership Youth Camp.



Colton McNinch (left) and Dal Schultz enjoy the view on top of Mt. Werner in Steamboat Springs.

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Colton McNinch (left) and Dal Schultz (far right) along with other participants take a moment to pose in Dillon, CO.



Colton creates “power lines” from craft supplies during the build a transmission line competition.

Cold Weather Rule



Members who are unable to pay their electric service bills during the winter months may qualify for the Cold Weather Rule.

Western Cooperative Electric members who are unable to pay their electric service bills during the period from November 1 to March 31 can avoid being disconnected by fulfilling certain good faith requirements. Those requirements are summarized below:

- 1 Member must notify the cooperative and state their inability to pay their bill in full.
- 2 Members must apply to federal, state, local or other financial assistance programs for which they may be eligible to receive aid in paying utility bills.
- 3 Members and the cooperative will reach a mutually agreeable payment arrangement.

It will be the responsibility of the cooperative during the cold weather period to send one written notice to the member and attempt to phone at least two days prior to the collection disconnection trip.

If no response is made to the notice, or if we are unable to make telephone contact, the trip for collection and/or disconnect will be made.

The cold weather rule is to ensure that human health and safety are not unreasonably endangered during the cold weather months.

For more information concerning assistance with your bill, please contact Western Cooperative Electric at 743-5561 or 800-456-6720.

Local Students Attend Camp

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The 2009 campers build a human pyramid on top of Mt. Werner.

We would like to thank Western Cooperative Electric for making this experience possible.

Dal Schultz and Colton McNinch

During their weeklong stay in Colorado, the youth created their own candy cooperative, attended sessions featuring energy and legislative simulations, and visited Craig Station, one of the largest electric generating plants in the Midwest.

“The fact that I now know how coal is mined and electricity is made makes me think when I flip the switch,” Dal said. “After learning what I did, I would definitely recommend this camp to anyone. I am so glad that Western Cooperative Electric made this experience possible.”

The Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp winners were selected from a group of local high school



Dal attempts to “lift” a large front-end loader at Trapper Coal Mine.

applicants. The participants were asked to complete an application, write a short essay, take a quiz about cooperatives, and interview with a panel of judges. The winners were determined by earning the highest cumulative score.

“We are pleased that Colton and Dal represented Western,” said General Manager, David Schneider. “All of the applicants were outstanding, and we are proud to have sponsored these two students at the leadership camp.”

Portable Generator Planning and Preparation

If you have a standby power generator that you plan to use in case the power goes out, it's important to frequently check that your generator is running properly and ready for emergencies.

Your check of the equipment should include the actual connection and running of your generator to assure it is in proper working order. This test will also familiarize you with the proper operation under non emergency conditions.

Standby generators must have a double-throw switch. The safe and proper connection of your generator requires a transfer switch to completely disconnect the generator from Western's electric system. This switch prevents the flow of current into Western's lines, which could electrocute line workers who are working to restore power or could present a hazard to people or livestock near downed power lines.

The switch also protects the generator from potential damage when regular electric service is restored. The transfer switch is typically owned by the consumer and must be installed by a licensed electrician.

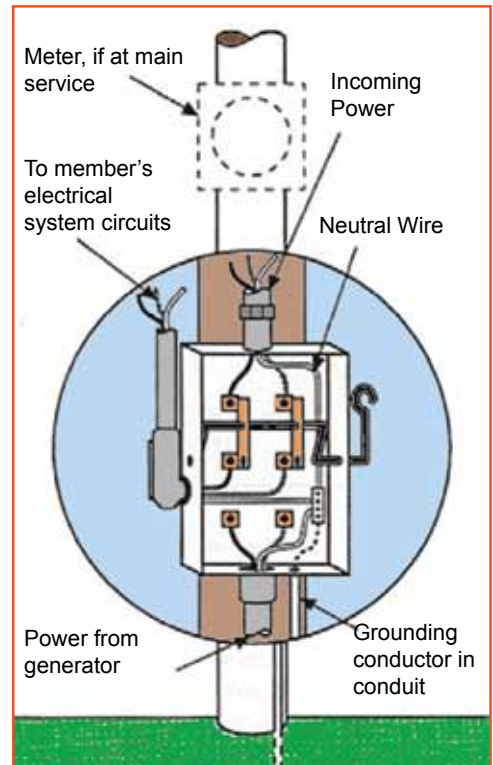
Before transferring the electric load, the generator must be brought up to speed. Once up to speed and generating the right voltage, the load can be switched to the generator. During this test, run your generator under

load for an hour. This polishes any brush connections in the generator, plus it will dry out any moisture that has accumulated since you last used the unit.

