



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Bluestem Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
1000 South Wind Dr., P.O. Box 5  
Wamego, KS 66547  
800-558-1580

[www.bluestemelectric.com](http://www.bluestemelectric.com)

# Bluestem NEWS

## BLUESTEM ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Mark Diederich**

President

**Donald Classen**

Vice President

**Bruce Meyer**

Secretary

**Amanda Gnadt**

Treasurer

**Patricia Bloomdahl**

Trustee

**Gary Buss**

Trustee

**Brent McKeeman**

Trustee

**Steven Ohlde**

Trustee

**Stephen J. O'Shea**

Trustee

**Matthew Rezac**

Trustee

**Richard Ridder**

Trustee

### MANAGEMENT STAFF

**Michael Leitch**

Chief Executive Officer

**Trisha Bradley**

Manager of Accounting and Finance

**Jerod Chaffee**

Manager of Line Operations

**Benjiman C. Easterberg**

Manager of AMI and Mapping/OMS

**Kevin Heptig**

Manager of Member Services

### CONTACT US

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## EXCERPT FROM THE BLUESTEM ELECTRIC BYLAWS

### Bluestem Nomination and Election Process

#### SECTION 4.05 NOMINATION OF

**TRUSTEES.** The Board shall appoint a nominating committee, on or before the first of October of each year, consisting of not less than one, nor more than five members from each district for whom a Trustee is to be elected. Board members may not serve on the nominating committee.

Only committee members from each district will nominate their own candidate. Committee members from districts one and two will meet together in any County within District #1 and/or District #2 where the Cooperative is providing a Cooperative Service and committee members from districts three and four will meet together in any County within District #3 and/or District #4 where the Cooperative is providing a Cooperative Service. Nominating committees shall meet during the month of October. On or before the first day of November, the nominating committee shall prepare and post a list of nominations for Trustee at the Wamego office and on the Cooperative Website and/or other Cooperative Social Media sites. The committee shall nominate one or more candidates for each position. Nominations may be made by petition, filed on or before the close of business, November 30, at the Wamego office. The petition must be signed by no less than 5% of the membership of the

district for whom the Trustee is to be elected. The secretary shall immediately post such nominations at the same place where the list of nominations by the committee is posted. Nominations made by the petition shall appear on the ballot in the order received.

#### SECTION 4.06 ELECTION OF

**TRUSTEES.** The election of Trustees shall be by mail ballot and/or electronic ballot as determined by the Trustees. Only those nominees selected by the nominating committee or nominated by petition shall appear on the ballot. There may be write-in votes for a qualified member not named on the ballot. The ballot shall first list the name(s) nominated by the committee, then the name(s) nominated by petition in the order received and, at the end, a place to write in a name. Failure of strict compliance with provisions of this section shall not affect the validity of any election of Trustees.

The secretary shall mail the ballots to the respective members by the 10th day of December of each year.

On or before the first day of January of each year, ballots must be postmarked or received at the Wamego office.

*Those members who have been appointed to serve on each district's respective Nominating Committee will be listed in next month's Kansas Country Living Magazine.*

## Bluestem Electric Cooperative and CoBank Partner to Provide Funding to Area Nonprofit Organizations



**Community Health Ministry Director Susan Inskeep (left) accepts a \$2,000 donation from Bluestem CEO Michael Leitch.**



**Bluestem Trustee Gary Buss (left) presents Rhonda Baer, board president of Community Food Basket Serving Northern Riley Co., and Doris Fritz, volunteer, with a donation.**



**Bluestem Electric Trustee Patricia Bloomdahl (right) presents a check for \$2,000 to Karen Bryant, Lighthouse for Christ volunteer.**

Bluestem Electric Cooperative, Inc., has partnered with CoBank to provide \$16,000 in monetary donations to four local charitable organizations: **COMMUNITY FOOD BASKET** Serving Northern Riley County in Riley; **THE LIGHTHOUSE FOR CHRIST**, in Clay Center; **COMMUNITY HEALTH MINISTRY** in Wamego; and **CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF NORTHERN KANSAS**, in Manhattan.

Bluestem gave a \$2,000 donation to each organization, which was then matched by CoBank. Throughout rural America, cooperatives are working to improve the quality of life in their communities.

