

Rural Power

Electronic Edition

A newsletter for and about Kansas Electric Cooperatives

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KDHE Completes Public Hearings, Extends Deadline

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) hosted a series of Air Quality Construction permit hearings on Sunflower's expansion project. These public forums – held in Garden City, Topeka, and Lawrence – followed KDHE's published draft permit that will

set emissions limits for three 700 MW electric generating units to be built at Sunflower's existing plant site south of Holcomb.

The final public hearing took place Nov. 16-17 on the campus of the University of Kansas. The meeting at the Kansas Union was heavily attended, with more than 300 people signed in for the hearing. There was obvious tension when the university public safety officers moved the people standing in the meeting room, which had capacity of 100 people, into an adjoining room where they could hear the speakers through an audio feed.

KDHE officials allowed three minutes for each person who signed up to speak. More than 70 people from across Kansas testified at the hearing that lasted until late night. KDHE called a recess and concluded the hearing the following afternoon to a much smaller crowd.

As at prior hearings, Sunflower staff made compelling and informative cases within their areas of expertise for the construction of the new coal-fired generation units at the existing Holcomb site. Additionally, a strong contingent of supporters from government and industry in Southwest Kansas expressed their support for the project, noting the economic benefits, the need for economical power, and the record of good citizenship of Sunflower and its workforce.



Sunflower's Wayne Penrod shows a rendering of the proposed expansion at the KDHE public hearing in Lawrence.

The opponents of the expansion claimed that the new units would contribute to global warming, increase mercury emissions and other pollutants, deplete water resources, and be a hindrance to the development of wind energy.

"Most who have concerns about what we

are doing, and are willing to learn more about the project, have been satisfied with our plans, because we are following every law applicable to these new plants," said Earl Watkins, Sunflower's President and CEO. "We have participated in pioneering research that will benefit hundreds of other utilities when they deal with mercury control issues."

Following the public hearings, the KDHE extended the deadline for Kansans to submit written comments regarding Sunflower's permit. Written comments must now be postmarked no later than Dec. 15, 2006.

"Because of the significant interest in this issue, we feel it is important to extend the deadline to December 15 to insure that everyone interested will have an opportunity to make their thoughts known," stated Roderick L. Bremby, Secretary of KDHE.

The department had received about 140 written comments as of Nov. 28. The original deadline to submit comments was Nov. 30.

After KDHE considers all comments, the department will compile and make available a summary of the department's responses to those comments. KDHE may also propose modifications to the draft permit, based upon comments from the public. The final decision to issue the permit will be made by Secretary Bremby.

Cooperative Calendar

December	6	KEC Committee Meetings, Marriott Hotel, Wichita. Communications - 1:30 p.m. Legislative/Regulatory Review - 3 p.m. Policies and Bylaws - 4:30 p.m.
	7	Executive Committee, Marriott Hotel, Wichita, 7 a.m.
	7	KEC Board of Trustees Meeting, Marriott Hotel, Wichita, 8:30 a.m.
	15	Sunflower Board of Directors Meeting, Sunflower Headquarters, Hays.
	20-21	KEPCo Board of Trustees Meeting, KEPCo Headquarters, Topeka.
	25	Christmas Holiday, KEC Office closed.

Annual CEO-Manager Conference Emphasizes Employee Benefits

The challenges of long-term disability issues and other employee benefits will be featured at the annual CEO Close-up Conference, Jan. 22-24, in Marco Island, FL. The conference will feature national experts in employee benefits, succession planning and management.

NRECA CEO Glenn English said that a large part of the conference is geared to assist co-op CEOs and managers in business decision-making.

“At a time when cooperatives are spending billions of dollars in their power supply infrastructure, they must also invest in their human resources. At this conference, we will examine the whole range of benefits and together develop approaches so co-ops can continue to attract and keep the talented and skilled

employees to ensure our future,” he said.

At each session, attendees will be able to weigh-in on issues with an innovative electronic polling device that captures their responses to selected questions and instantly displays results.

The conference includes sessions on effective leadership and management skills. Attendees will review the latest global and economic forces transforming the electric utility industry such as renewable energy options, increasing operating efficiencies, technology and the impact of the 2006 elections.

For more information, go to Cooperative.com. Check out the program by clicking on the conferences and training tab and following the links to the CEO Close-Up Conference.

KHRC Launches State Energy Efficiency Program

The Kansas Housing Resources Corporation (KHRC) has launched a statewide initiative to promote energy conservation and reduce home heating costs. The initiative is the Kansas Energy Efficiency Program (KEEP), which allows income-eligible homeowners to obtain low-interest loans to purchase energy efficient heating systems and to make other energy conservation home improvements.

