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WESTAR ENERGY REVITALIZES VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

ReliabiliTree will help improve reliability, support safety initiatives.

TOPEKA, Kan., October 26, 2010 — Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE:WR) is re-energizing its vegetation management practices in Wichita and the surrounding areas with a pilot program called ReliabiliTree. The program will help improve electric service reliability by mitigating a leading cause of power outages – trees near power lines. The program will put vegetation management – the clearing and pruning of trees – on a four- to five-year cycle as well as boost Westar’s customer education regarding line clearance and tree planting. Westar will use data gathered from the pilot program to help achieve a four- to five-year pruning cycle throughout its service territory.

“Simply put, tree pruning prevents power outages and improves safety by reducing the risk of accidental contact with power lines. Our top priority is to provide our customers with the highest quality, safest electric service. But we also want to preserve the beauty of the environment and neighborhoods, which is why ReliabiliTree is so vital,” said Caroline Williams, vice president, distribution power delivery.

Wichita-area cities involved in the pilot program include Andale, Andover, Bel Aire, Cheney, Clearwater, Colwich, Derby, Eastborough, Garden Plain, Goddard, Haysville, Kechi, Maize, Park City, Rose Hill, Valley Center and Wichita. This overall area was selected for the pilot program because it represents about 1/3 of Westar's total retail customers and 1/8 of Westar's total overhead distribution line miles. Distribution lines supply power from the substation to the community. Westar's transmission lines are already protected by a similar program and are not included in this program.

Between 25-35 vegetation management crews will be dedicated to ReliabiliTree during the four-year pilot. The area has been divided into quadrants and work has already begun in the areas identified as having the highest number of tree related outages. Under the program, crews will revisit areas for cycle pruning every four to five years.

Westar contractors utilize national standards to carry out their work, including those from the International Society of Arboriculture and the Tree Care Industry Association. Tree species determines the amount of pruning. After pruning, the tree may look somewhat "stark" but over time the tree will fill out. Some trees may have to be removed. Following pruning, customers may see additional crews in their neighborhoods assisting with clean up and maintenance.

"We plan to demonstrate that the cost of the program improves service reliability and the benefits of improved service reliability are equal to or greater than the cost for our customers. Additionally, that this program will improve safety and customer satisfaction," Jeff Martin, director, reliability and resource scheduling said.

Customer education is an important component of the ReliabiliTree program. Westar will provide customers an informational packet prior to work being done, as it currently does with any vegetation management work. The packet includes information about the ReliabiliTree program and pruning practices, as well as a tree planting guide to help customers in selecting the right tree. Westar will also use other avenues for customer education including presenting at community meetings, mass media and other mediums.

Westar will periodically report the progress and results of the program to the Kansas Corporation Commission, and will share progress reports on its website,

www.WestarEnergy.com/tree.

ReliabiliTree in Summary:

- When trees come into contact with power lines, electric service is hampered and, more importantly, a dangerous situation is created for both the public and employees in charge of keeping the lights on. The goal of ReliabiliTree is to balance safe, reliable service with preserving the health and appearance of trees.
- Vegetation management – clearing and pruning of trees – will be performed on a standard time cycle rather than based on reliability of service.
- Westar is increasing its education regarding the importance of keeping trees clear of the electric lines.
- ReliabiliTree's pilot program includes Andale, Andover, Bel Aire, Cheney, Clearwater, Colwich, Derby, Eastborough, Garden Plain, Goddard, Haysville, Kechi, Maize, Park City, Rose Hill, Valley Center and Wichita.
- For more information about ReliabiliTree, visit www.WestarEnergy.com/tree.

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Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE: WR) is the largest electric utility in Kansas, providing electric service to about 686,000 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>.

Forward-looking statements: Certain matters discussed in this news release are “forward-looking statements.” The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 has established that these statements qualify for safe harbors from liability. Forward-looking statements may include words like “believe,” “anticipate,” “target,” “expect,” “pro forma,” “estimate,” “intend,” “guidance” or words of similar meaning. Forward-looking statements describe future plans, objectives, expectations or goals. Although Westar Energy believes that its expectations are based on reasonable assumptions, all forward-looking statements involve risk and uncertainty. The factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from these forward-looking statements include those discussed herein as well as (1) those discussed in the company’s Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended Dec. 31, 2009 (a) under the heading, “Forward-Looking Statements,” (b) in ITEM 1A. Risk Factors, (c) in ITEM 7. Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations, and (d) in ITEM 8. Financial Statements and Supplementary Data: Notes 13 and 15; (2) those discussed in the company’s Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed on or about August 4, 2010 (a) in ITEM 7. Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations and (b) in Part I, Financial Information, ITEM 1. Financial Statements: Notes 7 and 8; and (3) other factors discussed in the company’s filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Any forward-looking statement speaks only as of the date such statement was made, and the company does not undertake any obligation to update any forward-looking statement to reflect events or circumstances after the date on which such statement was made.

