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WHEATLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

WHEATLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

EATLAND

Delivering Energy for Life

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 🔨

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Mark Arnold President Josh Young Vice President Stacey Addison-Howland Secretary John Kleysteuber Treasurer Wes Campbell Trustee Lynn Freese Trustee **Bob Hiss** Trustee **Dustin Stansbury** Trustee John Sullivan Trustee **Mike Thon** Trustee

DISTRICT OFFICES

Garden City — 620-275-0261 2005 W. Fulton, P.O. Box 973 Garden City, KS 67846

Great Bend — 620-793-4223 200 10th St., P.O. Box 1446 Great Bend, KS 67530

Harper — 620-896-7090 906 Central, P.O. Box 247 Harper, KS 67058

Leoti — 620-375-2632 101 W. F St., P.O. Box 966 Leoti, KS 67861

Scott City-Main — 620-872-5885 101 S. Main St., P.O. Box 230 Scott City, KS 67871

Syracuse — 620-384-5171 206 N. Main, P.O. Box 1010 Syracuse, KS 67878

Tribune — 620-376-4231 310 Broadway, P.O. Box 490 Tribune, KS 67879

FROM THE MANAGER

Empowering Members

The crucial role of mail-in voting for Wheatland Electric Cooperative's Board of Trustees



Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc. (WEC) adheres to the Seven Cooperative Principles. The following principles guide

As a cooperative,

us in how we do business, build our communities, and serve our members.

Voluntary and Open Membership

- Democratic Member Control
- Members' Economic Participation
- Autonomy and Independence
- Education, Training and Information
- Cooperation Among Cooperatives
- Concern For Community In the heart of democratic member control lies the power of the people to shape their community's future. This holds true for rural areas served

by cooperatives like WEC where the democratic process is a cornerstone of the organization's success. One key aspect of this democratic structure is the election of the board of trustees, a process that hinges on the active participation of cooperative members casting their votes.

The implementation of mail-in ballots is helping to make the democratic process more accessible and inclusive than ever before. Recognizing the diverse and often rural membership of WEC, the option to vote by mail ensures that every member, regardless of geographical constraints, can exercise their right to participate in the cooperative's governance.

Voting for the board of trustees is not merely a civic duty; it is a direct investment in the cooperative's future. Trustees are responsible for overseeing the cooperative's financial health,

Continued on page 12E►

SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

Overhead power lines carry thousands of volts of electricity. Accidental contact with one of these wires may result in serious injury or death. Most of these accidents can be avoided with greater awareness of the location of power lines and other electrical equipment in the near vicinity. Always be aware of what is overhead and remember the phrase, "Look up and live!"

2024 A N N U A L MEETING ILLUMINATING CONNECTIONS

Join us for an **ILLUMINATING** annual meeting on April 24!

ATTENDING WHEATLAND ELECTRIC'S ANNUAL MEETING IS NOT AN OBLIGATION; IT'S AN OPPORTUNITY TO ACTIVELY ENGAGE IN THE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE OF YOUR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE - AND HELP SHAPE OUR VERY BRIGHT FUTURE!

> That's why you should mark your calendar now for **APRIL** 24 for our 2024 ANNUAL MEETING. located this year in Great Bend and livestreamed to seven remote locations across our service territory: Scott City, Leoti, Tribune, Syracuse, Garden City, Harper and Caldwell.

From any location, co-op members like you will be able to LEARN, VOICE, CONNECT and WIN amazing door prizes, including our GRAND-PRIZE GIVEAWAY!

LEARN

As a WEC member-owner, your participation in our annual meeting is crucial to ensuring that we serve your needs and priorities effectively.

As a **MEMBER-OWNED** organization proudly serving individuals, small businesses, farms, ranches, and industrial partners across southwest and central Kansas, we look forward to this annual event and encourage your attendance because it's an opportunity for us to share cooperative news and updates while also hearing from you.