Funding for KEEP is \$2 million and is part of Governor Kathleen Sebelius' Warm Homes Project. KHRC funds half of the loan amounts, up to a maximum of \$7,500. Total loan amounts could be higher as determined by the lender.

“This is a great way to help Kansans keep costs down, stay warm through the winter and conserve energy,” Sebelius said. “I hope many Kansas families consider this as an option.”

Sunflower Bank, a family-owned bank with 34 locations throughout Kansas and Colorado, is the official lender for KEEP. KEEP will continue as funding is available.

Home improvements allowed under KEEP include:

- Installing specified ENERGY STAR furnaces, air conditioners, heat pumps, water heaters and ventilation systems.
- Installing wall and floor insulation, new storm doors and windows, and weather-stripping.
- Air sealing, duct work and the purchase of certain ENERGY STAR appliances such as refrigerators, washers, dryers, dish washers and programmable thermostats.

More information about KEEP is available at www.kshousingcorp.org/programs/KEEP.shtml.

KEC December Board Meeting

KEC will hold Board and Committee meetings at the Wichita Marriott on December 6-7, 2006.

Committee meetings scheduled for Wednesday, December 6, 2006, are Communications (1:30 p.m.), Legislative/Regulatory Review (3:00 p.m.), and Policies and Bylaws (4:30 p.m.). The Executive Committee is scheduled to meet Thursday, December 7, 2006 (7:00 a.m.).

KEC Annual Meeting

The KEC Annual meeting will be held at the Capitol Plaza Hotel, Topeka, on January 20 - 23, 2007. Tentatively scheduled for Sat., Jan. 20 is the Board Leadership Course **924.1 When Disaster Strikes - Continuity Management and Emergency Response Planning**.

Reservations may be made directly with the hotel at (785) 431-7200. Cutoff date for reservations is December 29, 2006. Reservation requests received after the cut-off date will be on availability and there is no guarantee that the \$89 group rate will be available. Make your reservations early to ensure a room.

In Sympathy

Darrell Brown

Darrell John Brown, a Western Board member, died on November 3, 2006, at his home in rural Collyer at the age of 58. Darrell was elected to Western's Board of Directors on May 13, 1992, and was still actively serving.

Services were held November 9, 2006, at Christ the King Catholic Church in WaKeeney. Memorials are suggested to Western's Youth Program or Kansas Wildlife & Parks, and can be sent in care of Schmitt Funeral Home, 336 N 12th, WaKeeney, KS 67672.

Job Opportunities

Lineman Seeking Position

KEC has received a resume from an apprentice lineman who would like to relocate in Kansas. For a copy of the resume, contact Leilani Todd, ltodd@kec.org.

In Brief

Boot Hill Biofuels Representatives Discuss Proposed Plant

A group of area farmers and other investors have teamed up under the banner Boot Hill Biofuels to build a 110 million gallon per year ethanol plant off US 50 amid farmland a mile east of Wright, an unincorporated Ford County hamlet. They are still seeking the required permits, but as part of the process, they met with locals last month to provide details about the planned \$185 million ethanol plant and address any potential concerns.

Hutchinson News - 11/15/06

Residential Micro-CHP Furnaces

Down in Bernard Malin's basement is a metal box that turns natural gas into hot water and generates \$600 - \$800 worth of electricity a year - a bonus by-product of heating his home. Malin is the first person in Massachusetts - perhaps in the nation - to own a residential "micro combined-heat-and-power" system, also known as micro-CHP. But he's not likely to be the last.

Factories and other industrial facilities have used large CHP systems for years. But until the US debut of micro-systems in greater Boston, the units had not been small enough, cheap enough, and quiet enough for American homes. Add the public's rising concern about power reliability and some experts see in micro-CHP an energy revolution.

The Christian Science Monitor - 11/14/06

Kansas Out-Migration Documentary

When Kansas Farm Bureau's Mike Matson arrived to film interviews of Kansans sharing their thoughts on rural life, he didn't need to do much. "I literally stuck a camera in their face and got out of the way," Matson said. Their stories of the state's ongoing saga of out-migration from rural counties included the views of people in small, rural communities as well as those who have left. The resulting documentary, "Rural Kansas: Heritage Lost?" airs this month.

Harris News Service - 11/10/06

KEPCo Board Elects Officers and Executive Committee

The Kansas Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. (KEPCo) Board of Trustees re-elected Kenneth J. Maginley, Bluestem, as President during its November 16 meeting in Salina.

KEPCo's Board consists of a Trustee representative and alternate from each of the 19 KEPCo member rural electric cooperatives. The Board annually names seven Trustees to serve as its Executive Committee. Kirk Thompson, CMS, was re-elected as Vice President. Gordon Coulter, Ninnescah, was re-elected as Secretary. Bryan Coover, Twin Valley, was re-elected as Treasurer. Also re-elected to the committee were Melroy Kopsa, Rolling Hills, and Robert Reece, Flint Hills. Elected to the Executive Committee was Harlow Haney, DS&O.

