

Rural Power

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Co-ops partner to offer Building Operator Certification Training

While many commercial and industrial members are already taking steps to become energy efficient, training is now being offered to help companies save money by improving the efficiency of HVAC and lighting systems—the biggest energy users—while giving their staff the tools to research and pursue more efficient operational methods.

The Kansas electric cooperatives have partnered with the Kansas State Energy Office, the Kansas Municipal Utilities, and Westar Energy to offer the Building Operator Certification (BOC) training program.

BOC training is a nationally recognized competency-based program designed for building operators and maintenance staff who are responsible for the day-to-day maintenance and operation of large buildings with complex heating, mechanical and electrical systems. This certification program includes more than 80 hours of classroom and project work in building systems operation and maintenance. BOC participants save an average of \$12,000 per facility per year.

Mike Volker, Midwest Energy's director of regulatory & energy services, said that Midwest Energy offers this training to its large C&I members to accomplish two things.

"One, we'd like to see them run their facilities in a more efficient and profitable manner. If they succeed, we succeed. By using energy wisely and understanding rates, it makes it better for them and for all of our customers," Volker said. "Two, obviously because the training is going through us, we want to strengthen our relationship with our key accounts."

Volker explained that before the electric cooperatives' partnership with the State Energy Office to offer this program, Midwest Energy had a tariff approved and partnered with Westar to offer this training and certification.

"This training is designed for our commercial customers large enough who have an energy manager," he said. "However, we don't have enough large customers to offer a class by ourselves, so we've partnered with Westar when

they've put on classes."

Midwest Energy started their partnership with Westar last year.

"We believe if we can get other utilities involved, we can make it better for all customers because we can offer more classes at more convenient locations," Volker stated.

The Kansas Energy Office has secured grant funding in the amount of \$85,000 to defray the cost of cooperative and municipal participation in the training. These funds will allow the cooperatives and municipals to pilot test the program to see if it is beneficial. The grant funds will be available to offset the

\$1,700 per student (tuition plus fees) that is paid for program management in Kansas.

Additionally, scholarships worth up to \$575 toward the \$1,150 tuition cost of the training is available from the Kansas State Energy Sector Partnership & Training (SESPT) Grant for individuals meeting eligibility criteria.

"We've had five people complete the training so far," Volker explained. "Midwest Energy has reimbursed half of the tuition fee after the training for those who complete the certification process."

Katy Rex, Westar's energy efficiency account manager, said, "Anyone in the state of Kansas can attend. We started the first course series at the end of 2009, and we are currently at our 8th course series."

These courses have already begun in Wichita and Pittsburg, but training is also scheduled for Parsons, Topeka, and Kansas City. Courses are limited to 25 attendees. Training dates and course descriptions are listed at <http://www.westarenergy.com/boc>.

The BOC program was developed by the Northwest Energy Efficiency Council, which licenses the program to Midwestern states through the Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance. For more information about the training or the SESPT Grant, email BOC@WestarEnergy.com or call 1-888-WORKS-50 (967-5750) or 316-261-6585. For more about Midwest Energy's program, visit www.mwenergy.com/boc.aspx.



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Duke Energy to deploy energy storage technology at Texas wind farm

Duke Energy intends to store electricity generated at its Notrees Windpower Project in Texas using an energy storage and power management system developed by Austin-based Xtreme Power. Duke Energy announced plans to match a \$22 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy to install large-scale batteries capable of storing electricity produced by the 153-megawatt wind farm. Duke Energy is targeting an in-service date for the storage system by late 2012.

DUKE ENERGY - 4/14/11

Google to invest in world's largest wind farm

Google, ITOCHU Corporation and Sumitomo Corporation investing approximately \$500 million in the world's largest wind farm, the 845-megawatt Shepherds Flat wind project under construction near Arlington, OR. This \$2 billion project broadens the renewable energy portfolio of its new investors.

GE ENERGY - 4/19/11

New legislation makes Texan's electric bills more transparent

Two bills pending in the Texas Legislature, would require all competitive electricity providers to offer a standard one-year, fixed-rate package, easing the confusion associated with hidden fees and charges felt by many Texas consumers in the deregulated electricity market. The proposed standard plan would present consumers with a clear-cut choice on which provider to select – a standard retail service package on a standard form with standard terms, where the only difference would be the price of electricity.

RECHARGE TEXAS - 4/14/11

MAY

- 1-4 **NRECA Legislative Conference**, Washington, D.C.
- 3 **Caney Valley Annual Meeting**, dinner at 5:30 p.m., meeting at 7 p.m., Chautauqua County Fairgrounds, North Park Avenue, Sedan.
- 9-12 **NRECA's Connect Conference**, Denver, Colorado.
- 11 **Western Annual Meeting**, lunch at 12 p.m., meeting at 1 p.m., co-op headquarters, 635 S. 13th Street, WaKeeney.
- 11 **KEC Committee Meetings**, Marriott Hotel, Wichita. 10 a.m. – Apparatus Testing Committee Meeting. 1:30 p.m. – Loss Control Safety and Compliance Committee Meeting
- 12 **KEC Board of Trustees Meeting**, Marriott Hotel, Wichita.
- 13 **Tri-County Annual Meeting**, dinner at 5:30 p.m., meeting at 6 p.m., Texas County Activity Center, 5th Street and Sunset, Guymon, Oklahoma.
- 18-19 **KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting**, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka.
- 20 **Sunflower Annual Meeting and Board of Directors Meeting**, Lane-Scott Headquarters, Dighton.
- 26 **MDM Meeting**, KEC Headquarters, Topeka.

