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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC NEWS

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FROM THE MANAGER

Sunflower Electric Economic Development Program



Tom Ruth

Commitment to community is one of the seven cooperative principles that govern the operation of cooperatives. The electric cooperatives

that are members of the Sunflower Electric Power Corporation system, including Western Cooperative Electric, show once again how we live this cooperative principle. We know that community vitality is central to your success. Community success/vitality looks different in each of our communities, but having access to jobs, adequate housing and education, and programs that improve life for residents are common needs for all of our communities.

That's why Sunflower member cooperatives recently launched the Sunflower Electric Economic Development Program (SEED). As a member of Sunflower, Western Cooperative Electric is actively engaged in bringing this program to your community. Western Cooperative Electric is already invested in making your community a success, but

this program allows us to bring additional community and economic development programs to you.

Sunflower Electric Economic Development involves several programs.

Industry Marketing

We know which industries are predominate in our area. Companies find success here for a variety of reasons, perhaps natural resources or being located in the central part of our country. Whatever the reason, it makes sense to share our story of business success with other companies within these industries. The world won't know this is a great place to do business until we tell them.

We have identified value-added agriculture, heavy equipment manufacturing and the associated supply chain, distribution and warehousing, and data centers as opportunities to expand our business base. We are developing plans to directly market to companies in these industries and make sure they know what our part of Kansas has to offer for expansion opportunities.

Available Sites and Building

Just as a business needs inventory on its shelves, inventory of available sites

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Sunflower Electric Economic Development Program *Continued from page 16A* ▶

and buildings must be visible and promoted. LocationOne Information Systems (LOIS) is the largest website for economic development properties in the U.S. We have purchased a license and are actively working to increase the number of properties that are promoted on LOIS. Let us know if you are interested in using this site as a way to promote your available sites or buildings.

The Sunflower Certified Site Program is a certification that guarantees extensive research has been completed for a property intended for business development. Certified site programs are valuable to businesses as they reduce the chance of a site-related surprise during the construction process. A comprehensive list of items are researched and cataloged so a prospective owner knows the available utilities, capabilities, environmental and historical attributes of the property, confirming that the site is ready for development.

Local Community Support

Your local leaders are in the best position to understand what opportunities fit your community. What they may need is additional education, access to information, and resources for projects that benefit the residents. Our team

includes trained facilitators to help your community identify what opportunities are right for you and how to capitalize on those opportunities. We have identified an extensive list of resource providers that are ready to support technical expertise for economic development.

Key to sharing our story to our communities and the world, what we have to offer, is our economic development website, www.sunflowercodevo.com. The website includes information for businesses that want to learn about the advantages of expanding in the Sunflower member service territory, where to review available sites and buildings, how to connect with member staff, and information about the region.

The website also has information on programs available to communities that may want to advance their local economic development program. Information about ways Western Cooperative Electric and Sunflower can provide assistance for economic development planning is described on the website.

Living and working in a vibrant community is a goal we all share. Western Cooperative Electric will continue our commitment to your community. Just give us a call at 800-456-6720 to learn more about this exciting new program!

Western Welcomes New Faces



Nolan Numrich

We are happy to announce that **NOLAN NUMRICH** has accepted the position of manager of member services. His tentative start date will be July 1, 2020.

As a Western Kansas native, Numrich grew up in Scott City. Upon graduating high school, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps where he spent four years and completed two deployments. After his enlistment, Numrich attended the University of Kansas where he received his bachelor's degree in history with a minor in business.

The past two years, Numrich has worked as member services representative and key accounts manager for Wheatland Electric Cooperative. During this time, he received his Certified Key Account Executive credentials through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Numrich is experienced in internal and external communications, member relations, and has worked closely with Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc., Sunflower Electric Power Corporation and Touchstone Energy to better serve the members and promote the cooperative model.

Numrich and his wife, Ragen, have two sons, Coen, 6, and Gavin, 2. In their free time, they enjoy watching movies and going to the lake.

Welcome, Nolan to the Western family!



