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COLWICH SWITCHES ON THE SAVINGS

Kansas town reduces residential energy use in yearlong Westar Energy challenge.

TOPEKA, Kan., Oct. 15, 2009 — Westar Energy, Inc. and Colwich, Kan., will celebrate the results of the Colwich Switch on Saturday, Oct. 17, 2009, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Colwich City Park. If it rains, the event will be at Colwich Grade School, 401 S. Marion, Colwich.

Colwich residents reduced their energy use from September 2008 to August 2009 by about 1.7 percent compared with the prior year. Nationally, electricity use is expected to increase about 1 percent per year, according to the Energy Information Administration, a federal agency.

“Colwich residents achieved electricity savings averaging about 200 kilowatt hours per household over the year, which is like turning a television off in each home for a year,” said Bill Moore, Westar Energy chief executive officer. “The people of Colwich have demonstrated that by working together we can use electricity more efficiently. This challenge was a success for everyone.”

Moore added that such energy efficiency efforts on a collective basis can assist Westar Energy in delaying the need for a new peaking power plant.

The Colwich Switch celebration will feature remarks from state Sen. Dick Kelsey, Colwich Mayor Terry Spexarth and Westar Energy's Moore. In addition, lunch will be provided and inflatables will be set up for children.

To ensure the validity of the Colwich Switch results, Westar Energy also looked at the energy use of a similar community where residents did not receive reports. Usage in the comparison community increased nearly 3 percent compared with the prior year.

The Colwich Switch began Aug. 16, 2008, when Colwich residents joined then-Lt. Gov. Mark Parkinson, Colwich Mayor Terry Spexarth and Westar Energy representatives in the Colwich City Park for a kick-off celebration. Afterward, Westar Energy and Colwich volunteers delivered a bag of six compact-fluorescent light bulbs to Colwich homes, for a total of about 2,700 energy-saving bulbs that residents were encouraged to install right away.

Over the past year, Westar Energy periodically provided energy efficiency information to residents of Colwich, including quarterly reports comparing their household's and the town's electricity use with the same period a year earlier.

Westar Energy compared the electricity consumed by about 420 residential electrical accounts in Colwich. Westar serves about 500 residences in the town, but homes where service was changed to a new customer during the yearlong challenge were excluded. Energy use in Colwich and the town used for comparison was adjusted for changes in weather between the time period of the Colwich Switch and the prior year. Without considering the cooler temperatures during the Colwich Switch, electricity consumption dropped 4.7 percent in Colwich compared with only 0.1 percent in the town selected for statistical validation.

Through its EfficiencyWorks division, Westar offers programs to help its customers save money on energy bills. For more information, visit www.westarenergy.com.

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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>.