



October 2024



Customers Save \$1M on Power Bills with Irrigation Time-of-Use Rate

LACEY GULBRANSON
General Manager/CEO

Did you know since the inception of the irrigation time-of-use rate in 2018 our customers have saved roughly \$1M in Wheat Belt power bills?

Power costs are most expensive during the middle of the day. When managing power consumption to a time of use rate, a utility or a customer can reduce their cost of energy. This is a form of energy efficiency.

To our customers energy efficiency means reduced bill and maybe even rebates. To a generation company, such as Tri-State Generation & Transmission, energy efficiency means deferring a large multi-year, capital project. At the end of the day, when each of us uses energy more efficiently we all win from an economic standpoint.



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LUCKY DRAWING

Congratulations to Travis and Laynette VanAnne our August "Lucky Draw Winner"!

Travis is a veterinarian and the VanAnne's have been Wheat Belt customers for 24 years in the Dalton area.

Travis and Laynette 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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Understanding Public Power in Nebraska: A Beacon of Benefits

BY: **KELLI CHAON** Customer Engagement Manager

In Nebraska, public power isn't just a utility—it's a cornerstone of the state's identity and a symbol of community resilience. For over a century, Nebraska's commitment to public power has provided its residents with reliable, affordable, and locally managed electricity. This approach has shaped the state's energy landscape, offering numerous benefits that extend beyond just keeping the lights on.

What is Public Power?

Public power refers to electricity services provided by publicly owned and operated utilities, as opposed to private, investor-owned utilities. In Nebraska, the majority of electricity is delivered through public power systems, managed by local municipalities and public power districts. This model means that the profits from energy sales are reinvested into the community rather than distributed to private shareholders.

Benefits of Public Power in Nebraska

1. Cost Savings and Affordability:

One of the most significant advantages of public power is its impact on energy costs. In Nebraska, public power systems consistently offer some of the lowest electricity rates in the nation. This is partly due to the non-profit nature of these utilities, which prioritize customer service and cost-efficiency over profit margins. Residents benefit from lower bills and greater financial stability, a crucial factor in a state known for its agricultural and rural communities.

2. Local Control and Accountability:

Public power systems are governed by local boards and elected officials, ensuring that decisions about energy rates, policies, and investments are made by those who are direct-

ly accountable to the community. This local control allows for tailored solutions that meet specific regional needs and preferences, fostering a more responsive and transparent approach to energy management.

3. Reliability and Resilience:

Nebraska's public power utilities are known for their reliability and quick response times during outages. Local management means that repair crews are often nearby and can address issues promptly, minimizing downtime. This reliability is particularly important in rural areas where service disruptions can have significant impacts on daily life and local economies.



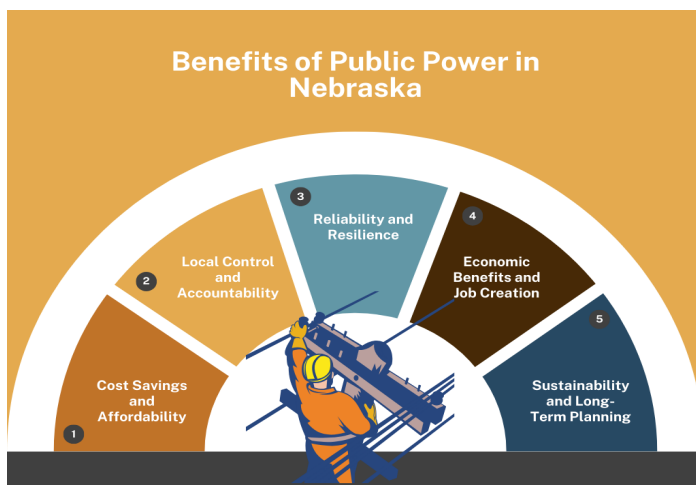
4. Economic Benefits and Job Creation:



Public power contributes to the state's economy not just through direct energy savings but also by creating local jobs. Maintenance, management, and administrative roles within public power systems provide employment opportunities and support the local economy. Additionally, public power investments often prioritize local infrastructure projects, further stimulating economic growth.

5. Sustainability and Long-Term Planning:

Public power systems in Nebraska are increasingly focusing on sustainable energy solutions. With a commitment to long-term planning and community welfare, these utilities are investing in renewable energy sources and energy efficiency programs. This forward-thinking approach helps ensure that Nebraska's energy needs are met in a way that balances environmental stewardship with economic considerations.



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Wheat Belt PPD Employee Feature

Jane Bartels - Customer Records Specialist



How did you hear about Wheat Belt?

I grew up on a farm east of Dalton, so Wheat Belt was always a part of my life. One of my jobs growing up was to run out and read the meters to include with the payment each month.

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

Wheat Belt was always known for the longevity of its employees. I knew several of them

and wanted to be a part of the group.

What do you like most about working at Wheat Belt?

I really enjoy the customers, they make me smile, laugh, sometimes we talk about the old days. I love helping them work through any problems they have, then the satisfaction of knowing we “fixed” it. I know the customers and they know me. One of my duties is to transfer accounts into new owners’ names which is where I get to know the new customers.

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

Trainings and conferences are offered to further my experience in my position as Records Specialist. I have to keep up with the changes in the rebate program by attending seminars and conferences.

Tell us about your family:

I have enjoyed being married to Matt for 38 years. In our free time, we like going to the lake to kayak, boat and fish. We also enjoy gardening, 4-wheeling and hunting in the winter. We have one son, Lance and his wife, Tiffany. They are making us Grandparents, expecting their first baby in December this year. We have one daughter, Aftan and her husband David. They live in South Dakota, so we visit as much as we can. The Black Hills are beautiful to explore with them and our “grandpups”.

In your position you process rebates for Wheat Belt customers. Tell us your thoughts on how efficiency has changed over the recent years and how Wheat Belt has helped our customers through some of the changes.

We can see by the overall usage in the past that customers are moving to the more energy efficient products. I have tracked usage on many things that are more efficient and see the savings. We really need to keep customers informed on the rebate programs we offer. Our farmers all have pivot motors out there that will need replacing over time. I try to keep it in their minds that when they replace them, look at the new high efficiency motors and make sure to get me the paperwork for a rebate to help with the cost. We also have rebates on everything from light bulbs to refrigerators for customers.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

If you recently made or plan to make energy efficiency upgrades to your home, you may be eligible for federal tax credits. The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) of 2022 empowers homeowners to save up to \$3,000 annually to lower the cost of efficiency upgrades by up to 30%. A few upgrades covered through the IRA include new exterior doors, windows, insulation, heating/cooling equipment and other major appliances. If you have completed or are considering an efficiency upgrade, visit www.energystar.gov/federal-tax-credits to learn if you qualify for tax credits.

Source: energystar.gov

Understanding Public Power in Nebraska cont'd from 12-B

Public power in Nebraska is more than just a way to keep the lights on; it's a vital part of the state's character and a driving force behind its economic and social well-being. By prioritizing affordability, local control, reliability, job creation, and sustainability, public power systems help ensure that Nebraskans enjoy not only consistent and cost-effective energy but also a stronger, more connected community. As the state continues to navigate the challenges of a changing energy landscape, the principles of public power remain a beacon of resilience and resourcefulness.



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Our Mission

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