

## BACKUP POWER TIPS

# Operating a Generator Safely

A generator can be a valuable piece of equipment to keep electrical appliances working during a power outage. Generators can be either temporary or permanently installed.

A permanent generator is wired into a house or shop by a qualified electrician using a transfer switch that prevents a generator from feeding electricity back into overhead lines, which can be deadly for linemen.

A temporary generator is powered by gasoline and should not be attached to a circuit breaker, fuse, or outlet. Before ever purchasing a generator you need to know the wattage required to run the appliances you will attach to the generator. You also need to know the surge power, which is the power it takes to turn an appliance on.

Once you have purchased the proper generator, follow these tips from Western's electrician department to properly operate your generator:

- ▶ **Read and follow all manufacturer operating instructions** to properly ground the generator. Be sure you understand them before hooking up the generator.
- ▶ **Never operate a generator in a confined area**, such as a garage. Generators can produce numerous gases, including toxic and deadly carbon monoxide. They require proper ventilation.
- ▶ **Generators pose electrical risks** especially when operated in wet conditions. Use a generator only if necessary, when the weather creates wet or moist conditions. Protect the generator by operating it

under an open, canopy-like structure on a dry surface where water cannot form puddles or drain under it. Always ensure that your hands are dry before touching the generator.

- ▶ **When you refuel the generator**, make sure the engine is cool to prevent a fire, should the tank overflow.
- ▶ **There should be nothing plugged into the generator** when you turn it on. This prevents a surge from damaging your generator and appliances.
- ▶ **Be sure to keep children and pets away** from the generator, which could burn them.
- ▶ **Shut down the generator properly.** Before shutting down a generator, turn off and unplug all appliances and equipment being powered by the generator.
- ▶ **Remember maintenance** between uses. It is also a good idea to inspect the fuel and oil filter, spark plug, oil level and fuel quality and to start the generator on a regular basis before an emergency situation occurs.

For assistance in selecting the proper size of generator, maintenance, and safety features contact Western's electrician department at 785-743-5561 or 800-456-6720.



# Sign Up Today to Win



Western Cooperative Electric offers free trips for up to four children of Western Cooperative Electric members.

If you are a high school junior, whose parents/guardians are Western members, you are eligible to enter this contest.

Two winners will be chosen to join over 1,500 young people in Washington, D.C., for the “Government in Action” Youth Tour June 12-19, 2014. You will visit the state capitol in Topeka before flying to Washington, D.C. There you will learn about the U.S. government through visits with senators and congressional delegation, meetings with youth from other states and tours of museums, Capitol Hill and Arlington National Cemetery.

Two winners will be chosen to attend the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, CO, July 12-18 2014.

You will stay at the scenic Glen Eden Resort in the beautiful Rocky Mountains. At camp, you will join winners from other cooperatives in Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming to form one of the most



Jacob Brull (left) and Hannah Gillespie pose at the Capitol before meeting with Senators Jerry Moran and Pat Roberts.

outstanding leadership camps in the country.

In addition to the trips, each winner will receive a \$250 scholarship. An additional \$250 scholarship is being offered as a memorial for past Board Trustee, Darrell J. Brown.

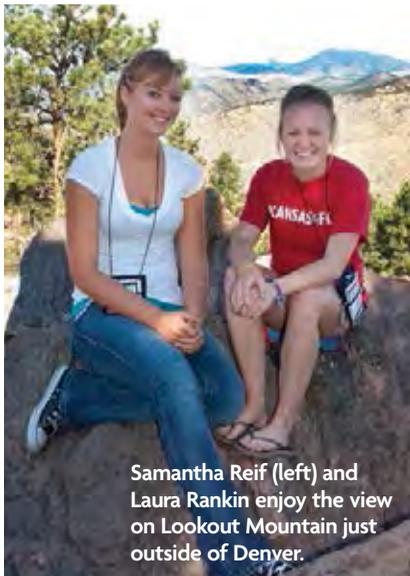
To apply, students submit an application and resume, take an open book quiz and write a short essay on

“This has been a once-in-a-lifetime experience that I will never forget,” Gillespie said. “I am so proud and thankful to be an American.”

HANNAH GILLESPIE

**JUNE 12-19, 2014**  
**Washington, D.C.**

# Win a Free Trip of a Lifetime



Samantha Reif (left) and Laura Rankin enjoy the view on Lookout Mountain just outside of Denver.

COOPERATIVE  
youth  
Leadership  
camp  
SHIP  
July 12-18, 2014  
Steamboat Springs, CO

“I have learned so much about myself and my electric cooperative. Electric cooperatives are also leaders in the communities they serve.”

