



An Equal Opportunity Provider & Employer

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

P.O. Box 278, WaKeeney, KS 67672

800-456-6720

www.westerncoop.com

www.facebook.com/WesternCoopElectric



WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC NEWS

Western Cooperative Electric, Inc.

Board of Trustees

Craig Crossland
President

Terry Hobbs
Vice President

Richard Schaus
Secretary-Treasurer

Landon Heier
Trustee

Frank Joy
Trustee

Marvin Keller
Trustee

Charles Luetters
Trustee

Susan Rohleder
Trustee

Dale Weinhold
Trustee

General Manager

Tom Ruth
General Manager

Contact Us

635 S. 13th Street
P.O. Box 278, WaKeeney, KS 67672
785-743-5561
FAX: 785-743-2717
www.westerncoop.com

Like us on Facebook

Be sure to LIKE us on Facebook! Just go to www.facebook.com/WesternCoopElectric to find co-op news, energy tips, photos from co-op events and more!



FROM THE MANAGER

Make Your Voice Heard



Tom Ruth

There's an old political saying, "if you're not at the table, you're on the menu." This adage is the perfect answer to the question, "why vote?" It's a blunt description

of what happens when you don't engage in the political process.

If you don't vote, you're not only missing the opportunity to support a candidate who shares your views and concerns, you're allowing others to chart a course that impacts your future. That's why we're encouraging all Western Cooperative members to recognize National Voter Registration Day on Sept. 22. Whether you're registering yourself or helping members of our

community get organized, there are many ways to get involved.

Your Vision, Your Vote

While local elections may not be as exciting as the high-profile presidential election, they are just as critical. Local elections have a direct impact on your community and on your quality of life.

Like the national level, local elections represent who we are as a community, and more importantly, where we want to go. Whether it's an election for a mayor, sheriff, state representative, school board, or an electric co-op board member, your vision for the community is tied to your vote.

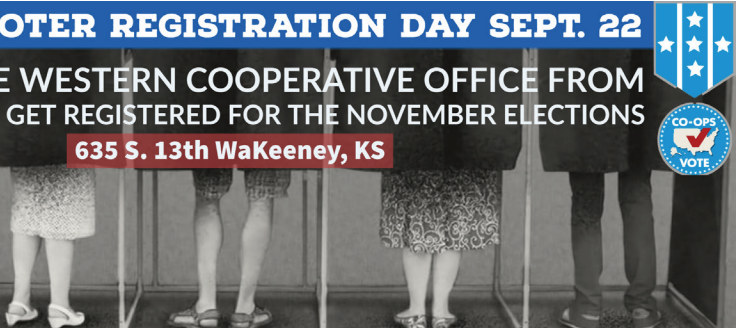
A strong voter turnout shows investment in the community and ensures diverse views are represented. The whole community benefits when more people participate in the process be-

Continued on page 16C

NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY SEPT. 22

JOIN US AT THE WESTERN COOPERATIVE OFFICE FROM 10 AM TO 2 PM TO GET REGISTERED FOR THE NOVEMBER ELECTIONS

635 S. 13th WaKeeney, KS



Western Awards \$500 Scholarships in Lieu of Youth Trips

Like so many other activities scheduled in 2020, Western's Youth Programs were canceled due to safety concerns related to COVID-19. In place of the youth trips, students will be awarded \$500 scholarships for the 2021-2022 academic year.

In March, Western was thrilled to announce four local students were selected to represent the cooperative at the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., and Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

JONATHAN SPACHEK, Ellsworth High School, and **ETHAN REEVER**, Otis-Bison High School, were selected to attend the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. During the trip, the students would have met with politicians, toured the nation's capital and participated in several events with other students from all over the United States.

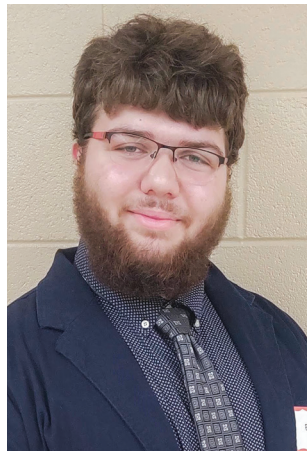
Spachek was looking forward to this trip of a lifetime, "I was excited to be selected for the interview process and was even more excited when I was selected to go to Washington, D.C.," he said. "I was very disappointed when the Youth Tour was canceled. I wish I had the opportunity to tour the White House, visit the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, and participate in events where I could meet people from all across the country."

