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**WESTERN  
COOPERATIVE  
ELECTRIC**

WESTERN

# NEWS

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## Paul Brull Represents Kansas

**PAUL BRULL**, Plainville, senior at TMP-Marian High School, has been elected to represent Kansas on behalf of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Youth Leadership Council. Brull's selection was completed prior to attending the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., this summer, sponsored by Western Cooperative Electric.

"Before this trip, I didn't realize the capacity I had to speak out and change the world," Brull said. "This tour touched me in an incredible way in that I returned with both a voice and a purpose."

Along with being the 2018 Kansas representative comes responsibilities, which have included a return trip to Arlington, Virginia, for a meeting with 43 fellow state council representatives. Paul recently spoke at the Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. summer meeting in Overland Park. He will also represent Kansas in March 2019 at the 2019 NRECA Annual Meeting in Orlando, Florida. There he will work at NRECA's Congressional Action Center encourag-



Paul Brull, shown here at Mt. Vernon, has been elected to represent Kansas on behalf of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Youth Leadership Council.

ing attendees to contact their representatives about cooperative issues. He will also have educational forum opportunities and be recognized in front of thousands of electric cooperative representatives from around the country.

Brull's selection as one of five winners of the annual Western Cooperative Electric Youth contest precipitated his election to the Youth Leadership Council. For more information about the youth programs, call 785-743-5561 or visit [www.westerncoop.com](http://www.westerncoop.com).

## Energy Efficiency TIP OF THE MONTH

Turn off kitchen, bath and other exhaust fans within 20 minutes after you're finished cooking or bathing. When replacing exhaust fans, consider installing high-efficiency, low-noise models. **SOURCE: ENERGY.GOV**



## COOPERATIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP

## Local Youth Attend Leadership Camp in Colorado

**LANE FISCHER** and **ZACH GILLESPIE** were selected to attend the 42nd annual Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp (CYLC) near Steamboat Springs, Colorado, from July 13-19. Joining their peers from Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming, approximately 100 youth learned about the cooperative principles at the week-long educational retreat.

Fischer and Gillespie were selected from a group of high school applicants during their junior year. To win this trip, students were asked to write a one-page essay, take a quiz and appear before a group of judges for an interview.

“Western Cooperative Electric is proud to be a sponsor of the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp and send our local youth to develop essential leadership and teamwork skills,” said Tom Ruth, general manager. “Through this trip we hope local students will learn how our electric cooperatives work and how cooperatives and their employees support the communities they serve.”

Prior to arriving at Glen Eden Resort, the bus stopped in Denver for an overnight stay, and the group was treated to an indoor skydiving experience at the Denver iFLY.

After arriving at camp in the Rocky Mountains, the campers immediately began daily membership meetings where a general manager, board of directors and committees were selected. The week-long experience also gave participants an authentic camp feel with river rafting, volleyball tournament, swimming, a dance and a talent show.



Lane Fischer (left) and Zach Gillespie enjoy the view of Elk River during the 42nd annual Cooperative Leadership Camp.

Several demonstrations and presentations enhanced students' knowledge on the cooperative model and on operations at their electric cooperative. Campers competed to build a model transmission line out of craft supplies, toured Trapper Mine, Craig Power Plant and experienced a high-voltage safety demonstration. “I now understand the dangers and hard work that go into the electric utility industry,” said Fischer. The campers also raised money to purchase water filters that will be distributed to the villagers living in remote Pie del Cerro and Tierra Balanca Salinas in Guatemala. Fifteen lineworkers from Colorado and Oklahoma will be leaving for these villages on Sept. 17 to bring electricity, and clean water, to the area.

Each year, Western Cooperative Electric sponsors two students to attend CYLC as a strong commitment to our community and our mission to inspire future generations to become leaders. “I

learned the traits of being a good leader along with being myself,” said Gillespie.

For more information about the program, call 785-743-5561 or 800-456-6720 or visit [www.westerncoop.com](http://www.westerncoop.com).

**I learned the traits of being a good leader along with being myself.**

**ZACH GILLESPIE**



Nearly 100 campers from Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and Wyoming attended the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

# Some Reasons Behind a High Electric Bill

When sorting through mail, receiving bills is certainly on the least favorite list including your electric bill from Western. It could even be a daunting task to maintain a budget when you're not sure how much your electric bill could cost each month. While usually easy to blame Western for a high bill, it is more likely a result of usage and decision-making. To begin conserving energy and saving money, let's identify some possibilities of high household power usage and suggestions for lowering your rate of use.

## Modern technology appliances

One of the many reasons your electric bill may be high is that appliances or electronics are left plugged in whether you are using them or not, even when you are gone. While that might not have been such a problem in the past, today's appliances and gadgets use electricity when turned off. This is mostly because modern technology never really powers down. When you press the "power" button on your DVR, computer or television, it transitions to a standby mode so it can be turned back on faster, either for continued use or to carry out a scheduled task like recording a TV show. The challenge is these devices are sitting idle, using electricity, while waiting for a command from you or waiting for a scheduled task to run. Anything with an internal clock, such as microwave ovens and coffee makers—and even older technologies, like VCRs—need power to keep time while turned off.

Consideration: You can start saving energy by connecting devices to power strips and turning off the power strips when you are not using them. Keep in mind that "off" means the appliances have been disconnected and any internal programming could be jeopardized.

## Energy Hog Appliances

Big appliances, like dishwashers, clothes washers and clothes dryers, have insatiable appetites for electricity and using them too often can drive your electric bill higher. In fact, the average family does almost 400 loads of laundry a year and uses almost 40 gallons of water for a full load. However many of those "loads" may not actually be using the appliance to its fullest capacity.