SAMANTHA REIF

a topic to be announced. Based on these items, finalists will be selected for an interview at the Western office Sunday, February 23, 2014. You may complete the entry coupon, below, which also can be downloaded on Western's website [www.westerncoop.com](http://www.westerncoop.com).

**All entry coupons must be received by Friday, January 31, 2014.** For more information contact Janet Geist or Dennis Deines at 785-743-5561 or 800-456-6720.

## Youth Tour Contest Coupon

For an eligible high school junior to enter the competition, the cooperative office should receive this coupon by **January 31, 2014**. Mail or bring to: Western Cooperative Electric Association, Inc. 635 S. 13<sup>th</sup> St., P.O. Box 278, WaKeeney, KS 67672.

Name of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_ Student Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Town \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_ Year in School \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Parents or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Electric Account Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Parents' Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

I agree that all information supplied in this application is accurate and true. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Applicant)

I hereby grant permission for \_\_\_\_\_ to enter the 2014 Youth Tour competition sponsored by Western Cooperative Electric, Inc.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian)

## County Tax Distributions

Western Cooperative Electric is a member-owned cooperative which not only pays capital credits after margins are accounted for, but also pays personal property taxes.

The beginning formula for the valuation is determined in Topeka and the final apportionments are prorated according to school districts within the counties served.

Below is a listing of the taxes Western paid for 2013 in those counties where electrical service is provided.

### County Taxes Paid in 2013

Barton	\$73,432.92
Ellis	\$74,946.60
Ellsworth	\$115,250.79
Gove	\$137,981.52
Graham	\$75,062.14
Lincoln	\$22,793.74
Ness	\$16,643.14
Osborne	\$16,423.84
Rooks	\$145,837.48
Rush	\$48,660.12
Russell	\$51,727.78
Sheridan	\$63,794.94
Trego	\$267,336.80
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,109,891.81</b>

## Tip of the Month

Switch to energy-saving halogen incandescent lightbulbs to cut lighting energy use by 25 percent. These bulbs last three times longer than traditional incandescent bulbs and can easily be dimmed. Want to save more? Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) and light-emitting diodes (LEDs) cut lighting energy use by at least 75 percent. Learn more at [energysavers.gov](http://energysavers.gov).

## Keep Food Safe During a Power Outage

We've all been there: a winter-storm rolls through, toppling trees and damaging power lines. The lights go out. And although it may only be a matter of minutes or hours before Western gets things up and running again, thawing food in the refrigerator and freezer can make that relatively short time seem like an eternity.

It's important to keep cold food safe during a power outage, and a little advanced preparation and know-how can keep your family safe from food-borne bacteria. No one wants to let a refrigerator full of good food go to waste so make sure to take the following steps. First and foremost, keep your refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature: if unopened, a refrigerator will keep food safely cold for about four hours; a full freezer will do so for about 48 hours (24 hours if it's half-full).

A sure-fire way to know if food is safe is to monitor its temperature. Meat, poultry, fish, and eggs should be refrigerated at or below 40 degrees Fahrenheit and frozen food at or below zero degrees Fahrenheit. If the power goes out, a digital, dial, or instant-read food thermometer and appliance thermometers will help you know if the food remains at safe temperatures.

If the power stays out for a prolonged period, there are a few ways to aid your refrigerator and freezer in the fight to keep things cold. The simplest tip is to keep your freezer full. If it's not full, group items close together to preserve the cold.

Dry ice can help keep freezers



**First and foremost, keep your refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature.**

chilly: find it by scanning for "ice" or "carbon dioxide" in the phone book. It will take 25 pounds or so to keep a full, 10-cubic foot freezer safe for three to four days. Fifty pounds of dry ice should hold an 18-cubic foot full freezer for two days. Wear heavy-duty gloves or use tongs when handling dry ice—the temperature of dry ice is -216 degrees Fahrenheit—and separate it from food with cardboard to prevent freezer burn.

During cold months, it may be tempting to store food outside. Although this may work for cold drinks, food can spoil in direct sunlight. Curious animals may also take advantage of an outside stash.

Rather than putting the food outside, consider taking advantage of the cold temperatures by making ice. Fill buckets, empty milk cartons, or cans with water and leave them outside to freeze. Then transfer the homemade ice to your refrigerator, freezer, or coolers.

Power back on? Make sure your food is still safe by either checking its temperature or looking for ice crystals. If frozen food is 40 degrees Fahrenheit or below or ice crystals are visible, it's safe to refreeze. Discard any perishable refrigerated food (meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and leftovers) that have been above 40 degrees for two hours.