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Stay Safe and Shine Bright Essential Electric Safety Tips for Farming in the Summer Sun



LACEY GULBRANSON
General Manager/CEO

Summer is one of the best times of the year to live the farm lifestyle as days are long, weather is typically good and there is that feeling of freedom. However, it’s also a busy time of the year with fairs, harvest, and family events.

This is a quick reminder that we are never too busy to compromise safety. It’s always worth that extra look or that double check. When it comes to electric safety on the farm keep these tips in mind:

- Be aware of overhead lines and size of equipment
- When driving near power lines with large equipment get a spotter
- Water and electricity do not mix and pivot maintenance can be critical; know where your fuse boxes and circuit breakers are located
- Contact our office if you see a potential hazard with our lines
- Call 811 before you dig
- Don’t count on rubber tires to insulate you as they aren’t pure rubber
- Help share your electric safety knowledge to family members and those working for you

Enjoy the summer, soak in the sun and always remember to be aware of your surroundings.

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LUCKY DRAWING

Congratulations to Rob and Nicki Rushman our May “Lucky Draw Winner”!

Rob and Nicki have three sons; Brett (wife Anita and kids Cainyn and Carsyn), JimBob (daughter Rylee) and Chase. They also have one daughter; Kayla (husband Matt and kids Reagan and Wade).

The Rushman’s have been Wheat Belt customers for 36 years and reside in the Dalton area. Rob is a farm and ranch owner/operator with their three sons and Nicki is a clerk at the Chappell post office for the last eight years.

In their spare time, Rob and Nicki enjoy chasing the grandkids around, golf, Husker football, and lake time with the kids and grandkids.

The Rushman’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.

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Wheat Belt PPD Employee Feature

Dan Westman - Linecrew Foreman



How did you hear about Wheat Belt?

I heard of Wheat Belt when I was growing up. They were active in the community, and I learned more about Wheat Belt when I decided to go to WNCC Lineman School in Alliance, NE after graduating high school.

Why did you decide to go to work at Wheat Belt?

After graduating high school and power line school in Alliance, I wanted to go back to where I grew up. It was a goal of mine to work for Wheat Belt at the Dalton Outpost, where I'm currently fulfilling my goal.

What do you like most about working at Wheat Belt?

Some things I like about Wheat Belt are my co-workers and the camaraderie we all have together. The satisfaction of restoring power during an outage and the opportunity to stop and visit my parents before work.

Is there any special training or education needed for your job/career?

For special training and education, the core part of it is going through an apprenticeship and accredited power line program. This consists of books and tests to learn power line technology, and logging on the job hours to receive your journeyman license.

Tell us about your family:

When it comes to family, I hit the jackpot. I'm very blessed to have them. My parents, Bob and Merry, gave me a wonderful childhood and are great parents. As a repayment..... I was the perfect son! I'm not short on best friends with three younger brothers Michael, Garrett and Jared who I enjoyed growing up with.

I don't have enough room to talk about my phenomenal wife, Ralynn, but she is a great partner to have in this game of life. Beau and April are my sweet, but ornery kids who I love to chase around and have wear me out. I enjoy being a father, it brings me so much joy to watch Beau and April growing up.

What do you like to do in your free time?

In my free time I like to spend time with family and friends whether it's sitting by the fire at the campsite, shooting five under at the local golf course, or just hanging out at home.

In your position, safety is of utmost importance.

Tell us your thoughts about safety and how Wheat Belt is working to ensure safety for all employees.

Safety is a huge part of work and life..... it's how we're able to make it home each night! Wheat Belt ensures safety to us by keeping us trained and up to date with all the safety practices and protocols. They provide all the proper PPE that allows us to perform our job safely and efficiently.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Electricity used to operate major appliances accounts for a significant portion of your home energy use. Here's an easy way to lighten the load on your clothes dryer. Before you dry a load of damp clothing, toss in a clean, dry towel. The towel will absorb excess water, shortening the drying time. If your dryer does not include an autosense feature, reduce the timer to about half of what you normally would. Remove the towel about 15 minutes after the cycle begins. Shorter drying times will extend the life of your dryer and save energy.