Spending time with you and hearing your take on our

community's energy future is important to us. In fact, it's essential because everything we do is shaped by you! This year's annual meeting will provide a unique and enlightening opportunity for our members to stay informed about the **CONNECTIONS** we work to create every day not just through the energy we deliver, but through the partnerships we build, projects we help fund, and programs we implement — all to empower the communities we serve. It also allows us to share important updates about our organization's financial health, our operational performance, and our strategic initiatives.

Attending allows members like you to **LEARN** about developments that may impact your electric service or hear about programs or services that could empower your or your community!

VOICE

You may be wondering if your opinion makes a difference. It does! As a voting member, you have the power to **VOICE** your concerns or ask your questions at the annual meeting from any of our eight meeting locations.

Members in attendance can ask guestions, raise concerns, and provide feedback directly to cooperative leadership, and this can be an effective way to address any issues or uncertainties you may have about your electric service or the cooperative's operations.

Cooperative governance is based on the principle of **DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL**, which means that members like you have a say in how the cooperative is run. By attending the annual meeting, you can participate in the democratic process by **VOICING** your concerns.

In addition, your vote is also your voice, and we encourage you to participate in our mail-in vote this spring.

Our trustees — democratically elected by members like you — are members of your community, and they are concerned with the issues you face every day because they face them, too. We encourage you to read more about our trustee elections and our new mail-in voting process on

Page 12D, and we encourage your attendance on April 24 to observe the outcome of this year's trustee elections.

CONNECT

This year's annual meeting is all about the **ILLUMINATING CONNECTIONS** that we work to create daily.

Our annual meeting provides a chance for members like you to **CONNECT** with fellow co-op members, our cooperative staff and leadership, and our board of trustees, not to mention government officials, local business leaders, and other community stakeholders who regularly attend, too.

CONNECTING at the annual meeting is an opportunity to build relationships, network, and engage with others who share a common interest in our cooperative's success and the communities we serve. The energy industry is in the midst of massive changes, and consumer needs and changing technology impact nearly every aspect of how we manage and deliver energy.

As we navigate these major changes in the years ahead, we need to hear from you and your neighbors to guide and inform our planning as we strive to meet the long-term needs of the communities we serve. So, whether you're a longtime WEC member or new to the co-op, we encourage you to **CONNECT** with us and contribute to our collective spirit and success!

WIN

One last (and best!) reason to attend this year is that YOU **COULD WIN BIG!**

In addition to enjoying a catered lunch at all of our meeting locations, members in attendance will have the

> DESIGN THIS YEAR'S MEETING BAG

Students (grades K-12) in our service territory are invited to design this year's annual meeting artwork!

Each year, goodie bags are distributed to members attending our annual meeting at all eight locations across southwest and central Kansas. This year, we'd like to feature a design (or designs) created by our mini members! All design submissions will be considered, but priority will be given to submissions reflecting this year's annual meeting theme:

ILLUMINATING CONNECTIONS: HOW DOES ELECTRICITY ILLUMINATE YOUR LIFE?

To submit your design, send your high resolution artwork in digital format (JPEG, AI, PNG, EPS, TIFF, PSD or PDF) to contests@weci.net or by hard copy to any local Wheatland Electric office BY MARCH 8. **OUESTIONS? CONTACT US AT MEMBERSERVICES@WECI.NET.**

lights, and more!

rather than profits.

opportunity to win awesome door prizes, which can range from small electric appliances, smart tech gifts, or possibly even a SIZABLE CREDIT on your next electric bill!

In fact, every member household in attendance will go home with a special member gift.

For this year's grand-prize giveaway, we'll be illuminating your life with a backyard/patio party package, including a outdoor television box, large-screen television, backyard

The winner of this year's annual meeting grand prize will be able to create the ultimate outdoor oasis, one where friends and family can gather, relax and create lasting memories together!

SEE YOU ON APRIL 24

Whether you attend in Great Bend or one of our remote locations, we thank you in advance for getting involved because your participation means so much to us.

