

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC NEWS

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NRECA to Conduct General Manager Search

Due to the recent vacancy in the general manager position, the Western Cooperative Electric Board has contracted with National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) Executive Search Department to facilitate the new general manager search process.

Please direct inquiries regarding the general manager position to:

TAMMY LEHMAN

NRECA Executive Search

executivesearch@nreca.coop

785-764-0296

Hiring a new general manager is the most important decision that a Board will make, and we take this responsibility as a challenge to build on Western Cooperative Electric's fine reputation and to enhance its future performance for our members.

We would like to assure the community, employees and the membership that we are doing everything in our power to identify not only the best technically capable individual, but the best "person" to lead the cooperative and represent Western Cooperative Electric in the community and industry.

We appreciate your support and understand that this is a time of change and perhaps some anxiety. We know that you may have concerns and ask that you trust that we will fulfill our obligations and exceed your expectations. That is our goal and responsibility to you, Western Cooperative Electric's member-owners.

*Western Cooperative Electric
Board of Trustees*

Deines and Malsam Named Co-Interim Managers

At Western Cooperative Electric's monthly Board meeting held Thursday, Sept. 21, **DENNIS DEINES** and **STACEY MALSAM** were named co-Interim managers until the general manager position is filled.

"We are humbled to be partners with Western Cooperative Electric's team," stated Malsam and Deines.

"Western's Board is confident

Stacey and Dennis will continue to provide member-owners with reliable electric service at an affordable price," stated Craig Crossland, Board chairman.



Dennis Deines

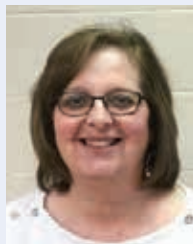


Stacey Malsam

Get to Know Your Western
Cooperative Electric Staff
Sandy Smith
Customer Service Representative

**TELL US
ABOUT
YOUR FAMILY.**

My husband, Greg, and I have been married 37 years. Our son James was born premature and died shortly after birth. Our son Trenton and his wife, Sarah, live in Pueblo, Colorado. Our daughter Jill and her husband, Aaron, live in Plainview, Texas. Our son Nolan lives in WaKeeney. We also have a Dachshund named Savanna.



Sandy Smith

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED AT WESTERN?

12 years

WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY?

Osborne

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

Going to sporting events and taking pictures.

WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

My family.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE VACATION?

Going to see our kids in Colorado and Texas, and going to Disney World in Florida.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MOVIE?

Frozen

WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE TEAM?

My favorite teams are the Fort Hays State University Tigers and the KU Jayhawks.

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

A dog. I just like them.

WHAT IS SOMETHING PEOPLE MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT YOU?

I taught business education at Lucas-Luray High School (1982-1986). I ran the mile in high school.

Boosting Home Heating Efficiency

Cold winter temperatures can drive up heating costs. However, there are simple steps that can be taken to help cut those costs by making your home heating more efficient.

Western Cooperative Electric suggests these tips that will increase heating efficiency and help you manage your heating expenses:

- ▶ Adjust your thermostat based on your needs. While away at school or work, turn the thermostat down. You can also turn the thermostat down at night when you can cover up with blankets. A programmable thermostat can automatically make these adjustments for you
- ▶ Replace your furnace filter monthly to save energy and improve heat circulation.



Conserve energy by using a programmable thermostat to lower the temperature of your home when you are away.

- ▶ Use the sunlight's natural heat to your advantage by opening curtains and blinds on sunny days to warm your home.
- ▶ Close your fireplace damper when you are not using the fireplace. This prevents heat from escaping and cold from entering through your chimney.
- ▶ If you have older or leaky windows, consider temporary fixes, such as plastic film kits that create the effect of an interior storm window.
- ▶ Weather stripping is relatively easy and available at your local home improvement store. Stop drafts from coming in and heat from leaking out of your home through drafty doors and windows.
- ▶ Use caulk to seal gaps in the walls of your home or apartment. Wherever different building materials meet, or wiring comes out of a wall, there are gaps that may contribute to the loss of heat in your home.



Avoid heat loss by adding weather stripping and caulking to your windows.

Daylight Saving Time Ends Nov. 5

Don't forget to **fall back** and set your clocks back by one hour at 2 a.m. on Sunday, Nov. 5. This is also a great time to change batteries in your smoke detectors and have a professional check your fire extinguishers.



