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**WESTAR ENERGY URGES CUSTOMERS IN COTTONWOOD FALLS AND
SURROUNDING AREAS TO CONSERVE ELECTRICITY TOMORROW**

Failed transformer needs repairs; estimated to take until 6 p.m. Thursday

EMPORIA, Kan., July 22, 2009 — Westar Energy is asking customers in Cottonwood Falls, Strong City, Elmdale and Clements to conserve electricity on Thursday, July 23, because of needed repairs to a transformer. About 750 Cottonwood Falls customers lost power at about 4:20 p.m. Wednesday because a substation transformer failed.

Westar Energy dispatchers were able to transfer customers to a Strong City substation, restoring power to a majority of customers at about 5:45 p.m. However, the company wants to ensure that the Strong City substation can support electricity needs tomorrow while repairs and subsequent testing of the transformer are completed. Westar Energy is asking that during this time, customers in Cottonwood Falls, Strong City, Elmdale and Clements perform only essential tasks, increase thermostat settings five to ten degrees or turn off the air conditioner completely if no one will be at home.

Crews estimate that the transformer repairs could take until 6 p.m. Thursday.

Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE: WR) is the largest electric utility in Kansas, providing electric service to about 681,000 customers in the state. Westar Energy has about 6,800 megawatts of electric generation capacity and operates and coordinates more than 35,000 miles of electric distribution and transmission lines.

For more information about Westar Energy, visit us on the Internet at <http://www.WestarEnergy.com>.