



WE

NEWS

Western Cooperative Electric, Inc.

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General Manager

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co-op news, energy tips, photos from co-op events and more!



Western's Board of Trustees Serve Important Functions in Operation of the Cooperative

Even though employees of Western Cooperative Electric are a vital part of the day-to-day operations, a very important policy-making body of Western is the board of trustees. Employees are usually recognized for their length of employment and commitment to the company, but a trustee is sometimes omitted from the limelight as he or she serves "behind the scenes."

Western's service territory is divided into three districts. Each district is represented by three trustees.

- ▶ District 1 includes Graham, Osborne, Rooks and Sheridan counties.
- ▶ District 2 includes Ellis, Lincoln, Russell and Trego counties.
- ▶ District 3 includes Barton, Ellsworth, Gove, Ness and Rush counties.

One trustee from each of the three districts is elected every year for a three-year term. Prior to the annual meeting, nominating committees are appointed from each district to prepare a list of nominations for a trustee that have terms expiring. These nominations are then voted upon by a mail-in ballot. Requirements to become a nominee are:

- ▶ Be a member of the cooperative; and
- ▶ Reside within the cooperative's service territory.

Being a trustee of Western Cooperative Electric requires a commitment of time and is a tremendous amount of responsibility. Western's trustees meet monthly to

establish the basic policies and long-range plans that serve as a guide for management decisions. They review the activities of Western, monitor its financial condition and act on a wide variety of matters affecting its well-being.

To make sound decisions trustees must stay informed about complicated issues. This requires hours of reading materials in preparation for board meetings and attending special courses and conferences as required.

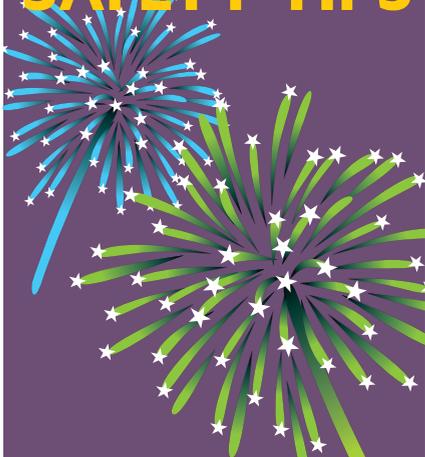
Besides monthly meetings certain trustees are appointed to represent Western at additional monthly meetings. Kansas Electric Cooperatives, the statewide service organization, is guided by a 31-member board of trustees.

TERRY HOBBS, Penokee, represents Western on this board.

Western's power supplier, Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, is governed by a trustee from each of the six members of Sunflower. **FRANK JOY**, Hays, represents Western on the Sunflower board. As you can see, members who serve on your board of trustees face a tremendous amount of responsibility.

As a member of Western Cooperative Electric, you also have a responsibility to help elect trustees who will continue to provide the quality of leadership, dedication, and expertise necessary for the successful operation of your business.

FIREWORKS SAFETY TIPS



Fireworks and the Fourth of July go hand-in-hand, and we want you to have a safe, fun celebration! About two-thirds of all fireworks-related injuries occur between June 16 and July 16, so keep these safety tips in mind:

- ★ Make sure fireworks are legal in your community before using them.
- ★ Never buy professional-grade fireworks. They are not designed for safe consumer use.
- ★ Keep small children a safe distance from all fireworks including sparklers which can burn at temperatures in excess of 2,000 degrees.
- ★ Never reignite or handle malfunctioning fireworks. Keep a bucket of water or garden hose nearby to thoroughly soak duds before throwing them away.
- ★ Keep pets indoors and away from fireworks to avoid contact injuries or noise reactions.

Western Welcomes Interns

CHANTZ BRUNGARDT and **HUNTER FOLSUM** have joined Western's operations department as summer interns. Brungardt is employed at the



Chantz Brungardt



Hunter Folsom



Nick Pennington

Plainville warehouse and Folsom is employed at the WaKeeney warehouse. They will gain experience in the challenging field of electric utility work.

Brungardt and Folsom are enrolled at Pratt Community College in the Electric Power Technology program to ultimately earn an associate's degree in applied science. Both enjoy hunting, fishing and being outdoors in their leisure time.

NICK PENNINGTON has joined Western's IT department as a summer intern through the Nex-Generation Round Up for Youth program. This program matches high school and college students with local businesses throughout northwest and north-central Kansas for paid internships.

Pennington enjoys singing, composing and playing the ocarina, or building Gundam scale models during leisure time. During their summer internships, Brungardt, Folsom and Pennington will gain hands-on experience and learn more about electric cooperatives and careers.

WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC
A Tri-State Energy Cooperative

2019 RATE STUDY

What will a rate study tell us?

Existing data is used to determine how much revenue is required to operate the cooperative in the future.

Next, a **cost-of-service study** examines how and why the costs are incurred in each rate class (e.g., commercial, industrial, residential).

There are costs associated with energy generation, consumption, and transmission of power from the power plants to our substations. Distributing the power to our members entails costs for poles, wire, trucks, office and warehouse facilities, substations, maintenance and repair of lines, repayment of loans, and employee costs.

Once the study is fully analyzed, **electric rates will be redesigned**, if necessary, to meet costs and recover revenue from each rate class.

Find us on **facebook**

As always, if you have questions, give us a call: 785-743-5561 or visit westerncoop.com

Western Offers Prepaid Metering

Western will soon offer a prepaid metering option, which is a pay as you go billing option. Benefits include:

- ▶ No Deposit
- ▶ No Late Fees
- ▶ No Due Date
- ▶ Optional Payments and Amounts
- ▶ Easy Options to Monitor Usage

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

COOKING TIP: When it's warm out, avoid using the oven. Try cooking on the stove, using a microwave or grilling outside instead.