Most people don't equate active involvement with their electric company with helping their community, but we're no ordinary utility company. We're an electric cooperative. While our core vision is to provide essential services that are safe, reliable and competitively priced to enhance the lives of our members, we're also motivated by service to our community,

Your attendance at our annual meeting is a win-win equation, providing opportunities for learning, engagement, connection, empowerment and growth.

We hope you'll learn, voice, connect, win **AND EXERCISE** ALL THE OTHER BENEFITS OF YOUR CO-OP MEMBERSHIP BY **JOINING US ON APRIL 24!**







SCAN FOR

AND INFO

CONTEST

RULES

WHY MAIL-IN **VOTING?**

Cooperative members will be voting for trustee representation by mail for the first time in cooperative history.

Why? Cooperative members who attended last year's annual meeting on April 26, 2023, voted to pass revisions to the cooperative's bylaws, which included mail-in ballot voting for trustee elections.

Prior to this year, elections were held in-person at our annual meeting locations via paper ballots distributed to members in attendance.

This year's election results will be announced at the 2024 annual meeting held on April 24 in Great Bend, Kansas. The primary meeting in Great Bend will be livestreamed to seven additional remote meeting locations: Scott City, Leoti, Tribune, Syracuse, Garden City, Harper and Caldwell.

Members across our service territory are encouraged to attend any meeting location to learn the results of the election, hear cooperative news and updates, enjoy a meal, ask questions, enter for door prizes, and more. For more information, see Pages 12B-C.

WEC's mail-in voting is being conducted and managed by Survey and Ballot Systems, a national data solutions company based in Eden Prairie, Minnesota. WEC's trustees selected the reputable firm to ensure a transparent, effective and fair election process.

Members with questions about our mail-in voting process are encouraged to call their local WEC office or email us at memberservices@weci.net.

Trustee Ballots Will Be Mailed March 29

Three board seats up for election

Members of Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc., will receive ballots by mail later this month to vote for trustees for the first time in WEC history.

Ballots will be mailed March 29 and MUST BE RETURNED BY APRIL 19. at least five days prior to this year's annual

meeting on April 24, 2024. Members are encouraged to

complete and return their ballots in a timely fashion through postal mail via postage-paid business reply envelopes which will also be provided. Ballots will not be accepted at WEC offices.

WEC is governed by a 10-member board of trustees elected by the cooperative's membership, and voting is crucial for co-op members like you.

Trustees play a significant role in setting the policies, strategic direction, and making financial decisions. Through your votes, trustees shape the co-op's priorities and initiatives, influencing everything from rates and services to community engagement and sustainability efforts.

By participating in trustee elections, members like you can help determine the direction of the cooperative and ensure that it aligns with your values and needs.

Board seats in the following districts are up for election this year:

LIEAP ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

The Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) helps low-income persons meet their home energy costs by paying a portion of their energy utility bill. To apply go to www.dcf.ks.gov, select the Services tab, scroll down and click on Energy Assistance (LIEAP). Applications can also be obtained from the DCF, your local health department or Wheatland Electric. APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5 P.M. ON MARCH 29, 2024. For further assistance, call 888-369-4777.

LIEAP REOUIREMENTS

- An adult household member must be personally responsible for purchasing home energy incurred at the current residence, payable either to the landlord or to the fuel vendor.
- ▶ The household must demonstrate a recent history of payments toward the purchase of their energy. Payments may be a combination of payments for natural gas, electricity, propane and firewood. The total of the payments must be at least \$80.
- The household must meet citizenship or lawful residency requirements.
- The household must meet application requirements.

DISTRICT 3 (Greeley County in Kansas; Kiowa and Cheyenne counties

- in Colorado)
- DISTRICT 6 (Great Bend, Kansas) DISTRICT 7 (Harper, Kingman, Sumner and Sedgwick counties in Kansas)

WEC'S BYLAWS ALLOW FOR **TWO METHODS FOR TRUSTEE** NOMINATIONS:

NOMINATION BY THE NOMINATING

COMMITTEE – The board of trustees has appointed a nomination committee made up of one member from each of our seven districts. Members should contact WEC to get the contact information for their fellow member who represents their district or contact Jim McVay, WEC's general counsel, at 620-793-4223 or jmcvay@weci.net.

