



August 2022

THE WHEAT BELT CONNECTION

WHEAT BELT PPD STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2022-2024

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

In the June edition of The Wheat Belt Connection, Wheat Belt General Manager Lacey Gulbranson, discussed a summary of Wheat Belt's 2022-2024 Strategic Plan. Each month going forward, our goal is to keep our customers updated on the current status of the initiatives as we work through the strategic plan.

The plan consists of four initiatives: Culture, Operational Efficiency, Safety and Customer Experience. This month we will look into Operational Efficiency with the focus on maximizing the utilization of our customers' dollar. It was determined that investing in a program to manage our fleet would be beneficial for budgeting and expense tracking. In May of this year, the Transportation Software Module was implemented, and we are now able to manage our fleet with greater accuracy and more efficiency. With safety being part of our mission, we want to make sure our fleet is safe to operate, and we are not spending unwarranted time and money on repairs to it. In the long run, the District will save money, which means our customers will save money.

Over the past few years, an internal audit of our data has revealed that our data integrity was not to the standards we would like to see here at Wheat Belt. Beginning in June, we have hired an outside contractor to do field data collection

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LUCKY DRAWING

Congratulations to Zac and Jessica Christensen, our June "Lucky Winner"!

The Christensens have resided north of Lodgepole, Nebraska for six years. They have worked in the ranching, contracting and education fields throughout their careers. Zac and Jessica have a five year old son and a two month old daughter. In their free time they enjoy gardening.

The Christensens have received a \$50 credit on their account for their prompt payment. If you would like to be included in our next drawing, and avoid a \$5 delinquent fee, please send your payment before the 16th of the month.

For your convenience, we offer several payment options. Please give us a call, 308-254-5871, or visit wheatbelt.com. Select the Customer Engagement page for information.



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Wheat Belt Strategic Initiatives cont'd from 12-A

throughout our service territory. As the results from the contractor come back into our office, they are validated, and our systems are updated with the accurate information. This includes transformer sizes, CT sizes, what type of service is at the meter and GPS coordinates for each location, just to list a few. Data accuracy is critical in setting our rates and developing the District's work plans. Wheat Belt wants to make sure that we are not making suboptimal decisions that could unjustly affect our customers rates.

Along with verifying our data is accurate in our systems, we have also engaged in a cost-of-service study to be completed by September 2022. These studies provide useful information for designing rates, showing cost differences among rate classes, responding to customer rate inquiries, and establishing line extension policies. Quarterly investment strategy planning sessions and debt strategy research as well as this study will play a large part in our budgeting process for the coming years. Wheat Belt's mission is to deliver electricity safely, reliably, and efficiently. The Board of Directors, management, and all of the employees are working diligently to ensure this mission stands true.

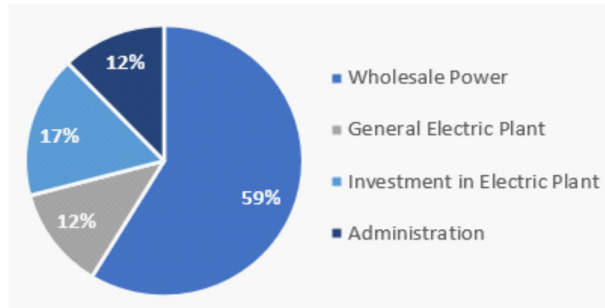


Public Power

Where do the rates you pay go?

Wheat Belt's cash budget is roughly \$23 million dollars annually. This \$23 million is comprised of the following:

- Wholesale Power Cost - \$13.5 million (59%)
- General Electrical Plant Maintenance (current) - \$2.8 million (12%)
- Investment in Electrical Plant (future) - \$3.9 million (17%)
- Administration - \$2.8 million (12%)



Be watching in the mail, later this month Wheat Belt will be sending out additional information regarding these topics.

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Brian (Moe) Moffat

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EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Austin Dormann Apprentice Lineman

Austin Dormann joined our team in May of this year as an Apprentice Lineman based out of our Os-hkosh outpost. He was raised in the Os-hkosh and Lisco area, and is excited to get to come back to his stomping grounds!

