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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

P.O. Box 278, WaKeeney, KS 67672

800-456-6720

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**WESTERN
COOPERATIVE
ELECTRIC**

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NEWS

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Tip of the Month

If you only want to heat or supplement inadequate heating in one room, small space heaters can be less expensive to use than your central heating system

Tips on Weathering a Winter Storm

When ice and heavy snow bring down limbs and power lines, safety is a consideration indoors and out. Make sure you know how to weather the storm.

When outside, stay away from downed power lines:

- ▶ A power line does not need to be sparking or arcing to be energized; Equipment near powerlines can also be energized and dangerous.
- ▶ Lines that appear to be “dead” can become energized as crews work to restore power, or sometimes from improper use of emergency generators. Assume all low and downed lines are energized and dangerous. If you see a downed or sagging line, contact Western.
- ▶ Motorists should never drive over a downed line as snagging a line could pull down a pole or other equipment and cause other hazards.
- ▶ Be careful approaching intersections where traffic or crossing lights may be out.
- ▶ If you plan to use a generator, know how to operate it safely.

Before a winter storm, you should have supplies on hand, and know how to stay warm:

- ▶ Always keep a battery-powered radio or TV, flashlights, and a supply of fresh batteries. You should

also have water, blankets and non-perishable food.

- ▶ When power goes out, it often comes back in spikes. This can damage electronics. Keep your electronics safe by unplugging them when the power goes out. Leave one lamp or switch on as a signal for when your power returns.
- ▶ To prevent water pipes from freezing, keep faucets turned on slightly so that water drips from the tap. Know how to shut off water valves in case a pipe bursts.
- ▶ Never use a charcoal grill to cook or heat with inside the home. Burning charcoal gives off deadly carbon monoxide gas. Charcoal grills should only be used outdoors.
- ▶ If you live with a child or elderly person, you may need to take them somewhere with power so they can stay warm. If you are healthy enough to stay home safely, there are ways to stay warm; stay inside and dress warmly in layered clothing.
- ▶ Close off unneeded rooms.
- ▶ When using alternate heat sources follow operating instructions, use fire safeguards and be sure to properly ventilate.



Attention High School Jun



Each year, students from Kansas join more than 1,700 youth in Washington, D.C., to attend the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. Next year's Youth Tour is scheduled for June 9-16, 2016.



Faith Tuttle (left) and L.T. Coburn stop for a photo in front of the Jefferson Memorial.

“Meeting and visiting with our senators and representatives in D.C. and taking time for us, really impressed me.” **FAITH TUTTLE, 2015 YOUTH TOUR PARTICIPANT**

Your electric cooperative 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 more than 1,700 young people in Washington, D.C., for the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour June 9-16, 2016. 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 our congressional delegation, meetings with youth from other states and tours of museums, Capitol Hill and Arlington National Cemetery.

To see what's in store, visit <http://bit.ly/dcytvideo2015>.

Two winners will be chosen to

Scan these Codes to Get More Information

Washington, D.C.



Steamboat Springs, CO



Download the free scanning app in the Apple App Store or Google Play.

attend the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, CO, July 16-22, 2016.

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 outstanding leadership camps in the country.

Get more information at <http://bit.ly/CYLCVideo>

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 a topic to be announced. Based on these items, finalists will be selected for an interview at the Western office Sunday, February 28, 2016.

You may complete the entry coupon at right, which also can be downloaded on Western's website www.westerncoop.com.

All entry coupons must be received by January 31, 2016. For more information contact Janet Geist or Dennis Deines at 785-743-5561 or 800-456-6720.

Leaders—Trips & Scholarships



From left: Dean Masters, Isaiah Fabrizio, and Scott Ring at the 2015 Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp.



Kansas delegates attend Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp along with students from three other states to develop leadership skills and learn about cooperatives. The 2016 camp will be July 16-22.

“Touring the power plant and coal mine really made me realize how much work goes into creating electricity.” **DEAN MASTERS, 2015 CAMP PARTICIPANT**

Youth Tour Contest Entry Coupon

For an eligible high school junior to enter the competition, the cooperative office should receive this coupon by January 31, 2016. Mail or bring to: Western Cooperative Electric Association, Inc., 635 S. 13th St., P.O. Box 278, WaKeeney, KS 67672.