NOMINATION BY A PETITION OF MEMBER - Twenty-five, or more,

members of WEC can nominate any member as a trustee candidate. Nominations by petition must be sent to WEC BY MARCH 10. Members interested in running should contact Jim McVay, WEC's general counsel, at 620-793-4223 or jmcvay@weci.net for additional information.

Empowering Members Continued from page 12A >

setting strategic goals, and upholding the values that matter most to the community. Members who actively engage in the voting process contribute to the cooperative's accountability and transparency, fostering an environment where decisions align with the collective interests of the membership.

Moreover, the election of trustees reflects the cooperative's commitment to grassroots democracy. Every vote serves as a building block for a stronger, more resilient community. It empowers members to actively participate in shaping the cooperative's policies, ensuring that it remains responsive to the evolving needs of the communities we serve.

Voting for WEC's Board of Trustees is not just an exercise in democracy; it is an investment in the cooperative's success and the vitality of the communities it serves. By participating



PUBLIC EV CHARGING STATION NOW AVAILABLE IN HARPER

AN ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATION

is now available at our Wheatland Electric office in Harper (906 Central) for use by the public.

The **LEVEL 2 CHARGEPOINT** charging station was recently installed and allows electric vehicle, or EV drivers to "fuel up" in the south central Kansas town about an hour's drive from Wichita.

It also brings WEC's total public charging infrastructure to three stations, with two charging ports per station.

Our two other EV charging stations are located at our WEC offices in Great Bend (200 10th St.) and Garden City (2005 W. Fulton Ave.) and were installed

With the influx of electric vehicles comes a need for charging infrastructure — both at home and on the road. Throughout the country, businesses, governments, and utilities have been installing electric vehicle charging stations for over a decade. In fact, according to the U.S. Department of Energy's Alternative Fuels Data Center, there are over 61,100 LEVEL 2 or higher charging stations across the nation today!

All three of our LEVEL 2 CHARGEPOINT **CHARGING STATIONS** can be used by downloading the ChargePoint app on your Android or Apple smartphone.

In fact, these three charging stations are part of a



INCOME GUIDELINES

in the electoral process, members actively contribute to the cooperative's ability to adapt, grow and thrive in an everchanging landscape. As the lifeblood of democracy, voting for the board of trustees is an essential act that fortifies the cooperative and strengthens the bonds of community. I also encourage you to read more about why your attendance at this year's annual meeting is important for you as a member and the cooperative on Pages 12B-C. Mark your calendar for our 2024 ANNUAL MEETING, WHICH WILL BE HELD APRIL 24. 2024. at the Great Bend Events Center, 3111 10th St., in Great Bend. Registration will begin at 11 a.m. CT, and learn how Wheatland is ILLUMINATING **CONNECTIONS** through collaborative initiatives and engaging discussions.

UNTIL NEXT TIME. TAKE CARE

much wider network of ChargePoint stations across the country, and the app makes it easy to find them all, charge quickly and get going!

Because most EV charging happens at home or at work, **LEVEL 2** charging — sometimes called AC charging — is the best choice for everyday charging, adding about 10-60 miles of range per hour.

LEVEL 2 EV CHARGERS, like the ones from ChargePoint, can power your EV up to nine times faster than a conventional wall outlet. An overnight charge, for example, will give you the full range that your EV is capable of, which is over 250 miles in the case of our Hyundai Kona Electric.

When you're short on time or are traveling long distances, the ChargePoint app can also help you quickly and easily locate DC Fast Chargers on your route. Also known as **LEVEL 3** chargers, these chargers can add anywhere from 60-80 miles of range in only 20 minutes!

DYK?

To date, our WEC public charging stations have hosted over 260 UNIQUE DRIVERS for over 550 **CHARGING SESSIONS!** The average charging session length is about 2.5 hours.