Austin graduated from Garden County High School. He worked for 3D Lawn through school and then went to work for Cooper Steel Construction until he enrolled in the Power Line Construction and Maintenance Program at Mitchell Technical College in Mitchell, SD. After graduating from Mitchell Tech, Austin joined our team. He stated his favorite part of the job this far is having the opportunity to run heavy equipment and work outside everyday. He also enjoys the men and women he gets to work with on a daily basis.

Austin's parents, Chad and Michelle Dormann, reside in the Lisco area and work for Garden County Schools. His sister, Megan Dormann, will begin teaching in Grant, NE., this fall. Austin's two younger brothers, Carter and Maddox, attend Garden County Schools. In his spare time, Austin enjoys playing basketball and fishing.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

An easy way to save energy is to seal air leaks and holes where plumbing pipes run through walls in your home. You can also check wall-mounted cabinets for plumbing holes or air gaps in the back.

Fill any holes or gaps with spray foam. Wear protective gloves and use a damp rag for cleanup.

Source: Dept. of Energy



Save a Life: Avoid Distractions While Driving

By: Anne Prince

Some temptations are hard to resist. For me, it can be especially challenging to turn down that last piece of chocolate cake.

While driving, we typically hear that "ding" on our phone, alerting us to a text or call coming through, and we sometimes feel the urgent need to check it. We know we shouldn't, but we reason that we're going to make an exception--just this once.

So, why do we indulge in behavior we know to be wrong, dangerous and in many states, illegal? Call it hubris. According

Continued on 12-D



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Save a Life cont'd from 12-C

to AAA research, most people feel they are better-than-average drivers. After all, we have busy lives and are accustomed to multitasking. But mounds of research and thousands of deaths every year prove otherwise.

August is Back to School Safety Month. As a new school year begins with young drivers and school buses back on the road, I thought it would be a good time to remind folks, including myself, of the dangers of distracted driving.

The reality is that using a phone while driving creates enormous potential for injuries and fatalities. Distractions take a motorist's attention off driving, which can make a driver miss critical events, objects and cues, potentially leading to a crash.

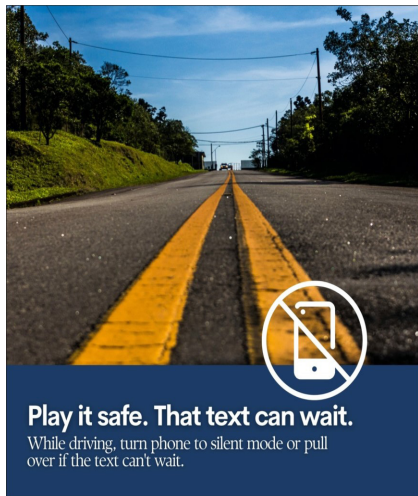
According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, one of every 10 fatal crashes in the U.S. involves distracted driving, resulting in more than 3,000 deaths annually. I find this statistic heartbreaking considering so many of these accidents could easily be avoided if we'd simply put down our phones while driving.

Distracted driving is considered any activity that diverts our attention, including texting or talking on the phone, and adjusting the navigation or entertainment system. Texting is by far one of the most dangerous distractions. Sending or reading one text takes your eyes off the road for an average of five seconds. At 55 mph, that's like driving the length of an entire football field with your eyes closed.

In addition to refraining from texting while driving, we can help keep the roads safe by moving over for first responders and other emergency vehicles. Additionally, if you see utility crews conducting work near the roadside, I'd encourage you to move over when possible and give them extra space to perform their work safely.

At Wheat Belt Public Power, safety is foremost in everything we do—for our employees and the members of the communities we serve. We routinely remind our crews of the dangers of distracted driving, and we hope you'll have similar conversations with your teens who may be new to the roadways and are especially susceptible to the lure of technology.

Let's work together to keep everyone safe on the roads. Remember: that text can wait and waiting just might save a life.



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