



An Equal Opportunity Provider & Employer

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

P.O. Box 278, WaKeeney, KS 67672
800-456-6720

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WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC

NEWS

Western Cooperative Electric, Inc.

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General Manager

Tom Ruth
General Manager

Contact Us

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FROM THE MANAGER

Cost-of-Service Study Underway

As a not-for-profit, member-owned cooperative dedicated to serving our local communities, Western has two primary obligations. The first is to provide safe, reliable and affordable service to the members. The second is to maintain sound financial operations that satisfy the requirements of our lenders.

Western has hired Power Systems Engineering, Inc. (PSE) to conduct a cost-of-service study (COSS) to examine the cooperative's cost of providing electric service to our members. PSE will conduct our rate analysis as an independent rate consultant to ensure the process is completed without bias and follows the highest industry standards.

The goal of Western's last COSS in 2019 was to combine the rates of the eastern service territory (acquired from Aquila in 2007) with the western service territory into a consolidated rates structure.

Although the merged rates have only been in effect for a little more than two years, revenue projections and costs were based on a stable pre-pandemic economy. It is important to consider the rising costs of materials and inflation in this COSS to ensure the cooperative's long-term financial health.

There are three separate steps in a COSS. First, PSE must calculate how much revenue is needed to continue to operate the business successfully in the upcoming years.

Next, there is an analysis that identifies how much each type of service(rate class) is responsible for in the identified revenue requirement.



Tom Ruth

Continued on page 12B ▶



We Want YOUR Feedback!

Community Solar Survey

Western Cooperative Electric is conducting research on the interest level of members regarding solar energy. Our national affiliate, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), is conducting the survey on our behalf. Members may be contacted via phone or email. We appreciate your input as Western plans for the future of renewable energy.

Member Satisfaction Survey

Members will also have the opportunity to participate in a member satisfaction survey. This 5-minute survey will be conducted online. The link to this survey can be found at Westerncoop.com or scan the QR code below. The survey's objective is to collect data to measure members' satisfaction and gauge interest among the membership for various topics.

Members who complete the member satisfaction survey will have the opportunity to receive a \$50 bill credit.



Cost of Service Study Underway

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Finally, rates are designed to ensure fair revenue collection between and within the rate classes while also meeting any other goals identified by the board.

When the rate study is completed, it will be reviewed by the board in detail. The board takes their responsibility to set fair rates very seriously as they are members of the cooperative and pay the same rates.

After the board's review, Western will provide the membership with notice of the time and place of the board of trustees meeting where rate changes will be discussed and voted on.

Rate change meeting notices will include as many details as possible about any proposed changes. Members will have the opportunity to attend the meeting to hear the discussion and vote of the board, and express opinions on the changes. Members can find the notices for these meetings in your monthly bill, in the *Kansas Country Living* magazine, or on our website.

As a not-for-profit electric coop-

erative, Western rates are not aimed at generating a return for investors or making profits but rather covering operating costs and ensuring the cooperative's long-term financial health.

erative, Western rates are not aimed at generating a return for investors or making profits but rather covering operating costs and ensuring the cooperative's long-term financial health. Western strives to operate efficiently and continually evaluates operations to gain efficiency and keep rates as low as possible. While it is Western's desire to avoid rate changes, sometimes changes are necessary to ensure the cooperative's long-term financial and operational health. Trustees must ensure electric rates are adequate to maintain a stable financial condition, provide the necessary revenue for delivery of reliable electric service, and minimize the subsidization between member rate classes.



SMART PAYMENTS

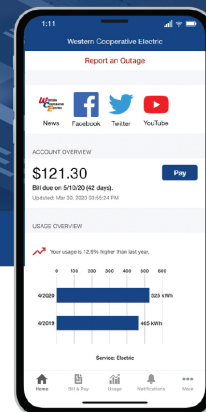
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Save time. Avoid service interruptions. Eliminate late fees.

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Visit www.westerncoop.com/SmartHub for details

Hensley and Tessendorf Earn Journeyman Certification



Dalton Hensley



Josh Tessendorf

DALTON HENSLEY and **JOSH TESSENDORF** have been promoted to journeyman linemen at Western Cooperative Electric Association, Inc. after receiving their journeyman certification from the U.S. Department of Labor in cooperation with the Kansas Department of Commerce Kansas Apprenticeship Council.

Both men completed all merchant job training and safety program requirements to earn this promotion. The four-year curriculum is one of the world's most comprehensive training programs for power line personnel and takes a high level of dedication.

After a summer internship, Hensley joined Western in 2018 as a first-year apprentice. He attended Pratt Community College and received an associate's degree in electrical power technology certificate. Hensley grew up in Elis, graduated from Ellis High School and works out of the WaKeeney office.

Tessendorf was hired in 2018, lives in Olmitz and works at the Olmitz outpost. He grew up in Mayetta near Topeka and is a member of the Prairie Band Potawatomi tribe. Before being hired by Western, Tessendorf earned his Electrical Power Technology degree while at Coffeyville Community College.

"Both Dalton and Josh have been stellar employees. Earning their journeyman lineman certification is a great accomplishment," said General Manager Tom Ruth. "It takes a dedicated and highly skilled individual to become a journeyman, someone who is devoted to serving others in rain or shine. Western is lucky to have so many great people that are committed to serving our members."



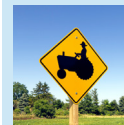
SPRING INTO SAFETY

Spring is in the air and that means more than just a change of season for farmers. During the busy planting season, follow these eight safety tips.



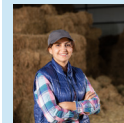
Transport Safely

Ensure equipment is compliant with agriculture road and travel safety rules.



Share Safety Tips

Teach anyone working or doing business on your farm about electrical hazards.



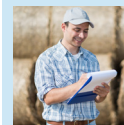
Encourage Young Workers

Be sure to match age and ability level with each chore.



Be Clear

Explain where the "back 80" or Smith Field is; not everyone may know how to get there.



Write It Down

Keep directions (with proper road and farm ground names) at home, in the shop and in cabs.



Look Around

Inspect your space and look for hazards before you start planting.



Evaluate Procedures

Consider new safety precautions you can implement, such as lock out, tag out.



Meet and Discuss

Conduct morning safety meetings to brief everyone on the day and talk about potential hazards.

WATCH

A watch means there is a great chance of severe thunderstorm or tornado. **Watch** and wait for more information while taking precautionary measures.



WARNING

A **warning** means that severe thunderstorm or tornado has been spotted or seen on radar. The moment you get a warning, take shelter in the safest part of your home.





77th ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday, May 11

Lunch at Noon | Meeting at 1 p.m.

**Western Office in WaKeeney
635 S. 13th Street | WaKeeney, Kansas 67672**

JOIN US FOR:

- Door Prizes
- Cooperative Updates
- Trustee Election Results
- Bylaw Vote
- Learn More About the Advantages of Being a Member

**MOVING
FORWARD**