Consideration: Make sure you fill the dishwasher to capacity before you run it, choose an appropriate wash cycle and change the drying setting to use no or low heat. When using clothes washers and dryers, try having only one laundry day each week, fill loads to capacity and select low heat for drying.



## Lights and Ceiling Fans

When choosing lighting, consider providing light to specific areas of a room instead of trying to illuminate a larger space. Specific areas include couches, chairs, kitchen tables and workspaces. Full room ceiling lights are much less effective than individual lamps in providing the light needed. Leaving lights on when no one is using them also adds to your bill.

Ceiling fans only affect the temperature of the room in which they are installed, so if unoccupied why leave the fan on? Also, ceiling fans have a directional switch to operate the blades at optimal efficiency based on the season.

Consideration: Use lighting only for specific areas that are occupied and make sure to turn off lights when areas are unoccupied. Change out light bulbs to energy-efficient LED bulbs. Operate ceiling fans when rooms

are occupied and set blades to run counter-clockwise during summer months and clockwise during winter season.

## Using Aged Appliances

Using old appliances can also contribute to a high electric bill. If your current dishwasher, washing machine and dryer were built in the 1990s or before, they are probably using more energy than current energy-efficient models.

Consideration: Upgrade appliances with new energy-efficient models. A new energy-efficient refrigerator, for example, uses about four times less electricity than an older model.

## Charging Devices

How many devices in your home require chargers? Cell phones, iPads and tablets, electric razors, electric toothbrushes, laptops and portable game systems—all these charging systems while plugged in, even though not actually charging a device, consume electricity.

Consideration: Unplug AC adapters and chargers from sockets when not actively charging a device. Changing your household energy consumption in small increments can add up to some substantial savings with your next electric bill.

# Safety Tips for Using Equipment Near Electrical Lines

Maintaining a safe distance from electrical equipment is important because accidents with electrical equipment are both dangerous and costly. Additional precautions need to be taken when using large equipment near electrical lines and equipment. Not doing so puts the operator at risk as well as the safety of those nearby.

Before beginning work, conduct a site survey, note the locations of overhead power lines, and take measures to prevent electrical accidents. Never attempt to move or raise a power line yourself. If any potential clearance issues are identified, contact Western Cooperative Electric.

When operating equipment, maintain situational awareness and keep yourself and the equipment safely away from overhead lines. Know the clearance rules for the machinery you are operating. Equipment like dump trucks, backhoes and loaders require a minimum 10-foot clearance from overhead lines. Cranes and derricks need to maintain an even greater distance for safe operation.

The Occupational Safety and Health

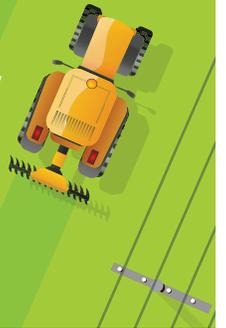
Administration requires the clearance for cranes and derricks be a minimum of 20 feet from overhead power lines. The equipment's maximum working radius, 360 degrees around the equipment, must also be considered. A dedicated spotter is very helpful when working near overhead lines to help the operator maintain the required clearance.

Even if contact is not made with electrical lines, but a collision occurs with other related equipment such as electrical poles or guy wires, it should still be reported to Western. Though the equipment may appear to have survived the collision, unexpected degradation of electrical equipment can lead to public safety hazards such as fallen power lines. Just because a power line has fallen does not mean it is not carrying electricity. There is still the potential

## Harvest Safety Tips

- Keep all equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines.
- Never try to raise or move a power line to clear a path.
- Power line sagging? Don't move it. Call us immediately.

For more information on harvest safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org)



for the line and the nearby area to be energized.

If the equipment you are operating does contact any overhead lines, it is best to stay in the cab. Immediately call 911, warn others to stay away, and wait for Western's crew to cut the power before exiting the machinery. If you see an operator's equipment contact a power line, resist the instinct to rush to that person to provide help. It is best to stay back and warn others to stay away.

Western Cooperative Electric offers safety demonstrations to identify and discuss these hazards. For more information call Western's office at 785-743-5561 or 800-456-6720.



## Let Us Help You Mind Your eBiz-ness

### Register for eBiz

1. Go to [www.westerncoop.com](http://www.westerncoop.com)
2. On Western's homepage, click the link to eBiz
3. Enter the information requested (shown below)

User Name	<input type="text"/>	Required, at least 8 characters in length.
Password	<input type="text"/>	Required, at least 8 characters long, contain at least an uppercase letter, at least one number, and may not contain any blank spaces.
Re-enter password	<input type="text"/>	
Account number	<input type="text"/>	Required, this is the basic account number.
Phone	<input type="text"/>	This phone number must match the one on file with Western. The error "Did not validate" means you need to provide the co-op with your current contact information.

Western Cooperative Electric now offers eBiz—a member-friendly application to access your account. eBiz offers the following account management tools:

- ▶ See your current billing and billing/payment history;
- ▶ View your daily meter readings from your meter;
- ▶ Pay your bill with a check or card (no processing fee);
- ▶ Pay one time or set up for monthly payments;
- ▶ Use our online bill calculator;
- ▶ View charts and graphs of usage data;
- ▶ Compare months or years of usage;
- ▶ Make account changes;
- ▶ Sign up for email billing notifications;
- ▶ Request service from Western Cooperative; and
- ▶ Store payment options and go paperless.

To create an eBiz account, visit [www.westerncoop.com](http://www.westerncoop.com) and follow the directions at left.