



An Equal Opportunity Provider & Employer

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WHEATLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

NEWS

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FROM THE MANAGER

Help Us Recognize National Electrical Safety Month

Each May, Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc. (WEC) proudly observes National Electrical Safety Month.

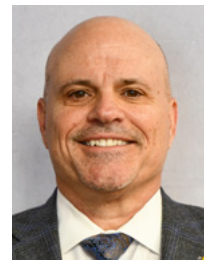
While this monthly observance shines a spotlight on electrical safety, at WEC we believe safety should be a year-round priority — for our employees, our members, and the communities we serve.

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, thousands of people in the U.S. are critically injured or electrocuted because of electrical fires and accidents in their own homes. Many of these accidents are preventable. While electricity is a necessity and powers our daily lives, we know firsthand how dangerous electricity can be because we work with it 365 days a year. National Electrical Safety Month serves as a reminder for us all to stay informed, stay cautious, and stay safe.

To me, safety is more than a

catchphrase. As CEO/general manager, it's my responsibility to keep our co-op employees safe. Additionally, we want to help keep members like you who are part of the communities we serve safe, too. That's why you'll see our line crews hosting safety demonstrations across community events and in schools throughout the year.

In fact, in 2024 alone our line crews delivered 63 live safety demonstrations across southwest and central Kansas, reaching thousands of participants across all age groups. During these live trailer and tabletop demos, we discuss emergency scenarios, such as what happens to equipment or items that touch energized lines or what to do in a car accident involving utility poles and downed power lines. We also caution students on the dangers



Bruce W. Mueller

Continued on page 12B ►

SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

According to Safe Work Insider, to prevent repetitive motion injuries, limit physically straining activities. Whether the job is lifting objects or working with tools for extended periods, these demanding tasks wear the body down and overwork the muscles. The situation becomes worse when someone performs them with an incorrect posture at awkward angles.

Help us Recognize National Electric Safety Month Continued from page 12A ▶

of padmount transformers and overloading circuits with too many electronic devices. I encourage you to learn more about our live line safety demonstrations on Page 12D.

Because electricity is an integral part of modern life and given the prevalence of electrical devices, tools and appliances, I'd like to pass along a few practical electrical safety tips.

- ▶ **REPLACE DAMAGED CORDS.** Frayed or cut cords can cause shocks or fires — replace them immediately.
- ▶ **DON'T OVERLOAD CIRCUITS.** Avoid plugging too many devices into one outlet to prevent overheating or electrical fires.
- ▶ **KNOW YOUR CIRCUIT BREAKERS.** Label them clearly, and if your home is over 40 years old or you're adding major appliances, consult a licensed electrician.
- ▶ **USE EXTENSION CORDS SAFELY.** Never connect multiple extension cords together or exceed their wattage. For long-term needs, install additional outlets with professional help.

At WEC, education is at the heart of our safety efforts. We believe that when people understand how electricity works and recognize potential hazards, they're better equipped to protect themselves and others.



It's built into every part of WEC's operations. Our team undergoes rigorous training and continuously updates best practices to keep pace with evolving technology and increasing energy demands. Still, safety doesn't stop with us — it's a shared responsibility. Every member of our community plays a role in preventing electrical accidents.

So, whether you're conducting a home electrical inspection, teaching your kids about electrical hazards, or simply being mindful when using appliances, your actions make a difference. By working together and staying alert, we can reduce risks and build a safer future for everyone.

At WEC, safety is a core value that drives our mission of **DELIVERING ENERGY FOR LIFE.** As we recognize National Electrical Safety Month this May, we invite you to join us in embracing safe habits not just today, but every day. Together, let's build a safer, stronger community.

UNTIL NEXT TIME, TAKE CARE.

IT'S GETTING
CHERRY HOT
 **IN HERE!**

DON'T MISS THE HOTTEST AFTER HOURS YET!

JUNE 4 @ DRY LAKE BREWING
 1305 MAIN ST. | GREAT BEND
4-7 P.M.

