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620-275-0261

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Great Bend, KS
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620-793-4223

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302 W. 6th
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Harper, KS 67058
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Leoti, KS 67861
620-375-2632

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101 Main Street
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Scott City, KS
67871
620-872-5885

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310 Broadway
P.O. Box 490
Tribune, KS 67879
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FROM THE MANAGER

Rate Proposal Passes — Effective with March Usage

On December 15, 2015, a rate proposal was presented to the Board of Trustees of the Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc. The study was completed by Mike Searcy of C. H. Guernsey & Associates. As announced in the November issue, the December board meeting was open to all members during the section of the meeting when the rate proposal was discussed and voted upon.

During the presentation, Searcy demonstrated the rates of all classes of service and how rate changes were applied to the various classes. Searcy showed how combining the rates from Wheatland's east and west service into one rate structure will allow for more efficiencies and potential cost savings in the future. The Board, staff and members in attendance asked Searcy numerous questions about the proposed rate structures. Members also asked cooperative staff how the proposed rate structure would be implemented.

After all questions were answered, the Board of Trustees discussed the matter thoroughly and decided it was in the best interest of the cooperative and its members to adopt the rate proposal. The rates will go into effect March 1, 2016.

Cost of Doing Business

The cost-of-service study showed that the overall electric revenues must be increased by 7 percent. This increase is needed to cover increased expenses for building and maintenance of the electric distribution infrastructure, wages, benefits and the overall cost of doing business.

The study also showed that some of the rate classes needed adjustments to more accurately cover their contribution toward the cost of providing electric service.

Service Availability Charge

One part of the rate change is the Service Availability Charge

Continued on page 16-B ▶



Bruce Mueller

The cost-of-service study showed that the overall electric revenues must be increased by seven percent.

Rate Proposal Passes Continued from page 16-A

New Rate Structures						
Rate Class	kWh Charge First 375 kWh (per kWh)	kWh Charge Over 375 kWh (per kWh)	PCA Charge ¹ (per kWh)	Demand Charge First 10 kW (per kW)	Demand Charge Over 10 kW (per kW)	Average Change in Monthly Bill
Residential Urban	\$0.1189	\$0.1189	\$0.0000	N/A	N/A	\$11.13
Residential Rural	\$0.1189	\$0.1189	\$0.0000	N/A	N/A	\$11.59
General Service Rural	\$0.1146	\$0.0946	\$0.0000	\$0.00	\$8.00	\$16.53
General Service Urban	\$0.1146	\$0.0946	\$0.0000	\$0.00	\$8.00	\$12.50
Large General Service	\$0.0706	\$0.0706	\$0.0000	\$12.86	\$12.86	\$105.13
Irrigation ²	\$0.0912	\$0.0712	\$0.0000	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$57.49
Municipal Service	\$0.1142	\$0.1142	\$0.0000	N/A	N/A	\$0.00
Municipal Water Pumping	\$0.1142	\$0.1142	\$0.0000	N/A	N/A	NA
Municipal Athletic Fields	\$0.1515	\$0.1515	\$0.0000	N/A	N/A	NA

¹PCA charge was reset to \$0 in the new rate structure, as the cost of power increases or decreases in the future, the PCA charge may vary accordingly. ²Irrigation Demand Charges are only for the months of June, July, and August. kWh hour charge is only discounted after the first 375 kWh during the months of June, July and August.

The chart above demonstrates the new rates that will go into effect on March 1, 2016.

(formerly known as the Customer Charge). This monthly fixed charge is designed to recover the fixed costs of providing the equipment, materials, labor and business overhead necessary to serve each meter regardless of the amount of electricity consumed. These costs are the same for a member using 10 kilowatt-hours (kWh) or 5,000 kWh.

Power Cost Adjustment

The cooperative's average cost of wholesale

power varies monthly depending on both the demand charges and fuel charges from our wholesale power suppliers Sunflower and Mid-Kansas.

The cooperative uses a Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) to pass along these fluctuations in wholesale costs. The PCA appears on your bill as a separate line item as a charge or credit applied to your monthly energy use based on the difference between the cooperative's actual monthly cost of power and the anticipated (or leveled) base cost of power.

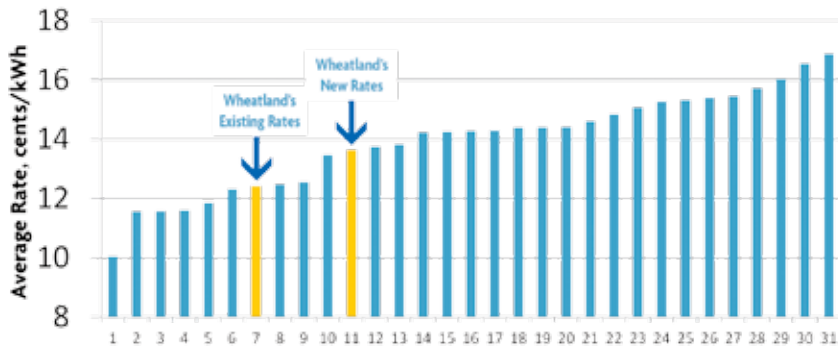
Over the past few years, the PCA has been a charge and not a credit to the members each month. The PCA has been a charge, because the base charge was anticipated several years ago, and power costs have increased since then. As part of the rate change, the board agreed to change the anticipated (leveled) base cost of power so that the PCA would be zero if the anticipated and actual costs were the same. As a result, you will likely notice a decrease in PCA charges.

