



August 2024



## Wheat Belt's Strategic Efficiency Initiatives Show Significant Progress



**LACEY GULBRANSON**  
General Manager/CEO

Wheat Belt's current three year strategic plan began back in January of 2022 and will finish up late this year. As a reminder we have four initiatives in the current strategic plan: culture, operational efficiency, safety and customer experience.

This update is covering the operational efficiency initiative. To begin, here are a few statistics: currently we are at 26 employees down from 28 five years ago and 2023's final audit shows administration costs are \$230,000 less than the prior 5 year average. This is possible through many efficiency projects we have worked on or are working on as a part of the strategic plan. These projects include spending resources to gain accuracy of electrical plant records, becoming more concise with financial reporting, implementing a bottoms up budgeting process, automating labor intensive processes, spending time and effort finishing up a regulatory project around oil contamination, cross-training employees, modernizing work order documentation and simplifying project estimating processes.

I am proud of the employees and their continued efforts helping to live out our mission every day: delivering electricity safely, reliably and efficiently. To all of our employees -- keep up the great work!

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*Editor - Kelli Chaon*

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WHEAT BELT PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

### Customer Appreciation

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When: August 24, 2024  
 Time: 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.  
 Where: 11306 Rd 32, Sidney, NE  
 (Wheat Belt Headquarters)

Join us for breakfast & get to know the WBPPD employees!

P.O. BOX 177, 11306 RD 32, SIDNEY, NE 69162

P 308.254.5871 | T 800.261.7114 | wheatbelt@wheatbelt.com | www.wheatbelt.com



# Trey Weeda Joins NREA Youth Tour in Washington, D.C.

Each year Wheat Belt Public Power District sponsors area youth to attend the National Rural Electric Association (NREA) Youth Tour held in Washington, DC. This summer, Trey Weeda, a bright young leader from Sidney had the incredible opportunity to participate in the tour. Youth Tour is a prestigious program designed to educate young leaders about the electric cooperative movement and the importance of civic engagement.

During his time in the nation's capital, Trey and fellow delegates had the privilege of exploring iconic landmarks and institutions that shape American history and policymaking. Among the highlights were visits to the Capitol Building, where they gained firsthand insights into the legislative process, and the White House, where they learned about the executive branch's role in governance.

The itinerary also included educational visits to memorials such as the Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial and the Washington Monument, each offering profound lessons in national heritage and leadership.

The NREA Youth Tour is more than just sightseeing; it's an immersive experience aimed at empowering young people like Trey with knowledge about the cooperative principles that underpin electric utilities serving rural America. Participants engage in discussions about energy policy, cooperative governance, and the vital role of electric cooperatives in their communities. They also had the opportunity to meet with elected officials, forging connections that can inspire future leadership and advocacy.

For Trey Weeda, the Youth Tour was a transformative experience, providing both a deeper understanding of our nation's capital and a broader perspective on the responsibilities of citizenship. As he returns home, Trey brings with him not only memories of a memorable trip but also a renewed sense of purpose in serving his community and supporting the cooperative values that sustain rural America. "The Tour was an incredible experience and such an eye opener to a lot of things about America," said Trey.

The NREA Youth Tour continues to shape young leaders like Trey Weeda, equipping them with the knowledge and inspiration to make a difference in their communities and beyond.



# Electricity Provides Powerful Value

By Maura Giles

If you're like me, there are aspects of your life that become sort of a daily routine. I get ready for work, get in my car and drive to the coffee shop on the way to the office. At lunchtime, I drive to the nearest fast-food location and get lunch. Once I finally end the day at home, I stream an episode or two of my favorite show before bed.

As we all look for ways to save money in this age of increasing inflation, I began to think about my daily routine and how much value it provided me compared to the money I spent. A morning latte was costing me about \$6, a fast-food combo with a burger, fries and a drink was setting me back \$10, and my Netflix subscription is about \$16 each month. All these daily expenses totaled around \$85 a week, or about \$340 monthly. And what was the real value—short-term satisfaction and a larger waistline? Even as I started packing my own lunch, my latte was still costing me about \$120 a month. This got me thinking—is this the best value for my money?

The average daily cost of electricity is about \$4.57, and the average monthly electric bill for customers of Wheat Belt Public Power is \$140. You could power your entire home every day for the price of a medium

latte. I could brew my own coffee, cook my own meals, binge a series and run on a treadmill for less than the cost of that drink. Now to me, that's real value.

Electricity provides benefits that we often take for granted. It goes well beyond short-term satisfaction by allowing us to charge devices and have cold food and hot water, all in a comfortable indoor climate. Besides the privilege it affords, electricity has also remained relatively cost-stable even amidst rising inflation.

As a public power district, Wheat Belt does everything in our power to ensure your costs stay reasonable and that electricity remains a great value for our members. It's not always easy, as there are several factors beyond inflation that impact the price of electricity—some within our control but most beyond it.

The cost of electricity can fluctuate due to supply and demand, infrastructure investment, maintenance and operational expenses. Weather patterns also contribute, affecting both demand and generation capabilities, with extreme conditions leading to heightened energy use or disruptions. Government policies, such as subsidies for renewable energy or taxes and regulations on emissions, shape electricity costs as well. Your electric provider considers all these aspects when adjusting

rates, and because we're a public power district, we consider the impact of those costs on our customers as well.

As our community continues to rely on electricity for nearly everything in our homes, schools, hospitals and businesses, we need it to be reliable and affordable. You can be assured, Wheat Belt PPD always puts you top of mind and works each day to ensure electricity remains the best value for your money.

**Where Do You Find Value?**

Did you know the average daily cost of electricity is \$4.57, or about \$140 per month?

Electricity fuels our daily life essentials, from heating/cooling equipment to entertainment devices and appliances. Think of how vital power is compared to other everyday purchases. That's real value.

Item	Cost
Morning To-Go Latte	\$6
Fast-Food Combo Lunch	\$10
All-Day Power	<\$5

Sources: Energy Information Administration, MoneyGeek and CNET



## LUCKY DRAWING

Congratulations to Brian and Mandi Raffelson our June “Lucky Draw Winner”!

The Raffelson’s 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](http://wheatbelt.com), and select the Customer Engagement page for more information.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Placing heat sources, such as lamps, computers or TVs, near your thermostat can result in false temperature readings, increased energy use and inconsistent cooling/heating. Make sure your thermostat is installed in an area clear of obstructions, electronic devices, direct sunlight and drafts.

Ensuring your thermostat is free from these types of interferences optimizes energy efficiency, improves indoor comfort and reduces wear and tear on your cooling/heating system.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)

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### OFFICE HOURS:

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

P 308.254.5871 | T 800.261.7114 | F 308.254.2384

[wheatbelt@wheatbelt.com](mailto:wheatbelt@wheatbelt.com)

## Our Mission

Deliver electricity safely, reliably and efficiently.