In early June, it was announced Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, would also be canceled. **ALICIA PHLIEGER**, Hays High School, and **SAMANTHA ROBBEN**, Hoxie High School, had been selected as the Western representatives. At camp students would have learned about the cooperative business model while enhancing their leadership and communication skills.

Despite not going on the trip, Phlieger believed the selection process was still a valuable experience. "Participating in the interview process is an experience that will be extremely beneficial in my future. I'm thankful for all the members of Western Cooperative Electric who made it possible," said Phlieger.

"We were deeply saddened to hear the trips were canceled. This is such an amazing opportunity for our local students to meet other youth students from all over the country, but with the health of our students in mind, canceling these trips was the right thing to do," said Nolan Numrich, member services manager. "Hopefully, we can get back on track next year, these are two great programs, and we are looking forward to continuing them in 2021."

To apply for the trips in 2021, qualified high school juniors who have a parent or guardian who receives power from Western Cooperative, can check out westerncoop.com/youthprograms or follow Western Cooperative Electric on Facebook for more information.



ETHAN REEVER
Youth Tour



JONATHAN SPACHEK
Youth Tour



ALICIA PHLIEGER
Camp



SAMANTHA ROBBEN
Camp



CARLEE FLAX
Trip Alternate and Darrell Brown
Memorial Scholarship

Stay Informed of Power Outages

If you follow Western Cooperative Electric on Facebook, you may have noticed the updated outage notification graphics. Recently, Western has placed more emphasis on keeping members informed through social media. Look for the large power outage notifications, and we will provide updates as more information becomes available.

“A few years ago, Western made the investment to switch to advanced meter infrastructure (AMI) and it has really started to pay dividends on how quickly and efficiently we can restore outages,” Line Superintendent Ron Aschenbrenner said. “Through AMI we get a great overview of the entire system to see which meters are out,

Keep your Storm Safety Kit Up-To-Date

- ▶ Drinking water and food
- ▶ Blankets, pillows and clothing
- ▶ Basic first-aid supplies
- ▶ Prescriptions
- ▶ Basic toiletries
- ▶ Flashlights
- ▶ Battery-operated radio
- ▶ Battery-operated clock
- ▶ Extra supply of batteries
- ▶ Phone
- ▶ Cash and credit cards
- ▶ Emergency numbers
- ▶ Important documents (in a waterproof container)
- ▶ Toys, books, games, and baby supplies
- ▶ Pet supplies

and where, that way we can dispatch linemen to the places they are needed the most.”

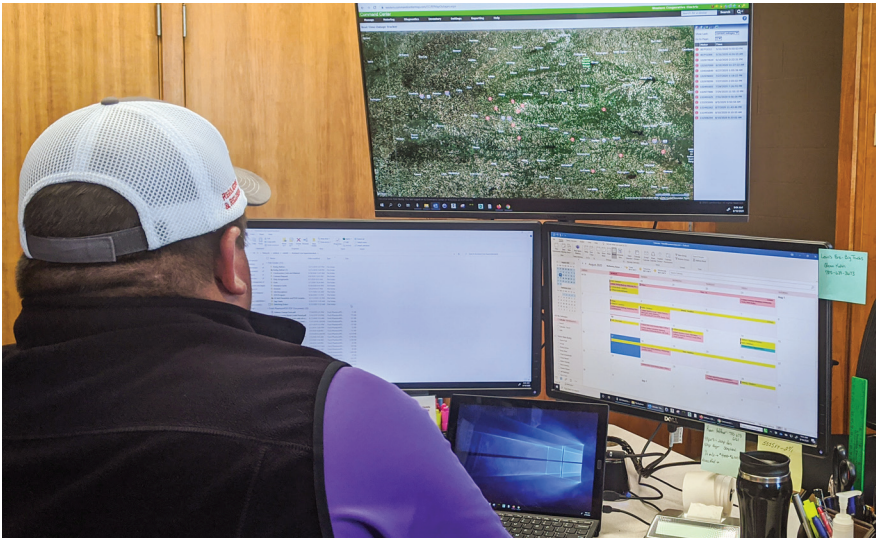
Although AMI gives Western the ability to see which meters are active, as is the case with any computer system, there can be glitches that do not get resolved immediately. During

a power outage, there are a few steps that should always be taken.