Hunter Folsom

Western Cooperative Electric also welcomes **HUNTER FOLSOM** to the electric cooperative family as our newest apprentice lineman. Folsom, originally from WaKeeney, graduated from Trego Community High School in 2018. From there he enrolled in the Electrical Power Technology (EPT) program at Pratt Community College and completed a summer

internship with Western last year after his first year in the EPT program. Folsom said he enjoyed every minute of his internship at Western.

When Folsom isn't working, he enjoys hunting, fishing and just being outdoors. He also enjoys taking his dog hunting and learning with him each time. He will be working at our WaKeeney location. Welcome, to the cooperative family, Hunter!

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Spending more time at home? Try an online energy audit to assess the overall efficiency of your home. Visit www.energystar.gov, then enter "home energy yardstick" in the search box to get started. **Source: energy.gov**

Alphabet Soup: What are GFCIs and AFCIs?

We have probably all heard the terms GFCI and AFCI when it comes to electrical safety, but what do the letters stand for? And how do these letter-heavy, acronym-named devices help keep us safe?

GFCIs

GFCIs, or ground fault circuit interrupters, help protect against electrical shock and electrocution. It is important to test and reset the red outlet (GFCI) buttons monthly to ensure they are working properly. GFCIs are typically installed in outlets or circuits close to water sources in and outside of the home.

When they are in working order, GFCIs help prevent shock by detecting current variations along the electrical path. If a person's body starts to receive a shock because of current variations, the GFCI senses this and cuts off the power.

According to the National Electrical Code, a "ground fault" is a conducting connection (whether intentional or accidental) between any electric conductor and any conducting material that is grounded or that may become grounded.

In other words, a ground fault happens when an electrical circuit malfunctions, causing the electrical current to seek a path to ground other than through the intended wires. A human or animal in the wrong place at the wrong time could become that "path to ground" or conduit of electricity.

AFCIs

AFCIs, or arc fault circuit interrupters, are required by the National Electrical Code for some, but not all, electrical circuits in the home. The device breaks the circuit when it determines a dangerous electrical arc, which is a discharge between two electrodes that can cause intense heat or light. The extreme

heat of an arc can cause a fire, so that is why AFCIs are required by code.

Most people associate arcs with welding, but they can happen in the home or when the conductors on a power line are interrupted, such as when a tree falls on it or a car strikes a utility pole and the line falls.

Much like a GFCI is to a ground fault, the AFCI breaks the circuit when it detects an arc or abnormalities in the flow of electricity. That safeguard or break in circuit helps prevent a fire or other arc-related electrical damage. The temperatures of an arc can exceed 10,000 degrees.

An AFCI can distinguish between insignificant, harmless arcs and the undesirable kind that could start a fire or cause damage. Benign or uneventful arcs can be an everyday byproduct of using switches and plugs in good working order.

What Are Arcs and Ground Faults, Again?

So, in review, an arc fault is the unintended result of current flowing through an unplanned path. A significant arc can cause burning particles that can easily ignite the materials around it, drywall, insulation or wood.

And a ground fault? A ground fault happens when stray electricity takes an unintentional pathway and the current flows directly to the earth, into the ground. If you become part of that path, the result could be shock or electrocution.



Western Brings on Interns

KYLE CASPER, TANNER FLAX and GRANT HELDSTAB

have joined Western for a summer internship to train and experience the challenging field of electric utility work.

Casper, who is from the Hays area, is interning at the Plainville warehouse. Casper lives in the country outside Hays with his parents and younger brother. He enjoys activities such as riding four-wheelers, shooting guns and playing with his dog.

Flax, a graduate of Dodge City High School, was born and raised in Dodge City and will be working at our Wakee-ney warehouse. His hobbies include being outdoors and going hunting or fishing and working on his own vehicle.

Heldstab graduated from Central Plains High School in Claflin and enjoys hunting and fishing in his spare time. He will be interning at our Olmitz warehouse.

All three of our summer interns attended Pratt Community College for the Electrical Power Technology (EPT) program.

Western would like to welcome them to the electrical cooperative family.



Kyle Casper



Tanner Flax



Grant Heldstab

FAMILY PICNIC COLORING SHEET

An outdoor picnic is a great way to spend time with your family! Cooking outdoors also helps you save energy because you don't have to use appliances that heat your home.