Heating Up Savings and Safety with Your Water Heater

Water heaters keep water at a certain temperature so that it's ready for use. Without proper maintenance, you could be wasting energy dollars and even risking safety. Western Cooperative Electric is sharing tips for the safe and efficient use of your water heater.

Steps to Safety

According to reports, younger children are most likely to sustain injuries from scalding water as they might not be able to communicate their discomfort or move if the water becomes too hot. When running water for hand washing or a bath for younger children, mix warm and cold water and check the temperature of the water with your hand first. As an additional safeguard, consider having a scald-protection valve installed to manage the flow of overheated water.

Lower your water heater's set temperature to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. The lowered temperature reduces the chance of scalding-related injuries, cuts energy costs, and slows the buildup of minerals and pipe corrosion.

Steps to Savings

- ▶ Perform regular maintenance, including draining, testing the pressure valve, and checking the temperature.
- ▶ Install a low-flow faucet and showerhead.
- ▶ Do not let the water continue to run when you are brushing your teeth, washing your hands or doing the dishes. Make it a habit to turn off the water when not needed.
- ▶ Do full loads in your dishwasher.
- ▶ Wash most of your laundry in cold water.
- ▶ Fix leaks and drips in faucets, shower heads and pipes.
- ▶ If you are away from the home for three days or more, turn down the water heater's thermostat to the lowest setting or completely turn off the water heater.
- ▶ If your tank is warm to the touch, it could use additional insulation.
- ▶ When it is time to replace old or broken dishwashers, washing machines and water heaters, consider purchasing Energy Star-rated appliances, which cost less to operate.

For more safety and savings tips, follow Western Cooperative Electric on Facebook.

Keep Safety in Mind When 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 power lines 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 Cooperative Electric.

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. When starting a generator, disconnect all appliances that might be connected to

it. That will not only protect them but prevent a fuse from being blown on the generator. When refueling generators, allow the engine to cool in order to prevent a fire should the gas tank overflow.

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 char-

coal 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.

To conserve heat, close off unneeded rooms.

When using alternate heat sources, follow operating instructions, use fire safeguards and be sure to properly ventilate.



Energy Efficiency for the Modern Family

If you are struck by the number of screens, remotes, gaming controls, charging stations and cords that have become fixtures in your home, you are not alone. The typical American family is well connected and owns a variety of electronic devices. According to a private research institute, 95 percent of U.S. families have a cell phone and 77 percent of Americans own a smart phone. Nearly 80 percent of adults own a laptop or desktop computer, while approximately half own tablets.

Consumer electronics coupled with the growing array of smart home appliances and technology have slowly but steadily changed our homes and lifestyles. The increased reliance on our many devices has new implications for home energy use and efficiency.

Using smart technology to manage energy savings

So how can we save energy when we are using more electronic devices than ever before? The answer may lie with some of those same electronic devices that have become indispensable to modern living. In many cases, energy savings is a touchscreen away as more apps enable you to monitor energy use.

From the convenience of your mobile device, smart technologies can maximize your ability to manage electricity use across several platforms—controlling your thermostat, appliances, water heater, home electronics and other devices. One of the easiest ways to make an impact on energy efficiency is with a smart thermostat. Using your mobile device, you

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can view and edit your thermostat schedule and monitor how much energy is used and adjust accordingly. For example, program your thermostat for weekday and weekend schedules so you are not wasting energy when no one is home. Check and adjust the program periodically to keep pace with changes in household routines.

You can also ensure efficiency by purchasing Energy Star-certified appliances. Many new appliances include smart-technology features such as refrigerators that can tell you when maintenance is required or when a door has been left open. New washers, dryers and dishwashers allow you to program when you want the load to start. This means you can program your task for off-peak energy hours—a smart choice if your electric rate is based on time of use.

“Old school” energy savings for new devices

Of course, there are the time-tested “old school” methods of energy efficiency that can be applied to the myriad household electronic devices and screens. Computers, printers, phones and gaming consoles are notorious “vampire power” users, meaning they drain energy (and money) when not in use. If items can be turned off without disrupting your lifestyle, consider plugging them into a power strip that can be turned on and off or placed on a timer.

While modern life involves greater dependence on technology, your best resource for saving energy and money remains Western Cooperative Electric.

Regardless of your level of technical expertise with electronic devices, Western Cooperative Electric can provide guidance on energy savings based on your account information, energy use, local weather patterns and additional factors unique to our community. For assistance on increasing energy efficiency in your home, give us a call at 785-743-5561.