JUNE

- 2-3 **REC Manager's Meeting**, Hyatt Regency, Wichita.
- 9-16 **"Government in Action" Youth Tour**, Washington, D.C.
- 17 **Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting**, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays.
- 23 **MDM Meeting**, KEC Headquarters, Topeka.

Kansas co-op delegates prepare for Legislative Conference

Every May, Kansas co-op advocates travel to Washington, D.C., for the annual NRECA Legislative Conference.

This year's group, made up of 30 directors, managers, and employees, will spend time on Capitol Hill talking to the Kansas congressional delegations about legislative issues affecting electric cooperatives and their member-owners.

The Kansas delegation will join with other cooperative officials from across the nation from May 1-4 to discuss legislation and regulatory issues impacting electric cooperatives.

"We will deliver the co-op message on the EPA's new and more stringent rules governing air quality and coal ash management, as well as on the Department of Agriculture's RUS Loan Program continuation and equitable renewable generation tax incentives," said Dave Holthaus, KEC's manager of government relations.

He continued, "There is an old saying in politics, 'If you're not at the table, you're on the menu.' It means that you have to be involved politically. You

can't sit on the sidelines. Only by participating in the process do you have an opportunity to make a difference."

Electric cooperatives face enormous challenges that must be addressed on Capitol Hill. They must meet the enormous demands for new generation, efficiency programs, renewable power and R&D to develop technologies that will reduce carbon emissions while providing member-owners with safe, reliable electric power in the most cost-effective manner possible.

All of these challenges must be met in a difficult political climate where key decision makers are determined to use the regulations to transform both the way the nation generates and uses electricity.

Holthaus explained that it is apparent that the electricity sector, including electric cooperatives, is on the cusp of enormous change.

Holthaus added, "The Kansas electric cooperatives have a long history of visiting with our elected officials during this national NRECA event, and we believe this work amplifies our position on issues vital to all co-ops."

There is an old saying in politics, "If you're not at the table, you're on the menu."

DAVE HOLTHAUS

Victory's Jerri Imgarten participates in Certified Cooperative Communicator pilot study program

The way some cooperative communicators study for the Certified Cooperative Communicator (CCC) exam will be quite different from the past.

Mainly, they won't be going it alone.

Former CCC candidates have expressed a desire for group learning opportunities to prepare for the four-hour essay test. But since candidates are scattered across the nation, in-person "study groups" were not feasible.

Now, due to the efforts of Rick Petty, director of communications and member services at Logan County Electric Cooperative in Ohio, the Internet is shortening that distance.

Petty, also a candidate, volunteered to set up an online learning community for the CCC exam. He likens the online learning process to whitewater rafting.

"Although the river is fairly well-defined, each trip down is an entirely different adventure that's determined by the people in the raft," says Petty.

The eight participating candidates will work their way through 26 weeks of sessions that require a minimum commitment of six hours online each week. The group will use



Jerri Imgarten

the CCC program's "Body of Knowledge" as a curriculum. Each candidate is responsible for leading a part of the study.

One of the eight participants is Jerri Imgarten, Victory's communications specialist.

"Earning my CCC designation will give me the opportunity to expand my knowledge of the cooperative industry," she said. "The exam covers everything from history to finance to operations."

Most of the study materials produced by NRECA have been digitized and posted on the learning website. This material has been divided into four core units: history; cooperation among cooperatives; understanding electricity; and social media, crisis and mass communications. The candidates spend five weeks on each of the four units.

"It's a very interactive course of study," Imgarten explained. "It forces you to take this mass of information, to break it down and delve deeply into each topic. The week-by-week study schedule helps keep us on track."

Imgarten has recently completed the first stage of her CCC application process, her portfolio, and is now scheduled to take her exam in October.

For more information about the CCC program, visit www.cooperative.coop.

annual meetings

Kaw Valley

Kaw Valley held its annual meeting on April 6 at the cooperative's headquarters in Topeka. Approximately 1,000 members and guests were served dinner. Jerry Manning's report as the new manager focused on PCAs. The membership also heard from last year's youth tour winners, Elizabeth Burgett and Jaeton Martin, who reported on their experiences in Washington, D.C. KEC's Shana Read spoke about the statewide grassroots campaign.

Gene Allen, Dallas Caster, and Lloyd Wolfkuhle were re-elected to the board.

