

the Wheat Belt Connection



WE ARE BLESSED-CELEBRATE

NOVEMBER 2019

Strategic Planning IT Roadmap: Cybersecurity

By Lacey Gulbranson,
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On July 19th, Capital One credit card customer data was breached. In the breach, roughly 140,000 U.S. credit card customers' social security data was breached, and an additional one million Canadian credit card customers' data was compromised.

In years past, we have heard of similar events from Target, Home Depot and more. In this rapidly changing technological age, it is vital Wheat Belt protects customer data the best we can. Cyber security has been a top priority for the past several years, and we continually look for ways to improve. In many cases, employees are the first line of defense from spam e-mail to suspicious internet content to unknown visitors in the building. Therefore, Wheat Belt has partnered with a company to help train employees to become more aware of how to detect potential breaches. First, employees and board members were sent a fake spam e-mail to baseline the company's click through rate (in this case clicking on the link was a bad thing). We learned we have some improvements to make, and that we are better than the average company. Next, our employees and board members will take online training to learn how to better detect scams. By the end of the year, we plan to have the initial training completed and supporting operating policies in place.

Our note to customers – if something seems odd with an e-mail, there is a great chance it is spam: don't click on the links, don't open the attachments and don't reply to that e-mail. Contact the person in another way (even if it is just a new e-mail) or go directly to a website through a web browser rather than clicking provided links.

Wheat Belt Connection

Editor
Pam Wieser

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Drawing Winner

Yolanda Hruska

We have printed the Lucky Winner Drawing information on the following page. We are so fortunate to live and serve in rural Western Nebraska.

Thank you Dennis and Renee Peters for your thoughtful words!





Drawing Winner

Yolanda Hruska

Congratulations to Dennis and Renee Peters, our September "Lucky Winners"! The Peters have one son, Jordan and one daughter, Justine Jobman. They are in agriculture, farming both dryland and irrigated operations. The Peters are third generation Cheyenne County Wheat Belt customers.

Instead of sharing their interest and hobbies, they asked to share the following: "Wheat Belt holds their customers and employees in high regard. Employees care about their customers and their jobs, something you cannot buy; and customers are valued not an account number. WB crews go out into nature's worst conditions to restore power, when 95% are heading for cover, and if not extremely careful, could be fatal. We are proud to be served by Wheat Belt."

The Peters have received a \$50 credit for their prompt payment. If you would like to be included in our next drawing, and avoid the \$5 delinquent fee, please send your payment before the 15th of the month. For your convenience we offer several options. Please give us a call or visit wheatbelt.com and select the Customer Services menu.

Quotes to Ponder

"Be humble and kind. Isn't it funny how those most critical have never walked in the shoes of those they condemn. Nor would they want to."

Unknown

"It takes strength not to be corrupted by position and power."

Peter Buffett

"How was I supposed to know that a stress ball wasn't for throwing at the person stressing your out?"

Unknown

"I feel safe sharing any secrets with my husband. He either isn't listening or forgets?"

Unknown

"Wouldn't it be nice if people would hold themselves to the same standards they hold everyone else, you should have no fear of perfection - you'll never reach it." Salvador Dali

"I love winter, you don't look so strange in the baggy sweatshirts you use to cover your stomach."

Unknown

"The squirrels have been gathering nuts for winter, and I haven't seen you for a couple months - coincidence? I think not!" Unknown

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It is unfortunate that not everyone has the opportunity to be part of a public power system, where they have a say in the direction, have a financial interest in the company, are able to keep more of their hard earned money, and where providing such a critical product is done so with the customer in mind, as affordably and responsibly as is practical.

Electricity is the most important foundation for a modern society, and critical to the economic vitality of communities. A customer driven, customer owned, and not-for-profit business model provides the most opportunity for this foundation to be built upon. These are some of the core values of a public power system. Nebraska is the only state in America where 100 percent of the electricity is provided to its electric consumers at cost and with local control.

Every aspect of our day-to-day lives relies on electricity being available and being affordable. This was not always the case for many people in the United States. As the benefits of electricity were realized and needed for all communities, the concept of publicly owned and not-for-profit energy companies or public power systems emerged as a way to have grass-roots driven buildouts to the customers

that were without electricity. At the time (and still to-day), it was not profitable for utilities to advance electricity to more people in all communities.

A way to ensure that electricity was not only available to everyone, but affordable, was to remove the profit motive from the economics and work together with other public power entities to share resources. In cases where there is excess revenue over the cost, that money is either reinvested into the electric system or given back to the consumers who purchased the electricity.

Public Power Districts & Cooperatives VS. Investor Owned Utilities

PPD'S & CO-OPS		IOU'S
Rates are set in a public forum resolving issues of competing interests and values at the local level	RATE SETTING	Rates are set by profit minded investors
Locally elected officials provide oversight of policies, programs, and rates. Board meetings are open to the public	GOVERNANCE	Governed by the largest shareholders. Board meetings are private
Locally owned and governed optimizes benefits to customer owners	MISSION	Profit driven optimizes investment return to shareholders
Not-for-profit and publicly owned	STRUCTURE	For-profit private holding companies

↑ IOUs WANT TO MAXIMIZE PROFIT FOR INVESTORS
↓ PPDs & CO-OPS WANT TO MINIMIZE COSTS TO KEEP BILLS AFFORDABLE

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Damage to Wheat Belt Equipment



Please be aware that damage caused by cattle in forage fields, such as corn or sunflower stalks, will be repaired, and the property owner or leasee will be invoiced for the repairs.

Charging for cattle damage.

Over the years, Wheat Belt PPD has had to replace meter loops and other equipment damaged by livestock rubbing on the unprotected equipment located in fields.

With the costs of replacing a meter loop being over \$500, Wheat Belt PPD will start charging the customer for damage to our equipment that could have been prevented by fencing off the meter pole, transformer pole or padmount transformer.

Landowners will get a one-time waiver of costs for damage to Wheat Belt's equipment; however, tenants or leasees of corn stalks or other fields used as forage, will not get a one-time grace. They will be charged for the damage.

As with all Wheat Belt PPD accounts, the landowner is responsible for the service. Landowners that lease their corn stalks or other feed, should either fence their services or require the renters to fence around the meter pole, transformer pole or pad mount transformer.

If you have any questions, please contact Earl Reilly at the Wheat Belt PPD office.

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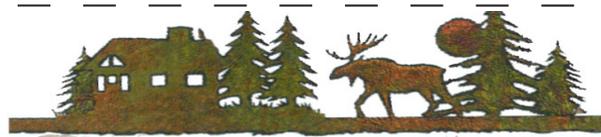
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