UNIQUE DRINKS & APPS!
 DOOR PRIZES!

GREAT BEND
 CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

DRY LAKE
 BREWING

HOSTED BY:
WHEATLAND ELECTRIC
 Delivering Energy for Life
 A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

2025 Youth Program Winners Selected

Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc. (WEC) is excited to announce **KAMRYN MEYER**, junior at Scott Community High School, and **SOPHIA WEDEL**, junior at Wichita County High School, have been selected to serve as our delegates at the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour from June 14-20, 2025, in Washington, D.C.

In addition, **BRAYLEE CARPER** and **QUINTON HEATH**, both juniors at Great Bend High School have been selected to represent WEC at the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp from July 11-17, 2025, near Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

To apply, eligible juniors complete an online application, including a written essay about a family, social or school situation in which their leadership made a difference. Our four selected delegates were shortlisted from these applications and selected following extensive interviews by the WEC Board of Trustees.

"Leadership is defined in many ways, by many different words," Meyer wrote in her written application. "To me it is as simple as pushing someone to succeed, not to benefit yourself, but to fulfill others. I want to ensure that my advice is always helpful, never harmful, and backed by kindness. I hope to grow and continue my strong leadership for years to come."

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour brings students to Washington, D.C., providing Meyer and Wedel with the opportunity to meet their elected officials on Capitol Hill, hear from nationally recognized speakers, tour historic landmarks and museums, attend a performance at the Kennedy Center, cruise on the Potomac River, and build meaningful connections with peers from across the country.

Carper and Heath will join 100 other high school youth representing cooperatives from Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming near Steamboat Springs, Colorado. At camp, students will learn about the cooperative business model, develop leadership skills, and listen to nationally recognized speakers. They also have the opportunity to raft the Colorado River, tour the Craig Generation Plant, attend a high-voltage safety demonstration, and participate in other activities, building memories that will last a lifetime.

Applications for these opportunities are accepted each fall and must be submitted by the January deadline. Juniors who reside in WEC's service territory that are a legal dependent of an active member receiving service from WEC are eligible to apply. For more information, visit www.weci.net/youth-tour-program.

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE YOUTH TOUR WINNERS



Kamryn Meyer



Sophia Wedel



Braylee Carper



Quinton Heath

COOPERATIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP WINNERS

“Leadership is defined in many ways, by many different words. To me it is as simple as pushing someone to succeed, not to benefit yourself, but to fulfill others.”

KAMRYN MEYER

2025 ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE YOUTH TOUR DELEGATE

HERE'S A BRIGHT IDEA!

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH US

YOU COULD WIN A \$250 PREPAID CARD!

ACSI American Customer Satisfaction Index

WHEATLAND ELECTRIC Delivering Energy for Life

YOUR FEEDBACK POWERS CHANGE.

To enter, visit www.weci.net by May 21 (or scan our QR code) to complete our member feedback survey!

HIGH VOLTAGE, HIGH IMPACT:

The Power OF SAFETY EDUCATION

As a distribution electric cooperative, we believe safety is more than just a priority — it's a responsibility that extends beyond our day-to-day jobs.

One of the most effective ways that we fulfill that responsibility is by hosting **LIVE POWER LINE SAFETY DEMONSTRATIONS** for various groups throughout the year, including first responders, students, community groups, and co-op members.

These hands-on events play a crucial role in promoting awareness, preventing accidents, and building trust within the communities we serve. That's why we've increased the number of safety demonstrations led by our line crews in recent years from less than a dozen in 2017 to over 60 last year!

FROM AWARENESS TO ACTION

Unlike pamphlets or presentations, we use real equipment and talk about real-life scenarios during our trailer and tabletop safety demonstrations to highlight the invisible dangers of electricity.

Our participants see firsthand how electricity arcs, how improper contact can cause serious injuries, and why keeping a safe distance is so vital. That kind of impact can't be replicated with words alone. When people witness the raw power and potential hazards of energized lines, our safety messages stick.