The donations were part of CoBank’s “Sharing Success” Charitable Contribution Program for 2025. CoBank, headquartered outside of Denver, Colorado, is a cooperative bank serving agribusinesses and rural infrastructure providers such as Bluestem Electric and Farm Credit associations throughout the

United States. CoBank established Sharing Success in 2012. Since then, the bank and its customers have together contributed nearly \$86 million to groups such as volunteer fire departments, local schools and hunger relief programs, the majority of which are located in rural communities.

The Bluestem Board of Trustees is proud to assist these local organizations with funding to continue their mission to help those in need in Clay, Jackson, Marshall, Nemaha, Pottawatomie, Riley, Wabaunsee and surrounding counties.



**In observance of Labor Day, our office will be closed on Monday, Sept. 1.**

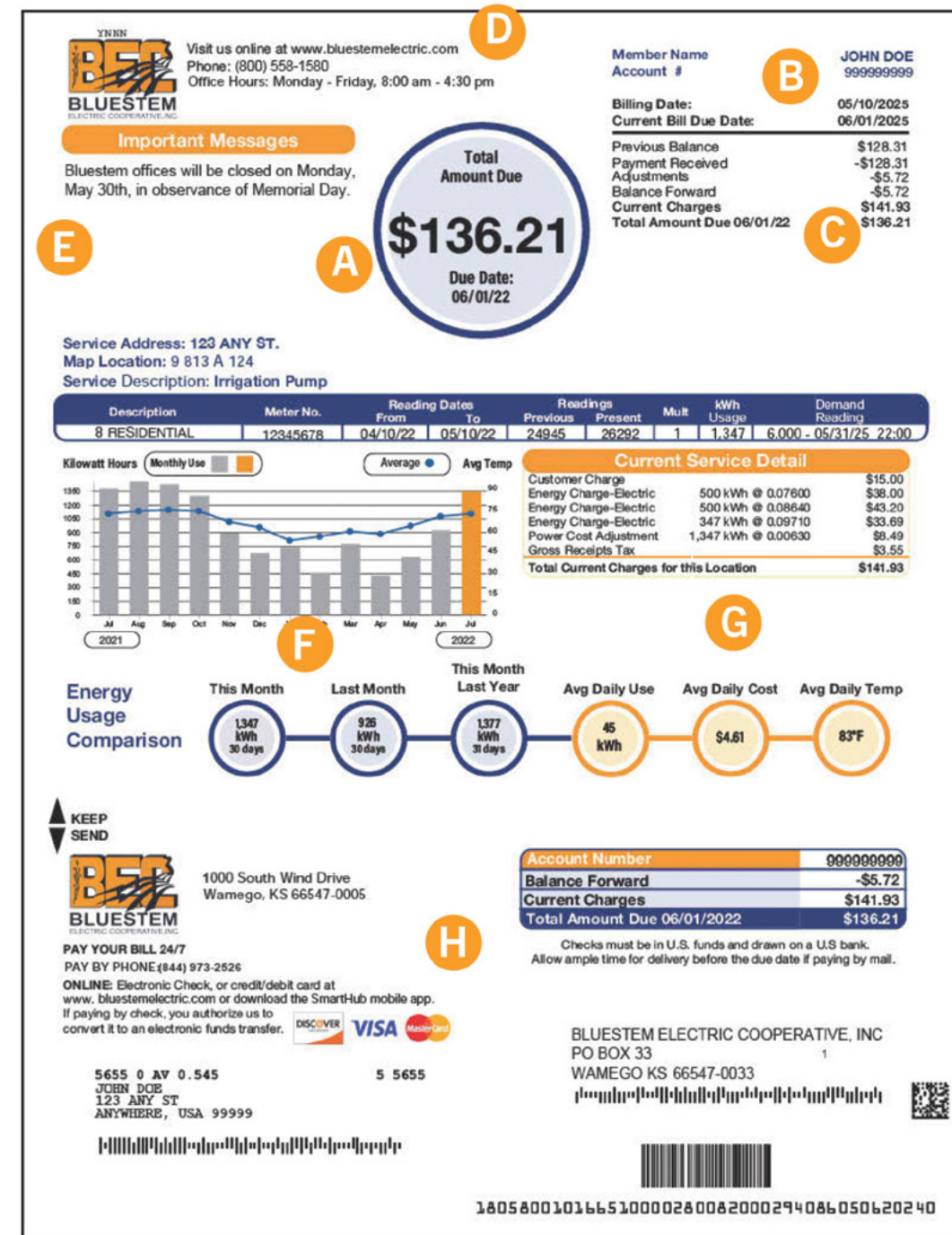
## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Replace your cooling system's filter regularly to improve airflow, energy efficiency and extend the unit's lifespan. A clean filter reduces strain on the system, saving energy and lowering bills. Check monthly, especially if you have allergies or pets. **SOURCE: [WWW.ENERGY.GOV](http://WWW.ENERGY.GOV)**

or pets. **SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV**

# Navigating Your New Electric Bill

Starting in September your bill will have a new look. You will find the same important information with some new features to make managing your account even easier.



