

**WESTERN  
COOPERATIVE  
ELECTRIC**

## WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC **NEWS**

### Western's Payment Options



Western's members can now make payments through our Web site or by phone using a credit card or electronic funds transfer.

To pay by phone, call our automated service at 800-330-1025, or call our main office to speak with a Western employee.

Through our Web site, you can also view your account, or enter your meter reading. You will have to set up a login and password the first time you do the online services. You will be prompted to enter your base account number and meter number.

All of these services are available at our Web site [www.westerncoop.com](http://www.westerncoop.com).

## Rust Celebrates 38 years as a Electric Lineman

"After coming home from the military, I decided to pursue the lineman profession," said **MIKE RUST**, journeyman lineman for Western Cooperative Electric.

On February 21, 2010, 38 years later after his first day on the job, Rust was still pleased with his career choice as an electric utility lineman.

While in the Army, Rust received schooling for radio operations and maintenance. "The knowledge I gained during that time helped me decide on my career," Rust said.

On February 21, 1972, Rust became an apprentice lineman in the Phillipsburg region for the electric utility in that area. During that time, the utility was rebuilding lines in area communities, so he would be away from home during construction time. Rust was reassigned to the Logan community in 1982 and was the only lineman for a number of small communities in the region.

"My assignment list was long," said Rust after a little chuckle. "I did everything from collections, to maintenance, to outages, but, if I needed help, there was always someone available to assist me."



**Mike Rust, journeyman lineman, celebrates 38-years as a electric utility lineman.**

In 1996, Rust received a new assignment to the Ellsworth community and became an employee of Western in April 2007.

When asked about a notable item during his 38 year career, Rust was quick to respond, "The bucket truck. We accomplish much more in a safer work environment."

Like Rust, most linemen site ice storms as their least favorite linemen duty. "Yes, storms can be destructive, and no one wants them to happen, but if they do

occur, it is gratifying to me that I can be a part of the restoration and rebuilding if necessary," he said.

Even though Rust categorizes part of his responsibilities as a lineman with Western as doing "service work", it is apparent that he involves himself in community "service work" also. Some of those after hour duties include rural fire volunteer, VFW member, and church elder.

Rust's nearly four decades of experience "on the lines" has been a great asset to Western. We appreciate his hard work and dedication to his profession.

### February ACH Drawing Winner

**JIMMIE R. BUNKER** of Dorrance won a \$50 credit on his electric bill in February. Jimmie signed up to make payment by automatic bank draft, which made him eligible for the drawing held February 10. Congratulations!

## How Much is Too Much?

You've had your fridge forever. With the exception of some crumbling parts of the seal, it's in pretty good shape and keeps your food cool. Why worry about budgeting for an upgrade?

Some homeowners forget the impact inefficient appliances have on a home's monthly power bill. Replacing a refrigerator made before 1993 with a new, Energy Star-rated model could reduce your electric bill \$65-\$100 each year. This leaves consumers with a question when evaluating older appliances; how much energy use is too much? To estimate the energy use of an appliance, use this formula:

Wattage x Hours used per day x Days used per year ÷ 1,000=kilowatt-hours (kWh) used annually.

You can usually find the wattage of most appliances stamped on the bottom or back of the appliance, or on its nameplate. The wattage listed is the maximum power drawn by the appliance. Since some appliances have a range of settings (i.e. hairdryers), the actual amount of power consumed depends on the setting used at any one time.

Here are examples of the range of wattages for common household appliances:

- ▶ Clothes washer: 350-500 Watts
- ▶ Clothes dryer: 1800-5000 Watts
- ▶ Dishwasher: 1200-1875 Watts

- ▶ Hair dryer: 1200-1875 Watts
- ▶ Microwave oven: 750-1100 Watts
- ▶ Refrigerator (frost-free, 16 cubic ft): 725 Watts

Once you calculate how much money you spend to run aging home appliances, compare this to what it would cost to use more efficient models. With federal incentives bringing down the price of an Energy Star-rated refrigerator or clothes washer, the annual energy savings could be worth an up-front investment. There are other benefits too.

For example, not only have clothes washers become 64 percent more energy efficient since 2000—the tub size increased by nine percent. With a new model you can wash more clothes for less money every month!

To help in calculating individual appliance usage or learn more about a series of customized energy efficiency tools go to Western's Web site at [www.westerncoop.com](http://www.westerncoop.com) and click on the light bulb and try the energy calculators. These calculators provide energy costs for nearly 50 appliances, electronic devices and lighting options; everything from compact fluorescent light bulbs and whirlpool tubs to big screen plasma TVs. By making wise decisions about your energy use, you can help determine how much is too much.

## Western Recognizes Employees for Years of Service

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

In December 2009, the following employees were honored for their tenure at Western:

- ▶ Richard Schaus, Board Trustee, 35 years
- ▶ Darryl Steckline, Line Superintendent, 30 years
- ▶ Dennis Deines, Member Services, 25 years

- ▶ Kelly Owens, Crew Foreman, 25 years
- ▶ Brady Bittel, Journeyman Lineman, 15 years
- ▶ Jake Wellbrock, Journeyman Lineman, five years

The following individual was recognized for their tenure not only to Western, but as employee within the electric utility industry:

- ▶ Kellye Irvin, Journeyman Lineman, 25 years



## Fridge Facts

**1** The average refrigerator sold today uses less energy than a 60-watt lightbulb left on for 24 hours a day.

**2** Every year refrigerator efficiency improves. An average 2008 fridge consumes 3 percent less energy than one made in 2007.

**3** 44 percent of fridges that could be retired or recycled are used as second fridges, sold, or given away.

**4** 26 percent of all U.S. households maintain a second refrigerator.

**5** Only three out of every 10 refrigerators sold are Energy Star-qualified.

**6** 27 million inefficient fridge models made before 1993 are still in American homes.

Source: Energy Star, Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers.  
Image: GE Consumer Products