SAFETY BY THE NUMBERS

At WEC, we're proud to host live trailer and tabletop demonstrations with various student, civic and first responder groups across the communities we serve. We've significantly increased these live line demonstrations over the years so that our messages of electrical safety and education reach more of our members.

► 2017 — 4 ► 2019 — 30 ► 2022 — 35
 ► 2018 — 25 ► 2021 — 30 ► 2023 — 38

* WEC HOSTED NO SAFETY DEMONSTRATIONS IN 2020 DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.





PROTECTING THOSE WHO PROTECT US

First responders are often the first on the scene of accidents involving power lines — crashes, downed lines, or structure fires. That's why we tailor some of our demonstrations for firefighters, police officers, and EMTs, offering them practical, lifesaving knowledge, including how to identify energized equipment, maintain safe perimeters, and communicate effectively while waiting for our line crews to arrive on scene during all kinds of emergencies.

powerful way for our line crews to connect with the members we serve. They highlight our commitment to our communities. Our role isn't just about keeping the lights on — it's also about keeping people safe. We're hopeful that visibility and engagement go a long way in building trust and reinforcing the cooperative difference with members like you.

TEACHING TOMORROW'S SAFETY LEADERS

Schools and youth organizations are prime audiences for power line safety education. Teaching kids of all ages how to recognize electrical hazards, stay clear of electrical equipment, and to respond in emergencies like car accidents involving downed power lines instills safe habits early. These lessons can ripple outward too — kids often take what they've learned home, reinforcing safety messages for the whole family.

SPARKING SAFETY EVERYWHERE

Live power line safety demonstrations are more than just educational events — they're investments in public safety and in our communities. By making electricity's dangers visible and understandable firsthand, we hope to reduce accidents and save lives in the communities we power.



STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY TIES

Beyond safety, these demonstrations are a



2025 ElectroRally

The green flag waves, and the race begins! How many laps can high school teams complete in specially designed electric cars within a single hour?

Spectators at this year's Sunflower ElectroRally witnessed the excitement as the first race of the 2025 season took place on April 3 at the Spencer Flight and Education Center in Scott City.

Scott Community High School's e-car racing team clinched first place in the standard division (57 laps in one hour), while Great Bend High School secured first in the solar division (53 laps in one hour). These teams competed against nine other high schools and one college team from across Kansas.

The Scott City race is the first of three competitions in the Kansas ElectroRally Championship Series. The second event, the Touchstone Energy West ElectroRally, took place on April 26 in Clearwater, with the final race, Touchstone Energy East, set for May 5 in Kansas City, Missouri. The overall state championship is determined by points accumulated across all three races.

WEC is proud to support these local teams in a competition that emphasizes science, math and hands-on learning. Each year, students design, build, develop and test competitive electric vehicles for these races.

These single-driver electric vehicles are low to the ground, lightweight, aerodynamic and highly efficient. Most teams construct their cars from scratch, utilizing lightweight materials such as aluminum frames and bicycle wheels. Teams compete in either the standard or experimental/solar division. Both types of vehicles use battery packs for power, while experimental cars can integrate solar panels to supplement their energy supply.



Members of the Great Bend High School e-car racing team, who took home first place in the solar division, pose with their e-car ahead of the Sunflower ElectroRally at the Spencer Flight and Education Center on April 3, 2025.

During the race, teams compete based on time, distance and efficiency, navigating unpredictable traffic and course conditions. One hour after the green flag drops, the checkered flag signals the end, and the team with the most completed laps is declared the winner.

Students take on various roles in these races, including drivers, pit crew members, and lap counters. While all vehicles must meet safety and competition regulations, teams have significant flexibility in designing their cars. Strategic planning is key — some teams prioritize speed early, while others focus on conserving battery power to last the full race. These electric vehicles can reach speeds exceeding 30 miles per hour and cover up to 25 miles within the one-hour time frame.