These charging sessions have helped the planet avoid over 6,700 kg of greenhouse gases — that's like planting 172 trees and letting them grow for 10 years!

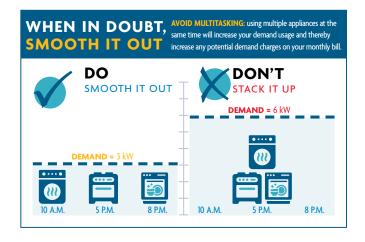
New Rates Take Effect With March Usage, April Billing

Starting March 1, new rates approved by the WEC Board of Trustees at an open meeting on Dec. 19 will go into effect. The new rates will take effect with March usage, April billing. These adjustments have been carefully considered to ensure the continued delivery of reliable and highquality electric services.

THREE-PART RATE STRUCTURE

A three-part rate structure is being implemented to ensure a fair and transparent system for our members. This three-part rate structure is designed to encompass the various components that contribute to the overall cost of providing electricity.

- SERVICE AVAILABILITY CHARGE: Fixed monthly charge designed to recover the costs of providing equipment, materials, labor and business overhead necessary to serve each meter, regardless of the amount of electricity consumed.
- **ENERGY (kWh) CHARGE:** The cost for the total amount of energy, measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh), used within the billing period. It is calculated by taking the total kWh used by the member and multiplying it by WEC's kWh charge for the member.



DEMAND CHARGE (kW): A charge to appropriately allocate costs to build, maintain or upgrade the infrastructure (power lines, transformers, substation upgrades, etc.) needed to ensure enough energy is delivered to meet members' needs. The charge is determined by the maximum demand of energy at any point within the billing cycle multiplied by the determined rate for a member's specific rate class.

CHANGES IN SERVICE AVAILABILITY CHARGE, DEMAND CHARGE AND ENERGY CHARGE						
RATE CLASS	SERVICE AVAILABILITY CHARGE		DEMAND CHARGE (BILLING kW)		ENERGY CHARGE	
	CURRENT	NEW	CURRENT	NEW	CURRENT	NEW
RESIDENTIAL URBAN	\$28.50	\$30	\$0.00	\$2.00	\$0.096485	\$0.105950
RESIDENTIAL RURAL	\$33.50	\$35	\$0.00	\$2.00	\$0.096485	\$0.105950
RESIDENTIAL HEAT & COOL	\$28.50	\$30	\$0.00	\$2.00	\$0.056372 (OctMay) \$0.120541 (June-Sept.)	\$0.064750 (OctMay \$0.119750 (June-Sept
GENERAL SERVICE URBAN	\$34	\$39	\$0.00 (first 10 kW) 8.75 (over 10 kW)	\$2.00 (first 10 kW) 9.25 (over 10 kW)	\$0.09455 (first 375 kWh/kW/month \$0.04955 (over 375 kWh/kW/month	\$0.106500 all kwi
GENERAL SERVICE RURAL	\$39	\$44	\$0.00 (first 10 kW) 8.75 (over 10 kW)	\$2.00 (first 10 kW) 9.25 (over 10 kW)	\$0.09455 (first 375 kWh/kW/month \$0.04955 (over 375 kWh/kW/month)	\$0.106500 all kwi
GENERAL SERVICE HEAT & COOL	\$34	\$39	\$0.00	\$2.00	\$0.051856 \$0.143050	\$0.057339 \$0.149339
GENERAL SERVICE TIME OF DAY	\$39	\$39	\$0.00 (first 10 kW) \$3.11 (over 10 kW) \$12.53 (Peak Billed Demand)	\$0.00 (first 10 kW) \$3.75 (over 10 kW) \$13.00 (Peak Billed Demand)	\$0.075879	\$0.099350
GENERAL SERVICE LARGE	\$46	\$50	\$13.12	\$14.75	\$0.063222	\$0.077190
GENERAL SERVICE LARGE ELECTRIC HEAT	\$46	\$50	\$13.12	\$14.75	\$0.058222 (Oct-May) \$0.068222 (June-Sept.)	\$0.070348 (Oct-May \$0.080348 (June-Sept
GENERAL SERVICE LARGE TIME OF DAY	\$46	\$50	\$3.75 \$13.19 (Peak Billed Demand)	\$5.38 \$14.75 (Peak Billed Demand)	\$0.062920	\$0.075046
IRRIGATION	\$41	\$45	\$14.00 (July-Aug.)	\$16.00 (July-Aug.)	\$0.079741 (septJune) \$0.079741 first 375 kwh/kW/month \$0.043821 over 375 kwh/kW/month	\$0.09837 (SeptJune \$0.098370 first 375 kWty/kW/mont \$0.062370 over 375 kWh/kW/mont
ATHLETIC FIELD	\$31.50	\$35			\$0.111373	\$0.146370
MUNICIPAL SERVICE	\$31.50	\$35		\$2.00	\$0.103936	\$0.115910
MEDIUM POWER		\$50		\$12.65		\$0.100000 first 375 kWh/kW/month \$0.055000 over 375 kWh/kW/month