Name of Applicant _____ Student Email _____

Address _____ Town _____ Zip _____

Birth Date _____ Student Phone Number _____ Year in School _____

Name of Parents or Guardian _____ Electric Account Number _____

Parents' Phone Number _____ Parents' Email _____ 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 2016 Youth Tour competition sponsored by Western Cooperative Electric, Inc.

(Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian)

Get to Know Your
Western Co-op Electric Staff

Craig Cramer

Manager of Information Systems
4 Years of Service



Craig Cramer

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY. My wife of 23 years works for Sunflower Electric in Hays. My son, Austin, is a freshman at Trego Community High School, and my daughter, Ashlynn, is a fifth grader at Trego Community Grade School. We live in WaKeeney with one dog and four cats.

WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY?

I was born and raised in Scott City.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

I like to go trail riding on my dirt bike, play computer games, weld in my shop, and do computer programming.

WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

Actually, getting the opportunity to work for Western, and guide it down the path of IT!

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE VACATION?

Going trail riding in the Rocky Mountains with my son.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MOVIE OR BOOK AND WHY?

I have a hard time picking one favorite movie or book, but I am a big fan of superhero genre movies. I also like Tom Clancy novels and books of that type.

WHAT SPORT OR TEAM IS YOUR FAVORITE?

Chiefs and Royals!

WHAT IS SOMETHING PEOPLE DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU?

I owned a semi, hauling fertilizer and meat.

IF YOU COULD BE ANY ANIMAL, WHAT WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

I would enjoy being a lazy house cat spending my days curled up in a sunbeam and my nights out hunting and having adventures.

WHO HAS INSPIRED YOU IN YOUR LIFE AND WHY?

My late Uncle David inspired me to try to always have a smile, to treat people as people, and that everyone deserves a chance.

Are Smart Appliances in Your Future?

If it wasn't before, it seems like everything is becoming "smart" nowadays; cars, the electric grid, personal watches, homes, phones and ... appliances. For those of you who remember the television show, *The Jetsons*, a fully automated home was how they lived. Dinner was cooked, laundry done, and dishes washed by a smart appliance.

In reality, smart appliances utilize modern communications technology to ultimately make functions faster, hopefully economical and more energy efficient.

Annual electronics shows feature smart appliances every year including refrigerators, stoves, ovens, freezers, washers, dryers, garage door openers, dishwashers, and water heaters.

Even though today's smart appliances can give many of us sticker shock, experts predict these new technologies will deliver major benefits in energy efficiency, convenience and maintenance. So what makes today's smart appliances stand out from others? From the smart screen on your dazzling new refrigerator, you check the weather while grabbing your orange juice or milk. You can even browse the Internet for recipes—all on the conveniently placed touchscreen.

Remotely monitor your oven to turn it on and adjust temperatures. Running late from work and need to get the kids somewhere? Stop for a frozen pizza on the way home, and preheat the oven so you can pop it in upon arrival. Pretty neat, huh? And of course, the panic moment while leaving on vacation, "Did I leave the oven on" will be a thing of the past.

Got a load of clothes in the washer you forgot to start? Log in and start the cycle from the mall while shopping.

Eventually, smart appliances will become extremely useful to the average homeowner. A refrigerator that



Smart appliances, like this clothes dryer from Whirlpool, can be monitored via smartphone.

reads the bar codes of what you put in and tracks consumption. It could even recommend a shopping list if it noticed something getting low or out of date. No more wondering if the milk is beginning to sour!

Maintenance is also an area of huge potential. An analysis could be run on a timely basis for a diagnosis, including items such as filters, belts, heating elements, or even circuitry components. A diagnostic could be made directly to the manufacturer and, with your permission, a tech can show up at your home with everything needed to make the repair.

Finally, from an energy efficiency and load management point of view, smart appliances present an opportunity to manage energy load more discretely in the quest to give you, the member, the highest possible quality of service at the lowest possible price.

As for smart technology, the *Jetsons'* flying car may still be in the future, but it appears that the *Jetsons'* appliances are here today.