Midwest Energy Holds Annual Meeting

Approximately 120 members and guests attended the Midwest Energy Annual Meeting held at the Sternberg Museum on November 21st.

Ed Pratt, Chairman of the Board, highlighted several activities, including the status of the FEMA project and the SHARP Safety Award that Midwest earned from OSHA. A video was shown of Governor Kathleen Sebelius presenting the SHARP award and praising the cooperative for its energy efficiency programs.

Earnie Lehman, General Manager, spoke on energy costs and Midwest's energy contracts. Lastly, the five youth tour winners spoke to the membership regarding their weeklong trip to Washington, DC.

Kansas Touchstone Energy Cooperatives Hold Annual Meeting



NRECA's Charlie Gloeckner speaks to the Kansas Touchstone Energy representatives at the Touchstone Energy Annual Meeting in Wichita.

The Kansas Touchstone Energy Cooperatives held their 2006 Touchstone Energy Annual Membership Meeting at the Wichita Airport Hilton on Nov. 10.

Charlie Gloeckner, NRECA, spoke to the Trustees, managers, and staff about the programs and services offered through Touchstone Energy.

The Kansas Touchstone Energy Executive Council reviewed sponsorship proposals and planned activities before

approving the 2007 budget and statewide dues assessment.

Three officers on the council were up for re-election. Re-elected were Leon Eck, Rolling Hills; and Kirk Thompson, CMS. Travis Griffin, Butler, was elected to fill the position that had been vacated by Dustin Pulliam, Butler. The officer positions remained unchanged: Kirk Thompson, Chair; Leon Eck, Vice Chair, and Dennis Deines, Secretary / Treasurer.

Kentucky Director Elected for CFC At-Large Director Position

R. Wayne Stratton, Chairman of the Board of East Kentucky Power Cooperative and a Director of Shelby Energy, was elected to fill the position of At-Large Director on the CFC Board. The

At-Large position was created by CFC to provide the Board with a member who qualifies as an audit committee financial expert. He takes his seat following the CFC annual meeting in March.

Butler Creates International Linemen Fund to Provide Aid

“With the ever-growing need for assistance throughout the world and even in our own nation, our linemen have made the decision to try and help when and where they can,” said Travis Griffin, Butler’s Manager of Member Services.

To help their local and global community, the Butler REC linemen have started the Butler International Linemen Fund.

“The need for electricity during disasters is great,” Griffin explained. “Our linemen already assist with disasters locally and across the country, and we just wanted to take this to the next step.”

With funds raised through this assistance program, the Butler linemen hope to travel to underdeveloped countries to bring electricity to communities that currently do not have electricity.

“The initial concept of this program



Butler’s Jerry Haskell visits with a young cooperative member at the CFL display during Cooperative Month.

was brought up by a couple of our linemen as a mission trip to bring electricity to people who have never had it,” Griffin explained.

“The money raised through this program will be used to help send our linemen to areas that are in need, both international and local. But for now we’re starting off locally,” he added.

Butler employees are planning

fundraisers over the next couple of years, such as golf tournaments and trap shoots. Butler has already started selling compact florescent light bulbs (CFLs) from its office, and the proceeds go to the Butler International Linemen Fund.

“We’re trying to be creative (with our fundraisers),” Griffin stated. “And we’re also trying to find ways to tie together both energy efficiencies and electrical safety with this program.”

Butler has a long history of helping its community, and this fund will enhance their community service programs.

“We already have some local projects slated,” Griffin said. “We’re going to help put up light poles for some local baseball fields and little league football fields. We’re trying to touch both our community and the national community.”

Safe Electricity Teleconference

Safe Electricity is offering a members-only teleconference on Dec. 13 from 2:30 - 4 p.m., and on Dec. 14 from 10:30 a.m. - noon. This training will explain how to implement this program at the local level, and will review the resources available including the members-only website. To participate in the training, register online at info@SafeElectricity.org by Dec. 11.

Midwest Launches Member Assistance Program

Midwest Energy is launching its *Midwest Customers Care* program on December 1, 2006. This program is designed to collect voluntary donations that will help members pay their energy bills.

Members can donate to the program through Midwest’s web site, or can return pledge cards that will be mailed out at the beginning of the year. These donations will fund the *Midwest Customers Care* program, which will continue until the donations are exhausted.

Assistance will be administered through The Salvation Army for Midwest’s electric and natural gas customers who can prove need.

“We feel this new program can make a difference in the lives of all our customers,” said Earnie Lehman, Midwest’s President and General Manager. “Clearly those customers who receive assistance will benefit, but those customers who donate will feel good about extending a helping hand to those in need.”

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