The chart above shows the current service availability charges, as well as the new charges effective March 1, 2024. To view tariffs in full for each rate class please visit www.weci.net/tariffs. Most residential members living within city limits fall in the first rate class depicted above: Residential Urban. For specific questions about your account, please call your local Wheatland office.

INTRODUCE NEW GENERAL SERVICE MEDIUM POWER TARIFF

WEC aims to ensure fairness and equity among all our member-owners. By creating specific tariffs for different types of members (e.g., residential, small commercial, large commercial), the cooperative can tailor rates to match the cost structures associated with serving each group. This prevents one group from subsidizing the electricity costs of another, promoting fairness.

Medium-sized commercial or industrial members often have varying load profiles and usage patterns. By implementing a general service medium power tariff, WEC can encourage these members to better manage their energy demand. It is part of our strategic approach to provide reliable and competitively priced electricity to our diverse member-owners while ensuring the cooperative's financial stability.

MEMBERS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THE GENERAL SERVICE MEDIUM POWER TARIFF WILL BE NOTIFIED.

CONTACT US WITH QUESTIONS

As we have expressed in earlier articles, raising electric rates is a matter of paramount importance to the Wheatland board of trustees. Please contact your local office if you have additional questions or concerns.



For more information, please visit www.weci.net/cold-weather-rule. If your service is disconnected for non-pay, please review our rules and regulations by visiting www.weci.net/rules-regulations.



COLD WEATHER ACCOMMODATION

ENDS MARCH 15

As spring draws near once again, Wheatland Electric would like to remind co-op members that the COLD WEATHER ACCOMMODATION for residential members ends March 15.

NEWS FROM WHEATLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

ILLUMINATING CONNECTIONS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 2024

GREAT BEND EVENTS CENTER | 3111 10TH ST., GREAT BEND

10 A.M. MT / 11 A.M. CST REGISTRATION

10:30 A.M. MT / 11:30 A.M. CST LUNCHEON

11 A.M. MT / NOON CST BUSINESS MEETING

AT ALL LOCATIONS

Join Us for an **ILLUMINATING**

Annual Meeting at the Great Bend Events Center on April 24, 2024!

OR AT ONE OF OUR REMOTE LOCATIONS:

DISTRICT 1 — SCOTT CITY Western Kansas Child Advocacy Center, 212 E. Fifth St.

> **DISTRICT 2** — **LEOTI** Wheatland Electric Warehouse, 103 West F

DISTRICT 3 — TRIBUNE Wheatland Electric Warehouse, 310 Broadway Ave.

> **DISTRICT 4** — **SYRACUSE** VFW Building, 609 N. Main St.

DISTRICT 5 — GARDEN CITY Wheatland Electric Office, 2005 W. Fulton

DISTRICT 7 — HARPER Westview Lodge & Apartments, 1300 N. Westview

DISTRICT 7 — CALDWELL Caldwell Community Building, 119 E. First St.



KANSAS COUNTRY LIVING MARCH 2024