Wheatland Electric and other Kansas electric cooperatives have supported the Kansas ElectroRally since 1987 and continue to champion the program.

The Sunflower ElectroRally is sponsored by Sunflower Electric Power Corporation — our power supplier — along with several of our sister member cooperatives.

For more information and the latest race results, visit www.kansaselectrorally.org.



The Scott Community High School e-car racing team took home first place in the standard class division at this year's Sunflower ElectroRally!

Treat Bend! Join us for a
POWER PLAY
Tuesday, June 10

FREE HAMBURGERS + HOTDOGS
FIRST 200 PEOPLE
GIVEAWAYS! PRIZES!



serving at 6 p.m.

AL BURNS MEMORIAL FIELD
GATES OPEN AT 6:30 P.M. CDT

POWER PLAY

Thursday, July 10

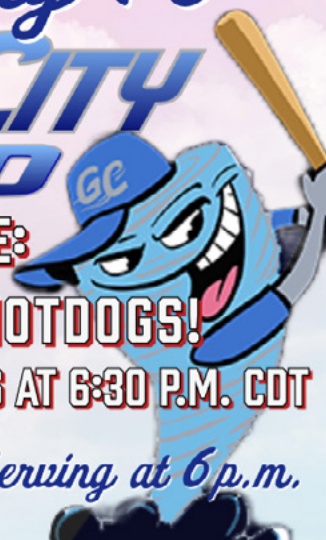
**GARDEN CITY
WIND**

FIRST 200 PEOPLE:

FREE HAMBURGERS & HOTDOGS!

CLINT LIGHTNER FIELD | GAME STARTS AT 6:30 P.M. CDT

First 50 people get in free! | Serving at 6 p.m.





Wheatland Electric Wins NATIONAL Spotlight on Excellence Award for FOURTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR

For the fourth year in a row, member services at Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc., (WEC) has received national recognition in the Spotlight on Excellence Awards program, sponsored by the Council of Rural Electric Communicators (CREC) and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

WEC's member services team received the **GOLD AWARD IN BEST EXTERNAL EVENT** for its **DINE AND DRIVE** event, held Sept. 30, 2024, in Great Bend in celebration of National Drive Electric Week (NDEW).

During the event at WEC's Great Bend office, community members enjoyed a complimentary lunch while exploring the benefits of renewable energy in the outdoor green space. Attendees also learned about programs like **COMMUNITY SOLAR** and got a chance to experience the power of electric transportation firsthand. Three all-electric vehicles were on site for test drives, including two WEC fleet vehicles and a Tesla Model Y provided by a WEC employee.

With limited access to electric vehicles in rural areas — no local auto dealerships currently offer EVs, and only three public charging stations are located across WEC's 4,625 miles of line — WEC is proud to lead efforts that bridge the gap and empower members with knowledge and hands-on access to emerging technologies.

"Our member services team continues to raise the bar when it comes to engaging and educating our communities," said Bruce W. Mueller, CEO and general manager. "I couldn't be



prouder of the creativity, dedication and innovation they bring to every project. This national recognition is a testament to their hard work and the values that guide us at Wheatland Electric."

The communications team is led by Alli Conine, director of member services and corporate communications, and also includes the following staff members: Samantha Garcia and Mary Hoisington, both member services and key accounts managers; Shajia Donecker, multimedia specialist; and Caitlin Moser, member services coordinator.

The team will be recognized at the **CONNECT CONFERENCE** in Kansas City, Missouri — a national gathering of communications and marketing professionals in the electric cooperative industry — this May. Moser and Donecker will accept the award and take part in this annual professional development opportunity.

The **SPOTLIGHT ON EXCELLENCE AWARDS** celebrate outstanding communication and marketing efforts by electric cooperatives and affiliated organizations nationwide. Judging is conducted by university faculty and industry experts in marketing, digital media, print, and communications across more than 20 award categories, including writing, design, digital strategy, and campaign development.