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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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# WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC NEWS

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General Manager

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## FROM THE MANAGER

# Thankful for Those Who Served

With Thanksgiving and Veterans Day quickly approaching, it seems only fitting that these two holidays reside in the same month. Without one, we might not have the other and vice-versa. This month I would like to focus on the veterans who have served this country and upheld its founding principles.

Similar to the Bill of Rights, co-ops follow a guiding set of Seven Cooperative Principles. If you have ever heard me speak at the annual meeting or in passing, chances are you heard me refer to Western as a red, white and blue co-op that does what co-ops are supposed to do, and I believe that. Western Co-op was formed in 1945 to serve you, the members.

Having a dedication to the service of others is what drives many Americans to take the oath and join the armed forces. On this Veterans Day, we will celebrate and honor America's veterans and their spouses for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

Although there is currently a great deal of divisiveness in our country, we should never forget the sacrifices that have made America what it is, "the greatest country on earth." While reflecting on who we are as a nation today, it is worth remembering how our freedoms have been



Tom Ruth

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## ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

Fall is the perfect time to prep your home for the upcoming winter chill. One of the best ways you can save energy and stay comfortable is to caulk and weatherstrip areas that typically need sealing. Start by sealing around windows and doors. Seal plumbing, ducting, and areas where electrical wiring comes through walls, floors and ceilings for additional energy savings. **SOURCE: ENERGY.GOV**



# Thankful for Those Who Served

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**SHELLI NOWLIN**

Member Service Representative  
U.S. Army active 1986-1992, inactive 1992-1994  
Medical Supply Specialist



**E. JAY DENIES**

Legal Counsel  
U.S. Army 1962-1965  
Radar Maintenance



**AARON FRIEB**

Olmitz Line Foreman  
U.S. Army 2006-2012  
Utilities Equipment  
Repairman



**NOLAN NUMRICH**

Member Services Manager  
U.S. Marines 2004-2008  
Field Artillery Cannoneer



**TOM RUTH**

General Manager  
U.S. Coast Guard 1981-1994  
Electronic  
Communications



**JAY SCOTT**

Safety Manager  
U.S. Army 1992-1996,  
National Guard 1996-  
2000, Mobile Subscriber  
Transmission System  
Operator



**DALE WEINHOLT**

Western Trustee  
U.S. Air Force 1964-1968  
Communication Teletype



★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## VETERANS DAY

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

Thank you to all of our veterans  
for their sacrifice.

fought for over many centuries to remain protected.

Inclusion means having an open and voluntary membership that does not exclude based on race, religion, gender, or economic status. Similarly, our veterans come from all sorts of backgrounds to form something greater than the sum of their parts and inspire us to seek a greater good for every American.

Western has several veterans in our organization. While we know them as our coworkers, each had a role in serving our country. Military veterans and co-op employees share a sense of duty when it comes to serving others. Whether deployed overseas or a lineman responding to a power outage in the middle of a snowstorm, we should focus on the selfless act of serving either a country or a member.

When we say our pledge of allegiance to the United States of America, it's more than just words. It's a way of life, an idea that we aspire to because of our inherent values and beliefs. The flag may be abstract, but it symbolizes the hope for a brighter future for all humanity, a commitment to our constitution, and honors the sacrifices required to maintain a free nation.

We are sincerely grateful for your service. Your service comes with many sacrifices to self and family, and we recognize our words are not enough to express the gratitude we hold in our hearts for our veterans. **THANK YOU!**

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and Money**



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your convenience through SmartHub.**



Safety and Risk Management Instructor Chuck Tiemann spoke to Western employees about his personal experience and the dangers of line work.



## What is the Cost of Being Unsafe at Work?

Safety and Risk Management Instructor Chuck Tiemann recently visited Western Cooperative Electric to discuss working safely with high voltage and what his personal experiences have cost him in his life.

In 1980, as a lineworker at Kay Electric Cooperative in Blackwell, Oklahoma, Chuck was repairing storm-damaged power lines. He was told the power had been disconnected and the grounds installed on the section of line he was working on. Sadly that was not the case.

Chuck decided to only wear his

leather gloves instead of his rubber gloves, assuming his coworker cut the power. As he was climbing the pole, Chuck reached up and made contact with an energized 7,200-volt power line. As a result of the accident, he died, was brought back to life, and eventually underwent the amputation of his left arm and right leg.