Establish a periodic starting schedule to exercise the generator. Some manufacturers suggest operating a tractor-driven generator at least one hour every three months. Engine-driven units should be operated more frequently to check battery charge levels and other starting components.

Also, use the generator every so often with a typical electric load to ensure that it can carry the load. Over the years, you may have added electric loads that weren't taken into consideration when you bought the generator. Remember, your standby generator is like an insurance policy. It isn't much good if it's not kept up-to-date.

If you need assistance determining which generator will fit your home, farm or ranch needs, contact Western Cooperative Electric at 785-743-5561 or 800-456-6720.



The diagram above explains how a double-throw switch prevents backfeed onto Western's lines.

Does this Sound Familiar?

"My farm's welder outlet is a handy place to connect my generator to my electric system. All I have to do is flip the main switch."

Does this statement sound familiar? You may have heard—or made—a similar statement in the past.

Western Cooperative Electric wants you to know that **plugging a generator directly into a home or farm's electrical system is both unsafe and illegal**. You run the risk of killing or seriously injuring line workers working to restore your power because your generator may back feed into Western's system—and you will also likely destroy your generator.

Electric wiring code requires that a double-pole, double-throw switch must be installed by a licensed electrician to prevent back feeding. If you have any questions please call our office at 785-743-5561 or 800-456-6720.

Take it Slow on Changing Energy Policies

BY DOUG RYE

I have been writing this column for six years. I must tell you that I love to do it. Based on the hundreds of calls that I receive from you folks about the column, it appears that we are helping you.

I love it when you call and tell me that the information has helped make your energy situation better. I really love it when you tell me to keep up the good work and how important that it is to have someone who really cares about the average Joe. Let me remind you that this is made possible by your electric co-op, which also cares about you. Please don't hesitate to tell them and say thank you.



I have decided not to give you an energy tip in this column. Instead, I would rather share with you a great concern that I have about some issues that could affect every one of us.

We live in a great country that seems to be changing at an extremely rapid pace. As I have written before, while we many all be reluctant to change, change is often good. However, changes that result from actions that are not well thought out can be disastrous. The leaders of our nation are now considering several proposals related to the generation of electricity. These proposals are related to renewable energy, carbon emissions, and climate change. Some of the proposals call for placing caps on emissions of carbon dioxide from power plants (and other industries, as well as cars, trucks, etc.) and charging utilities to pay at an auction for the right (allowances) to emit CO₂.

This system will no doubt raise electricity rates for Americans, perhaps significantly, at a time when the nation is in the midst of the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression.

Other proposals would require utilities to

generate a certain amount of electricity from renewable energy. While I support using renewable energy whenever possible, it isn't wise to set unrealistic targets for the use of such energy. Doing so will only raise electricity costs and could even threaten the reliability of the electric grid.

Simply stated, these are very serious proposals and must be thoroughly considered. I think that rapid decisions on these issues could lead to a gigantic new tax or taxes on the average Joe.

Folks, I am not a politician nor am I an expert on climate change. I am an energy efficiency consultant. But I know that this is a very serious matter. I think we must let our voices be heard.

If you have a computer and Internet access, please visit the "Our Energy, Our Future" Web site sponsored by the nation's electric coop-

eratives at www.ourenergy.coop. You can communicate with your congressional delegation through this site

about the critical energy issues now under consideration.

If you don't have access to a computer, please write your representatives and senators and ask them to listen to the electric cooperatives as they consider the major energy policies before them. The cooperatives are acting on behalf of their members with regard to these issues, as they always, do.

The cooperatives mission, as it has been for more than 70 years, is to provide affordable and reliable electricity to their members. They now need you to help them continue their mission.

Doug Rye, is a licensed architect and the popular host of the "Home Remedies" radio show. You can contact Doug at 1-888-Doug-Rye. Source: Arkansas Electric Cooperatives Corporation.

“Rapid decisions on these issues could lead to a gigantic new tax or taxes on the average Joe.”



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