**A TOTAL AMOUNT DUE:** This section summarizes total amount due and due date. Automatic payment would be indicated if you participate in this program.

**B YOUR ACCOUNT INFORMATION:** Your billing date, account number and account name are listed here.

**C BILLING SUMMARY:** This section shows a summary of the current account balance. It takes the total of all the charges for the current bill, adds the balance forward, and displays the total amount due for the account.

**D CONTACT INFORMATION:** Ways to contact us about your bill or account are clearly noted on your bill.

**E MESSAGE CENTER:** Important information will be listed here, which may be unique to your account or provide news about the cooperative.

**F** **GRAPH:** The usage history graph displays your usage history over the past 13 months. It compares your most recent average monthly use to the same time period as the year prior.

**G CURRENT CHARGES:** A detailed listing of the charges will be listed here.

**H** **PAYMENT STUB:** Return the bottom portion of your bill with your payment, especially if you have multiple accounts. This ensures that Bluestem applies the correct payment amount to your account(s).





## SCHOOL BUS SAFETY TIPS

School buses are among the safest vehicles on the road — but the greatest risk comes when children are getting on or off the bus. Whether you're a driver, parent or student, knowing these safety tips will help keep everyone safe.

### FOR DRIVERS

- ▶ **SLOW DOWN:** Reduce speed in school zones and near bus stops.
- ▶ **KEEP YOUR DISTANCE:** Stay back at least 10 feet from a school bus — this is the most dangerous area for children.
- ▶ **STAY ALERT:** Watch for kids who may unexpectedly enter the road, especially near bus stops.
- ▶ **RESPECT THE ZONE:** When flashers are blinking in a school zone, stop for pedestrians at crosswalks and take extra care to look for children near playgrounds, parks and residential areas.

### KNOW THE SIGNALS:

- ▶ **YELLOW FLASHING LIGHTS:** Bus is preparing to stop. Slow down.
- ▶ **RED FLASHING LIGHTS AND STOP ARM:** Bus is loading/unloading — stop and wait until the bus moves again.
- ▶ **NEVER PASS A STOPPED BUS ON AN UNDIVIDED ROAD:** It's illegal in most states.

### FOR PARENTS

Teach your child to arrive at the bus stop at least 5 minutes early, and how to play it **SAFE:**

- ▶ Stay back at least 10 feet, or five giant steps, from the curb.
- ▶ Always wait for the bus to stop and the driver to signal before boarding.
- ▶ Face forward and buckle up if seat belts are available.
- ▶ Exit carefully, look both ways and cross in front of the bus — never behind. Make eye contact with the driver before crossing.

SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG

## Chaffee Completes Leadership Training

**JEROD CHAFFEE**, manager of line operations, participated in the first Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. High Impact Leadership Academy (HILA).

HILA is a comprehensive, results-driven program designed to develop leadership skills among frontline supervisors, managers and executives. Participants engaged

in dynamic group exercises, case studies, and leadership assessments tailored specifically for Kansas electric cooperatives. Congratulations Jerod!

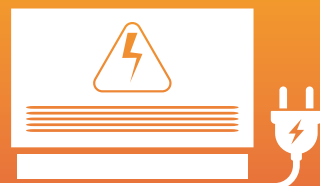


BEC Manager of Line Operations Jerod Chaffee (center) with his HILA Instructor, Brandon Rhinehart (left), and Lee Tafarielli, Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. CEO (right).

## SAFETY TIP

Keep plants and fences away from green transformer boxes — especially the padlocked side. Utility crews need at least 10 feet in front and 4 feet on the sides to work safely and quickly during outages. Keep a clear path to the transformer — even if it's in your yard. It's technically on an easement, and they still need access!

SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG



## TIPS TO AVOID UTILITY SCAMS

Delete deceptive emails. If you receive an email that appears to be from your electric utility but you are unsure about it, delete it. Never click on a link, open an attachment or send a reply to an untrusted source. When in doubt, contact your utility directly to report suspected email scams.

SOURCE: UTILITIES UNITED AGAINST SCAMS

