

December 2023

THE WHEAT BELT CONNECTION

Wheat Belt Board Evaluates Rates for 2024



LACEY GULBRANSON
General Manager/CEO

It's that time of year again when the Board of Directors reviews and approves rates in support of the coming year's budget. At the October 27th board meeting, Wheat Belt's rate consultant from JKEnergy Consulting presented findings from the Cost-of-Service Study. With the results of the study and Wheat Belt's power supplier, Tri-State G & T implementing an increase of 7.4% in 2024 to our cost of power, the Board of Directors approved the recommendation of a 3% rate increase beginning January 1, 2024, which will show up on your February 1st billing statement.

If it feels like Wheat Belt's rates have been on the rise in recent years, it's because they have. Here is a deeper look into why they have increased. Did you know Wheat Belt did not have an across the board, revenue rate increase in 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017? Yet costs

Merry Christmas

*from all of us
at Wheat Belt
12/12/23!*



Wheat Belt PPD

RATES

Scan QR code or visit
wheatbelt.com/rates to
view current rates.



Scan for
current rates

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Editor - Kelli Chaon

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BE SAFE DURING THE
HO-HO-HOLIDAYS
10 TIPS TO HELP YOU STAY JOLLY

 Before you plan out your new holiday lighting scheme or repeat last year's festive design, keep these 10 safety tips in mind when decorating outdoors:

- 1 Do not toss light strands up into the air. They could get too close to or come into contact with a power line.
- 2 Before using a ladder, always look up and assess all power line locations.
- 3 Carry a ladder horizontally when transporting it.
- 4 Keep at least 10 feet between yourself (and any item you are holding) and a power line.
- 5 Do not use staples or nails or tacks to secure light strands, cords, wires or extension cords.
- 6 String together no more than the number of strands recommended by the manufacturer.
- 7 Plug all lights and extension cords into GFCI-protected outlets.
- 8 Use lights and extension cords rated for outdoor use.
- 9 Do not use frayed, cracked or otherwise damaged cords, plugs or lights.
- 10 Use only lights and products certified by a reputable testing lab.


Safe Electricity.org[®] LEARN MORE AT: SafeElectricity.org

LUCKY DRAWING

Congratulations to Monte and Tammy Dean, our October "Lucky Draw Winner"!

Monte and Tammy family consists of four sons, four daughter-in-laws and twelve grandchildren. They live north of Broadwater Nebraska and have been Wheat Belt Customers for over thirty-five years.


Together they run a farm and ranch operation. Tammy is also a retired registered nurse.

In their spare time the Dean's enjoy anything family driven including camping, hiking, travel, gardening and reaping the benefits of the seeds sown!

Monte and Tammy 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 at 308-254-5871, or visit wheatbelt.com, and select the Customer Engagement page for more information.

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WHEAT BELT PPD IS INVESTED IN OUR LOCAL YOUTH

Scholarship Program

Wheat Belt Public Power District, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Tri-State G&T, and Arbor Wealth Management, Inc. team up each year to offer several scholarships.

Scholarships

- ✓ Wheat Belt Public Power District
 - One - \$2,000 Lineman or
 - Two - \$500 Vocational/Technical
- ✓ Basin Electric Power Cooperative
 - One - \$1,000
- ✓ Tri-State Generation & Transmission Assoc.
 - Two - \$500
- ✓ Arbor Wealth Management, Inc.
 - One - \$500

Please visit wheatbelt.com/youth-info for guidelines, application and deadline information.



Youth Camp & Youth Tour

Youth Energy Leadership Camp

- ✓ Held each July at Camp Comeca in Cozad, NE. Open to high school students in grades 9-11.
- ✓ IT'S FREE! Wheat Belt PPD covers the cost of the attendees from our service territory.

NRECA Rural Electric Youth Tour

- ✓ Held each June in Washington, D.C. Attendees must have previously attended the Leadership Camp in Cozad.
- ✓ Attendees must apply to Wheat Belt and be selected to participate each year.

Information on Youth Camp and Youth Tour will be out after the first of each year.

Visit wheatbelt.com/youth-info for information on youth safety demonstrations and educational opportunities.

Wheat Belt Board Approves Rate Increase cont'd from 12-A

were steadily increasing. In 2018, the board approved a rate increase and provided guidance on a five-year rate plan including a slower, yet steady rate increase each of the following years. Additionally, during those years the Board of Directors committed to investing more dollars in the upkeep and improvements to the electrical plant to continue to provide reliable service to our customers, which also put pressure on the rates.

Let's look at how Wheat Belt's rate increases compare to inflation over the same time period. In 2017, Wheat Belt customers paid 12.28 cents per kWh, compared to a projected 13.3 cents per kWh in 2023. This is an 8.35% increase, or a 1.39% increase each year for the past six years. General inflation for the same period was 15.5% or a 2.58% increase each year. Although electric rates have increased, general inflation has outpaced Wheat Belt's rate increases.

As difficult decisions are considered, deliberated, and voted on, Wheat Belt's Board of Directors is committed to the mission of delivering electricity safely, reliably, and efficiently through core values of respecting individuals, producing quality work, and valuing integrity.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Get smart with a better way to heat and cool your home! Smart thermostats are Wi-Fi enabled and automatically adjust heating and cooling temperature settings in your home for optimal performance. Smart thermostats learn your temperature preferences and establish a schedule that adjusts to energy-saving settings when you're asleep or away.

For maximum energy savings, look for smart thermostat models with the ENERGY STAR® label.

Source: Dept. of Energy



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OFFICE HOURS:

7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

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wheatbelt@wheatbelt.com

Our Mission

**Deliver electricity safely, reliably and
efficiently.**