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FEBRUARY 2026

Built to withstand

New transmission operations center keeps power flowing By Stephanie McCombs

The forecast calls for a day with falling snow or a night of severe storms. As the weather moves in, Big Rivers employees monitor power outages across 22 Western Kentucky counties and quickly address any issues. Now, these dedicated control room operators, lineworkers and engineers have a new home base in Owensboro to help improve response times and power reliability.

Big Rivers Electric Corporation is Kenergy's generation and transmission partner, delivering electricity to your area through a system of more than 1,300 miles of high-voltage power lines and substations. Once the power arrives at the substation, Kenergy distributes it to each house, farm or business. Together, Big Rivers and Kenergy work 24/7 to keep electricity running from the power plant to your home.

For the past several decades, Big Rivers control room operators, office staff and field crew worked from separate locations in Henderson. Plans to move these critical teams into a combined workspace began several years ago, with the groundbreaking for a new transmission facility in Owensboro held in late 2023.

The Transmission Operations Center, known as the TOC, was designed to streamline operations between different



The Big Rivers Transmission Operations Center in Owensboro opened to the first employees last summer. The facility sits just off the Audobon Parkway, providing easy access throughout the 22-county Big Rivers service territory. Photo: Stephanie McCombs

departments, including engineering, information technology, lines, substation, right-of-way, procurement and more. Much has changed since Big Rivers began in 1961, and today's system requires a facility equipped with modern technology to meet the growing needs of Western Kentucky residents and industries. Some of the TOC updates include a dedicated space for network infrastructure and an expanded critical parts warehouse.

The first employees moved into the TOC facility in the summer of 2025.

"By integrating under one roof, we en-

able real-time collaboration, allowing us to respond to outages faster, with greater accuracy, and more efficiently than ever before," says Director of Transmission Systems Shaun Cecil.

Whether teamwork is needed for sudden storm damage or a long-term system improvement project, people who work together are now a few steps apart.

"Engineering benefits from being located near the warehouse, as this allows us to monitor the delivery of project materials easily," says Director of Engineering Jerrod Thomas. "The ability to collaborate directly with support staff



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Joe Janes has been named Kenergy's new vice president of engineering. Janes succeeds Rob Stumph who retired in January. Please help us welcome Joe to Kenergy!

Message from the President

Reliability requires investment

Kenergy's mission has always been simple: keep the lights on and support the communities we serve. But behind every switch, every warm home and every business that opens its doors is a complex system that requires constant care. Reliable electricity doesn't happen by accident. It requires ongoing investment in our local grid—through system repairs, maintenance, upgrades and the integration of new technologies that help us operate smarter and more efficiently.

Much of the energy system we rely on today was built decades ago. While it continues to serve us well, age alone means that components must be repaired or replaced to maintain performance and safety. From poles and wires to transformers and substations, every part of the grid has a lifespan. Routine maintenance helps extend that lifespan, but eventually equipment must be updated to meet modern standards. These proactive investments reduce the likelihood of outages, shorten restoration times when disruptions do occur and create a stronger backbone for our growing community.

The demands on the electric grid are also evolving. Homes and businesses today use more electricity than ever, and that trend will only continue. Electric vehicles, advanced HVAC systems, smart appliances and new commercial facilities add load to the local distribution system. As these technologies take hold, the grid must be able to support increased demand while maintaining the reliability our members expect.

Implementing innovative technologies into the grid is not just a convenience—it is a necessity for ensuring reliability in an increasingly complex energy landscape. Integrating fiber helps future-proof our system and creates opportunities to utilize ever-changing technology.

While these improvements require thoughtful planning and financial investment, the return is significant. A stronger grid supports economic growth, improves service quality and enhances safety for our crews and community. Most importantly, it ensures that the essential power you rely on is available whenever you need it. Every upgrade, every repair and every technology we deploy is an investment in your daily life—from the comfort of your home to the success of local businesses and schools.

We know that powering our community means preparing for the future, not just maintaining the present. By investing in our local grid today, we are building the foundation for a brighter, more resilient tomorrow.

By *Tim Lindahl*
President & CEO



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on upcoming project work ensures that all departments remain aligned and informed on progress.”

The TOC is strategically located just a minute from the Audubon Parkway, making it easier for crews to travel throughout the entire service territory.

In addition to its prime location and integrated workspace, the Transmission Operations Center is built to withstand Kentucky’s unpredictable weather. Field staff trucks are kept in an indoor garage with heated flooring, enabling crews to quickly deploy for system repairs with-

out battling the effects of snow or ice on their equipment. Each of these features helps minimize the time it takes to reach outages and restore power.

Relocating the 24/7 control room without downtime was one of the most complex steps in the move. In November 2025, Big Rivers carefully shifted operations from the old Henderson site to the new hardened control room in Owensboro. No matter the time or conditions, these operators can continue to manage the entire energy system from a center ready to handle the worst weather.

“One of the benefits of the TOC is a modern control center that is designed and built to withstand severe weather events, such as high winds and tornadoes,” says Energy Control Manager Kevin Johnson. “This includes protection for the business server room, which provides support for Big Rivers and services for our partner cooperatives.”

Altogether, this new facility and its improved technology are expected to lessen the future impact of storms and high-voltage outages on your electric cooperative.



Control room operators now monitor and adjust the power system 24/7 from inside a hardened space designed to withstand severe weather events, like tornadoes. System operations moved into the new Owensboro control room in November 2025. Photo: Stephanie McCombs

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Toll Free: For information or to report an outage
(800) 844-4832

Henderson: 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
6402 Old Corydon Road

Owensboro: 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
3111 Fairview Drive

Hanson: 9 a.m. – Noon, 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.
2620 Brown Badgett Loop

Hawesville: 9 a.m. – Noon, 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.
315 Hawes Blvd

Marion: Tuesday and Friday, 9 a.m. – Noon,
1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m., 3000 Mott City Road

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