Source: homesandgardens.com

Driving Behind Farm Equipment:

Do Your Part

Spring planting and fall harvest are busy times. Farmers and workers have big equipment and implements on the road. Navigating roadways can be dangerous for farm equipment operators and auto drivers who follow behind them.

According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 410 farmers and farm workers died from work-related injuries in 2019. Transportation incidents, which included tractor overturns, were the leading cause of death for these farmers and farm workers.

Follow these safety tips to make it safer for everyone involved.

Equipment operators:

1. Make sure all flashers and lights are operational.
2. Drive as far to the right side of the road as possible when going around a curve.
3. Pull over and allow vehicles to pass when traffic builds up behind you.
4. Take care at railroad crossings.
5. Avoid traveling during busy traffic times.
6. Be mindful of the height and width of machinery, watching power lines, bridges and other hazards.
7. Along with turn signals, use hand signals.
8. Stay rested; do not drive when you are too tired or hungry.
9. Keep a first-aid kit in case of accidents.

Auto drivers:

1. Think about how long it will take to get to your destination and add extra time for busy farm roads.

2. Give farmers plenty of room on the road. If a piece of equipment takes up the entire road, pull into a driveway or area and wait for them to pass.
3. When passing, be sure you do so in a passing zone and that there is clear visibility around farm equipment. Watch for oncoming vehicles.
4. Go slow. Farm operators often stop or turn into fields. In addition, cars going at or over the speed limit can catch up to farm machinery quickly, since farmers in equipment move slowly.
5. Do not assume that a farmer can move over in narrow areas; it is not always possible.
6. Honk or motion when passing farmers, they may not see you or know you are there; their equipment is big and noisy.
7. Do not tailgate; the farmer often cannot see you.
8. Do not pass and then slow suddenly in front of equipment with implements behind it or farm trucks full of grain. They cannot stop quickly.
9. Farmers make very wide turns; give them plenty of time and room.

These are a few tips to make it safer for both the equipment operator and auto drivers and to provide a more pleasant drive for all.

For information about safety around electricity, including farm and ranch safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org).

FARM SAFETY

FOR A SAFE HARVEST

Take these steps to help keep you and everyone on your farm safe during a busy harvest.

Meet Daily

Have morning safety meetings to brief everyone on the day ahead and to discuss potential electrical hazards. Review power line locations, clearance requirements and the proper positioning of extensions for transporting.

Train Others

Train anyone working on your farm, including seasonal workers and family members, on potential electrical hazards.

Use a Spotter


Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines or poles. Always keep equipment and extensions at least 10 feet from power lines.

If your equipment makes contact with a power line, pole or guy wire, **stay in the cab, call 9-1-1 and warn others to stay away.**



 Safe
Electricity.org®

Don't Become Electricity's **PATH TO GROUND**



When electric utility equipment becomes damaged, the ground and objects can become energized.

If you are in a situation where there could be downed power lines or a damaged pole, guy wire or padmount transformer (green box), know what to do to save your life and the lives of others:

CAR ACCIDENT

Stay inside your vehicle or cab since the ground or objects could be energized.



Call 9-1-1 and report that there are downed or damaged power lines or a dislodged green box.

Wait for the utility crew to arrive to deenergize the power.

Do not exit until someone from the utility says it is safe to do so.

ONLY EXIT IF THE VEHICLE IS ON FIRE

Cross your arms over your chest and make a clean jump out.

Do not touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time.

Make solid hops with your feet together as far away as you can.

Do not return to the vehicle.



IF YOU ARE A BYSTANDER

Do not approach the scene to try and help.

Stay at least 50 feet away and do not lean on or touch anything, including fences or guardrails.



Learn more at:  Safe Electricity.org®

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Our Mission

Deliver electricity safely, reliably and efficiently.