Wheatland

Wheatland held its 63rd annual meeting on April 6 at the Scott City fairgrounds. Following a meal from Webb's BBQ, the members passed a resolution to amend the bylaws to reduce the number of trustees from a maximum of 14 to a maximum of 12, and to change the description of the seven districts.

Re-elected to the board were Don Hedges, Vic Case and Patrick Riley.

Guest speakers included Stuart Lowry of KEC, and Wayne Penrod and Corey Linville of Sunflower. At the meeting, manager Neil Norman announced that he plans to retire in January 2012.

Radiant

Radiant held its annual meeting April 7 at its headquarters in Fredonia. In attendance were 400 members and guests who were served a meal prior to the meeting. Dave Holthaus of KEC and Les Evans of KEPCo spoke to the membership. Loren Dickens, Daryl Donohue and Don Songer were re-elected to the Board of Trustees.

CMS

CMS held its annual meeting on April 7 at the Meade high school. 270 members and guests were served dinner prior to the meeting. Steve Parr, KEPCo, spoke on power supply issues, and Stuart Lowry, KEC, spoke on the grassroots advocacy campaign. State Senator Garrett Love and State Representative Carl Dean Holmes were in attendance.

Gary Warden, Keith Randall and Linda Tomlinson were re-elected to the board.

Sedgwick County

Sedgwick County's annual meeting was held April 12 at Cotillion Ballroom in Wichita. There were 650 members and guests in attendance who were served dinner prior to the meeting. Employee Marlayne Hahn was honored for 35 years of service, and her son Jeff Newberry sang for the group. Alan Smarsh, Cindy Foster and Rex Smith were re-elected.

Ark Valley

Ark Valley held its 72nd annual meeting on April 12 on the State Fairgrounds in Hutchinson. There were 275 members registered for the meeting and approximately 560 meals were served.

Karl Mueldener, Director of KDHE's Bureau of Water, spoke about the nexus of water and power production and the impact federal regulations could have on the price of electricity. Staci Schroeder, the 2011 youth tour winner, presented her essay.

Steve Goering and Keith McNickle

continued on p. 4

LJEC hires Jeff Layton

LJEC recently hired Jeff Layton as a member services representative.

Layton has previously served as a member of LJEC's tree crew before starting his new position.

Originally from Los Banos, CA, Layton has served six years in the military. He moved to the Midwest in April 2009, and attended Vatterott College where he studied electrical mechanics. He is scheduled to take his electricians exam next month, and has plans to continue his studies through an online business management program.

Layton was hired to expand the services offered to LJEC's members, including to help them understand their electric bill and usage, and what savings, safety and rebate programs are available.

Due to the number of high-bill complaints, Layton is prepared to make personal visits to the LJEC members to monitor appliance usage, identify phantom loads and perform a usage evaluation.

This evaluation will help LJEC members determine areas of their home for potential power savings.

Layton will also be actively involved in promoting electrical safety at schools and other organizations.



Jeff Layton

annual meetings

were re-elected and Dan Schnurr was newly elected.

Victory

Victory held its annual meeting April 12th at the Civic Center in Dodge City. 870 meals were served to 426 members and their guests. Board member Milam Jones was replaced by Randy Quint, a former Victory employee. House Representative Brian Weber and Senator Garrett Love were in attendance as were representatives for Jerry Moran and Tim Huelskamp.

KAMO

KAMO's annual meeting was held on April 14, 2011 at the Chateau on the

Lake in Branson, Missouri. There were 261 attendees and the following were re-elected to the board: Dr. David Cupps, Robert Burk, Jack Teague, Jim Wade, Lowell Hill, and Layne Morrill.

Twin Valley

Twin Valley held its annual meeting on April 21 in Altamont. More than 200 people enjoyed a dinner from the legendary Chicken Annies. Members heard reports from Dan Peterson, president, and Ron Holsteen, manager; youth tour winners Caleb Journot and Jennifer Nelson; KEPCo's Mark Barbee, and KEC's Stuart Lowry. Wayne Revell, Tom Ellison and Mike Allison were re-elected to the board.

jobmarket

Nebraska PPD seeks assistant general manager/operations manager

Loup Valleys RPPD is accepting applications for assistant general manager/operations manager. This position will assist the general manager with planning, organizing and maintaining the distribution and sub-transmission system. Duties will include shared responsibilities for developing, implementing and evaluating programs, policies and procedures for organization and personnel administration.

The position requires 10 years of experience in power systems operations and/or engineering. Organizational and administration management in an

electric utility is desirable. Negotiating and interacting with the public is necessary. Must be innovative and focused on quality and safety while being a self-starter. High school diploma required.

Loup Valleys is a public power district with 18 employees serving approximately 5,300 meters. Offices are located in Ord, NE.

Interested candidates are to direct inquiries to Chuck Fuhrer, 606 S Street, Ord, NE 68862, 308-728-3633. Send a resume, a minimum of three letters of recommendation, and salary expectations by June 10. EOE.



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