Source: energy.gov

Always Assume a Downed Power Line is Deadly

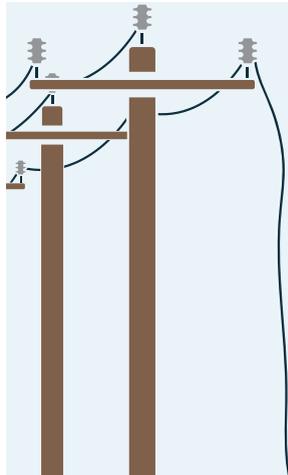
Overhead power lines can carry thousands of volts of electricity. If a line is down, always assume it is energized and dangerous, even if the power is out in your area. Touching or getting near a live power line could injure and even kill you.

Never approach an accident scene where a line is down or damaged. If you run toward the accident to help, you too could become a victim by entering the energized area.

Power lines can come down or sag close to the ground for many reasons including severe weather or damage due to a car accident. Because downed lines aren't always visible, these lines can lurk underneath water or debris.

Stay clear of all types of lines, including electrical, telephone or cable services. Any of these lines could be in contact with damaged and energized power lines nearby. Safety reminders:

- ▶ Call 911 to report fallen or damaged power lines.
- ▶ Power lines do not have to be arcing or sparking or making a humming noise to be energized
- ▶ Do not step in water or walk in debris near a downed power line.
- ▶ Do not attempt to move a downed line or anything it is touching with another object



KNOW WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU SEE A DOWNED POWER LINE

When power lines go down, take these precautions to stay safe:

- ▶ Call 911 to report fallen or downed power lines.
- ▶ Know that power lines do not have to be arcing or sparking to be live.
- ▶ Stay at least 10 feet away from the line.
- ▶ If the line is down because a vehicle has struck it, remain in the vehicle until emergency crews say it is safe to exit.
- ▶ If there is a fire or you smell gasoline, hop out without touching the vehicle — DO NOT WALK, but hop to safety at least 50 feet away.

Always treat a downed power line as live and never touch any wire that is down.

such as a stick or pole. Even materials that don't normally conduct electricity can do so if they're slightly wet.

- ▶ Stay at least 10 feet away from the downed power line.
- ▶ Do not attempt to drive over a downed power line.
- ▶ If a power line falls on your vehicle while driving, do not attempt to drive away or get out. Call for help and **STAY INSIDE THE VEHICLE** until crews say it is safe to get out. If there is a fire or you smell gasoline, hop out without touching the vehicle at the same time and **DO NOT WALK** but hop away to safety.
- ▶ Line properties can change: Any power line that is dead could become energized at any moment due to power restoration or back-feed from backup generators. **ALWAYS** consider all lines, regardless of the type, energized at deadly voltages.

2019 Summer Resolution Winner is Carole Engleman

Summer could include simplifying your bill paying process with Western Cooperative Electric. Payment options include bank draft with checking/savings or recurring card (debit/credit).

Additional options include enrolling for e-business (ebiz) or going green by opting for paperless billing. With paperless billing, you may opt to receive text or email notifications to get your information.

Ebiz allows you to see your monthly bill, view daily electric usage and historical data, store a payment method and make payments. Using ebiz allows you to enroll in automatic payments. If you need assistance contact us at 800-456-6720. There are no forms to complete so signing up is fast, friendly and convenient. Automatic payment guarantees on-time payments while maintaining an excellent payment history.

Selecting any one of these payment options makes you eligible for a monthly drawing for a \$25 voucher to a local business of your choice. Already signed up for these payment options? Your name will also be included in the drawings. **THIS MONTH'S WINNER IS CAROLE ENGLEMAN, OTIS.**

Get a fresh summer start by enrolling in an easy payment option. Enter today for a chance to win.

Stay Back and Stay Safe

Working with electricity is a dangerous job, especially for line workers. In fact, as reported, line repairers and installers are among the most dangerous jobs in the U.S. That's why for Western Cooperative Electric safety is the number one priority. This is not empty talk. We have created a culture of putting our crews' safety and that of the community above all else.

Western's mission is to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to you our consumer/member. Yes, we strive to deliver affordable and reliable electricity to you, but equally important, we want our employees to return home safely to their loved ones. This requires ongoing focus, dedication, vigilance—and your help.

Distractions can be deadly.

While we appreciate your kindness and interest in the work of our crews, we ask that you stay back and let them focus on their task at hand. Even routine work has the potential to be dangerous, and it takes their full attention and that of their colleagues, who are also responsible for the team's safety.

Distractions can have deadly consequences. If a line worker is on or near your property during a power outage, for vegetation management or for routine maintenance, please allow them ample room to work. These small accommodations help protect our crews—and you.

If you have a dog, try to keep it indoors while line workers are on or near your property. While most dogs are friendly, some are defensive of their territory and can't distinguish between a burglar and a line worker. Western's crews work best without a pet "supervising" the job.

Western recognizes that for your family's safety, you want to make sure only authorized workers are on or near your property. You will recognize



GETTY IMAGES/SOLARISIMAGES

Western's employees by their uniform and service trucks clearly marked with Western's name and logo.

Slow down and move over.

In addition to giving line workers space, we also ask that you move over and slow down when approaching one of Western's trucks on the side of the road. Bright fluorescent cones will also surround the trucks to add an extra barrier of safety for those who help all of us at Western.



Let Us Help You Mind Your eBiz-ness

Register for eBiz

1. Go to 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 consumer-member-friendly application to access your account. eBiz offers the following account management tools:

- ▶ See your current billing statement 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 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 and follow the directions at left.