Chuck credits his wife for pushing him to regain his independence following the accident. Terri, who was Chuck's high school sweetheart and only 24 years old herself at the time of the accident, helped push him and turn the challenges they faced into opportunities.

For the past 40 years, Chuck has been committed to teaching others about electrical safety. "That's why I'm doing what I'm doing," Chuck said. "I'm trying to make people a little smarter about electricity. I'm trying to make a difference." During his career, Chuck has spoken at 444 of the 812 electric distribution cooperatives in the United States, along with countless other organizations.

"Having Chuck recount his [electrical] contact incident and how it affected him and all of the people in his life was extremely powerful," said Western Safety Manager Jay Scott. "It is incred-



Chuck Tiemann, safety and risk management instructor, with Dalton Hensley, lineman apprentice.



Following his presentation, Tiemann had Dalton Hensley demonstrate an emergency bucket exit at normal working height.

ible how quickly things can go wrong if we become complacent about safety and communication."

During his presentation, Chuck emphasized that his missteps were easily preventable, and they should serve as a reminder for all lineworkers not to take shortcuts or make assumptions when working with high voltage.

"I don't know why my life was spared. But I'm thankful for it," Chuck said. "I take not one day for granted. Not one breath of life do I take for granted because life is precious, and it could be gone that quick. And I understand that."

## ‘Watt’ to Know about Appliance Electricity Use

Become ‘watt’ savvy before purchasing appliances, using generator

Determining how much electricity your appliances and home electronics use can help you understand how much money you are spending to operate them. Electricity is measured in units of power called watts, and one watt is a joule of energy used or produced per second.

The power consumption of small devices is usually measured in watts, while the power use of larger devices is measured in kilowatts (kW) (1 kW equals 1,000 watts). Knowing how much electricity an appliance uses and how much the electricity costs can help you decide whether to invest in a more energy-efficient appliance or make other cost-saving decisions, such as unplugging appliances when not in use. Becoming watt savvy is also helpful if you are considering purchasing a generator.

There are several ways to estimate how much electricity your appliances and home electronics use.

### See the Data Plate

Appliances usually have data plates located on the back or inside the door. They tell you how many amps, watts and volts are needed to power the appliance. If your appliance does not list watts for some reason but does list the number of volts and amps, you can multiply volts times amps to get the number of necessary watts.

### Review the EnergyGuide Label

The EnergyGuide label, a yellow-colored sticker or tag found on new products, provides an estimate of the average energy consumption and cost to operate the specific model of the appliance you are considering. The FTC requires the label, and the dollar amount is the estimated yearly operating cost based on the national average cost of electricity.

### Use a Monitor or Meter

Wattage meters are affordable instruments that are easy to use and can measure the electricity usage of any device that runs on 120 volts. To put it to work, just plug the monitor into the electrical outlet and then plug the device into the monitor. The monitor will display how many watts the device uses. If you want to know how many kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity a device uses over a length of time, just leave everything set up and read the display later. Some monitors even allow you to plug in your utility's cost per kWh rate to determine how much that specific appliance costs you over a certain length of time.

### Install a whole-House System

Whole-house energy monitoring systems provide more detailed data on your home's energy use (as well as the ability to measure the energy use of 240-volt appliances). The features of these systems vary, and the cost and complexity depend on the number of circuits you want to monitor, how detailed the feedback is and the type of features available. The monitors are often installed directly into the main breaker panel of the home, and some require an electrician to install. Some monitors must be connected to your home's wireless network, with data being viewed on a computer or smartphone, while others come with a dedicated display. In addition to providing information on the energy consumption of your appliances, this type of monitoring system helps you understand where and when you use the most energy, allowing you to develop strategies to reduce your energy use and costs.

## Cold Weather Accommodation Effective Nov. 15

The Cold Weather Accommodation policy for residential members runs from November 15 to March 15. This policy allows for delinquent accounts to be subject to disconnection when temperatures exceed 35 degrees for the ensuing 24-hours following the disconnection. This policy does not pertain to PrePayPower billing accounts. For the complete policy, visit [WESTERNCOOP.COM/RULES-AND-REGULATIONS](http://WESTERNCOOP.COM/RULES-AND-REGULATIONS).



Our office will be closed Thursday, Nov. 25, and Friday, Nov. 26, to allow our staff time to celebrate Thanksgiving with their families.

*We hope you have a safe and happy holiday.*