



May 2026

Wheat Belt PPD Adopts Seasonal 4-Day Work Schedule

Wheat Belt Public Power District will implement a seasonal 4-day, 10-hour work schedule beginning May 4, 2026, following the success of a pilot program conducted last year.

The pilot program was designed to evaluate the impact of extended workdays on productivity, operational efficiency and employee satisfaction. Results showed measurable improvements across all areas, demonstrating benefits not only for District operations but also for employee work-life balance.



Based on these positive outcomes, the Wheat Belt PPD Board of Directors approved a long-term plan to adopt the 4-10 schedule on a seasonal basis. Each year, the District will operate on the extended schedule for approximately six months, transitioning back to a traditional 5-day, 8-hour schedule during the winter months.

For 2026, the 4-10 schedule will begin May 4 and continue

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Editor - Kelli Chaon

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LUCKY DRAWING

Wheat Belt Public Power District is pleased to announce the Johnson Brothers (Ted & Gary) as our March Lucky Draw winners. Ted & Gary are from the Oshkosh area and have been customers of Wheat Belt for more than 45 years.

Gary and his wife, Marie, have three children and three grandchildren. Ted and his wife, MarrLyn, have two children and four grandchildren. Both families enjoy spending time supporting their grandchildren's many activities and sharing the farm with them whenever they come to visit.

Ted and Gary established their farming partnership, Johnson Brothers, in 1982. Gary enjoys attending car shows and has a particular appreciation for his Mustangs, while Ted's favorite hobby is farming itself.

Outside of work, both Ted and Gary enjoy spending time with family, as well as hunting, fishing and gathering with friends and family at the sandpit.

The Johnson Brothers received a \$50 credit on their account for their prompt payment.

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Morrill Fire

Wildfire Response and Restoration Efforts

BY: ROLLIE WAITE, *Manager of Operations*

On March 12, at approximately 2:00 p.m., Wheat Belt Public Power District was alerted to a reported fire near the intersection of County Road 111 and County Road 112. This location is just a few miles southeast of Angora and only a short distance west of Wheat Belt's service territory. Given the extreme wind conditions that day, it was immediately clear the fire would be difficult to contain.



Crews were dispatched north of Broadwater in anticipation that the fire would enter Wheat Belt's service area. At the time, winds were sustained at 40–50 miles per hour with gusts reaching up to 70 miles per hour, creating extremely hazardous conditions for firefighters and utility personnel alike.

The fire quickly advanced and reached Wheat Belt's Covalt Substation, located north of Broadwater, crossing the North Circuit shortly after 4:00 p.m. For the safety of the fire crews working in the area, we were asked to de-energize the North Circuit. Our crews were able to isolate the line just north of the substation and re-energize portions of the circuit so fire crews could utilize a nearby well west of the substation to refill tanker trucks.



Fortunately, the fire remained far enough north to keep the East Circuit energized. This allowed irrigation pivots to continue operating for fire protection and enabled consumers to pump water to help protect their homes and property.

As the fire continued moving east, it ultimately crossed approximately 100 miles of Wheat Belt's service territory, impacting lines served by four additional substations.

By approximately 10:30 p.m., the fire had moved across much of Wheat Belt's Northern District

into Arthur County and was rapidly approaching Highway 61 south of Arthur.

During this time, wind conditions shifted and began blowing directly out of the north, pushing the fire toward more densely populated areas including Oshkosh, Lewellen and the Lake McConaughy area. As the night progressed, wind speeds began to subside, allowing fire crews to make significant progress in containing the blaze. Their efforts were nothing short of extraordinary.

The damage caused by the fire was extensive and deeply devastating. Our hearts go out to the consumers who suffered significant losses to property and livestock.

In the days that followed, Wheat Belt crews worked tirelessly to replace damaged poles and restore electric service. Conditions remained challenging, with linemen wearing goggles and face masks to protect themselves from blowing ash and sand while working in the affected areas.



By Saturday, March 21, power had been restored to all inhabited residences except one location, where approximately five miles of line required complete replacement. Restoration efforts were supported by mutual aid from neighboring utilities, including Midwest Electric, Roosevelt Public Power District and High West Energy. We are extremely grateful for their assistance.

We would like to thank our customers for their patience and understanding as restoration work continues. Some outages have been necessary to safely replace infrastructure damaged by the fire. To date, approximately 205 distribution poles and four sub-transmission poles have been replaced.

We remain hopeful for much-needed moisture to help the land begin to recover.

Finally, we would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the many individuals who supported our crews during this difficult time by providing water, drinks, food, cookies and other supplies. Your generosity and kindness mean a great deal to our team as we continue restoration efforts.

Congratulations SCHOLARSHIP Recipients!



**\$1,250
Basin
Scholarship**

Macey Roelle

Macey plans to attend the University of Nebraska in Kearney, NE. Major course of Study: Education. Macey is the daughter of Derrick and Melissa Roelle of Lodgepole, NE.



**\$1,250
Basin
Scholarship**

Karma Peterson

Karma is currently undecided as to where she will be attending college. Major course of Study: Nursing. Karma is the daughter of Jerad and Shelli Peterson of Oshkosh, NE.



**\$500
Tri-State
Scholarship**

Owen Plog

Owen plans to attend Northeast Community College in Norfolk, NE. Major course of Study: Diversified Agriculture. Owen is the son of Scott and Mandy Plog of Hemingford, NE.



**\$500
Tri-State
Scholarship**

Breanna Yates

Breanna plans to attend the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, NE. Major course of Study: Animal Science. Breanna is the daughter of Mike and Kyla Wesch of Oshkosh, NE.



**\$500
Arbor Wealth
Scholarship**

Carver Corfield

Carver plans to attend Colby Community College in Colby, KS. Major course of Study: Beef Management and Technology. Carver is the son of Casper and Shannon Corfield of Oshkosh, NE.

Wheat Belt Public Power District and our partners, Basin Electric Power Cooperataive, Tri-State Generation and Transmission, and Arbor Wealth Management awarded scholarships to five outstanding area students. Our scholarship program is designed to recognize achievements and provide financial assistance to students of our customers. We believe investing in the education of our youth is a shared responsibility and is in the best interest of our communities and businesses.

Wheat Belt Adopts 4-Day Work Week cont'd from 3-A

through mid-October. In future years, this schedule will begin mid-April and run through mid-October annually.

Under the summer schedule, office hours will be Monday through Thursday, 6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. During the winter schedule (mid-October through mid-April), office hours will be Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Customers can be assured that Wheat Belt PPD's commitment to reliability remains unchanged. Line crews and personnel will continue to be available around the clock to respond to outages and emergencies.

This transition supports the District's mission to provide safe, reliable, and efficient electric service. By improving operational efficiency and supporting employee well-being, Wheat Belt PPD continues to uphold its core values of service and commitment to the communities it serves.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

As temperatures start to rise, many homeowners focus on staying cool. Don't forget about the small gaps around windows and doors. While air sealing is often associated with keeping cold air out during winter, it's just as important during summer. Tiny cracks and worn weatherstripping allow cool, conditioned air to escape and hot, humid air to seep indoors. This forces your air conditioner to work harder than necessary and increases energy costs. Take a few minutes to check for drafts, replace weatherstripping and seal leaks. A tighter home keeps you more comfortable and helps manage energy use.

Source: energy.gov



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Our Mission

Deliver electricity safely, reliably and efficiently.