First, always check the fuses or circuit breakers inside the house. To find out if the outage is only affecting your meter, try contacting your nearest neighbor to see if their power is out too. Look for an outage notification on Facebook to see if Western is experiencing large scale power outages in your area. Finally, call 800-456-6720 to report your outage. Live customer service representatives are available 24-hours a day to receive outage calls.

When calling to report an outage, please include:

- ▶ Your name and phone number;
- ▶ Location of the service, account number and meter number if available; and
- ▶ Any other information pertaining to the outage to help Western Cooperative Electric personnel locate the problem so power may be restored quickly.



Assistant Line Superintendent Nate Budig checks Western's AMI system to see where outages are occurring.

Make Your Voice Heard *Continued from page 16A*

cause greater numbers reflect a consensus on the direction of the future and the will of the people.

By voting in national, state, and local elections, you are serving as a role model for your family, friends, and colleagues. The act of voting demonstrates your support for the community and helps officials chart a course for the future. Democracy is not a spectator sport. Research candidates, learn about issues on the ballot, and get out and vote!

Join Us

As part of National Voter Registration Day, pending public health concerns, Western Cooperative plans on hosting a voter registration drive at our WaKeeney office, 635 S. 13th on Sept. 22 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. You must be registered prior to the November elections to vote.

To learn more about National Voter Registration Day or to get involved, visit www.nationalvoterregistrationday.org or follow Western Cooperative Electric on Facebook!

Saving Money in the Laundry Room

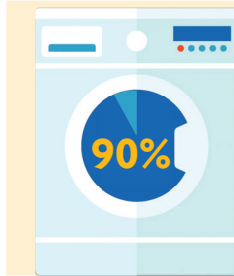
A washer and dryer inside the home is a luxury many enjoy. There's no waiting for a machine, no coin slots, and no one taking out a wet load from the washer if you aren't there when the cycle ends.

Although it's cheaper per load and much more convenient to do laundry at home, there's a somewhat hidden cost to consider, and that's the energy it takes to run your washer and dryer.

What appliances in your home use the most energy? The water heater costs the most to run. Right behind it is the washer and dryer's combined energy use. (Although not considered appliances by many, heating/cooling tops the list, followed by the hot water heater.)

A dryer requires more energy to run than a washer, but there are ways to reduce your washing costs, too (think hot water versus cold). To save money in your laundry room, consider these tips:

- ▶ Select the right amount of water for the wash load — that is, don't select the "extra-large" setting when doing a small load. In fact, consider waiting to do laundry until you have full loads to conserve water.
- ▶ Cut a load's energy use in half by using warm water instead of hot, and using cold water will save even more, according to energy.gov.
- ▶ Use dryer balls, which help separate clothes and get more air to them, cutting drying time.
- ▶ Clean the lint out of your dryer between loads and scrub the filter once a month to remove buildup.



About **90% OF THE ENERGY** used by washing machines goes to heating the water.

SAVE ON ENERGY COSTS by using cold or warm water.

Source: energystar.gov

- ▶ Run dryer on the lowest setting. Even if your dryer runs longer, you'll use less energy and be less likely to over-dry your clothes.
- ▶ Use cold water to save the money you would spend heating water. Some laundry detergents are designed to tackle stains in cold water.
- ▶ Put like items together since lighter-weight clothes take less time to dry. Drying towels and heavier cottons take longer.
- ▶ Use the moisture sensor option on your dryer if it has one.
- ▶ Take a clue from your teenage son and wear clothes more than once between laundering them (although don't wait until your jeans can stand by themselves).
- ▶ Purchase an Energy Star® dryer, which uses 20% less energy than a conventional model.
- ▶ Energy Star-certified washers use about 33% less water than regular clothes washers.
- ▶ Thoroughly clean your dryer's vents and duct system at least twice a year.

To learn more about how much you are spending to run your washer and dryer each year, refer to energy.gov's appliance energy use calculator.

FARM SAFETY

Make sure everyone is trained in safe practices around electricity. Use these safety tips for you, your employees, seasonal workers, family members, and anyone else accessing your farm.

- ▶ Keep equipment at least 20 feet from lines — at all times, in all directions.
- ▶ Know all power line locations on your farm and routes between fields.
- ▶ Always use a spotter when moving equipment near power lines.
- ▶ Don't completely rely on autosteer or GPS to detect and clear power lines or poles.
- ▶ Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- ▶ If a power line is sagging or low, contact your local electric cooperative.

If your equipment hits a power line, pole or guy wire, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 911, warn others to stay away and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.

POWER LINE AWARENESS