Changes in Service Availability Charge			
Rate Class	Current Service Availability Charge West	Current Service Availability Charge East	New Service Availability Charge
Residential Urban	\$6.00	\$10.00	\$16.00
Residential Rural	\$6.00	\$10.00	\$21.00
General Service Rural	\$10.00	\$11.00	\$23.50
General Service Urban	\$10.00	\$11.00	\$18.50
Large General Service	\$10.00	\$27.50	\$35.00
Irrigation	\$10.00	\$0.00	\$30.00
Municipal Service	\$10.00	\$13.45	\$22.50
Municipal Water Pumping	N/A	\$26.25	\$22.50
Municipal Athletic Fields	\$7.00	N/A	\$22.50

The chart above shows the current service availability charges, as well as the new charges effective March 1, 2016.

Rate Proposal Passes Continued from page 16-B

Average Residential Electric Rates for Co-ops in Kansas



The above graph illustrates Wheatland Electric's existing and new average residential rates compared to other cooperatives in Kansas.

Contact us with Questions

Please see the charts on the previous pages that demonstrate the existing rates and the new rates that will go into effect on March 1, 2016.

As we have expressed before in earlier articles, increasing electric rates is a matter of paramount importance. The cooperative's Board and management have evaluated this issue for

some time and decided the increase was necessary for the responsible operation of the cooperative—both for the quality and reliability of service and the financial integrity of the cooperative.

Please feel free to contact me anytime to visit about any questions, concerns or suggestions you may have.

Until next time take care.

Get to Know Your Co-op Staff

Traci Goddard

Manager of Accounting in Garden City
5 months at Wheatland

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.

My husband, Mikey, and I have three amazing children: Madison (aka Madi) (15), who is our free-spirited teenager. Amity (4), she is extremely funny and easy going. Then there is Bane who just turned three. He is all boy, anything that he can attempt to hurt himself, he does it. We also have a 10-year-old "daughter", Bren, who is our gentle giant.



Traci Goddard

WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY? Born and raised in Dodge City.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME? With a teenager and two preschoolers we don't have a lot of spare time, but when we do, we enjoy camping, fishing, barbecuing and just playing outside (weather permitting). We are really close with our families, so anytime we can make an excuse to get together we jump at the opportunity.

IF YOU COULD HAVE ANY SUPER POWER – WHAT WOULD IT BE AND WHY? There are so many that I would love to have! I would have to say that "mind control" would definitely come in handy with my hard-headed/stubborn children (they do not get that from me by the way).

WHAT WOULD YOUR IDEAL JOB BE? This one of course! (did I pass the test?) No seriously, I enjoy something that challenges me, never becomes monotonous, pushes me to be better, provides a sense of accomplishment and the feeling that you can/are making a difference.

WHAT IS SOMETHING NOT MANY PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT YOU? I was an "orchardork" as they called us in high school, but I was always proud of it. I played the violin all the way through my first two years of college.

WHO HAS INSPIRED YOU IN YOUR LIFE AND WHY? My parents. My mother taught me to be gentle, patient (I am still working on that one), determined and the extreme power of love. My dad taught me to get dirty, be self-sufficient, hardworking, and the skills to change a tire on my own.

Check Out a New Way to Curb Your Energy Usage

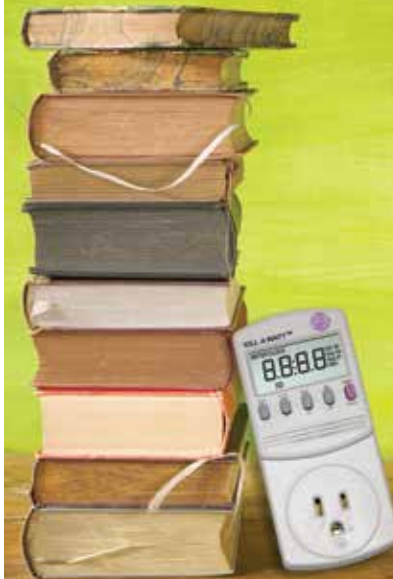
Borrow a Kill-A-Watt at Your Local Library Today!

The Kill-A-Watt™ EZ is an electricity monitoring device designed to easily measure how much electricity is being used by your plug-in appliances at home or work.

Find out how much money you would save on your electricity bills by turning them off and being smarter in your home energy management.

The Kill-A-Watt EZ is now available for checkout at your local library.

You must have a valid library card to borrow a Kill-A-Watt through this program.





BY SHAWN POWELSON
MANAGER OF
MEMBER SERVICES

Wheatland recently completed its second annual Cram the Van food drive. After collecting more than 3 ½ tons this year, we've now collected a total of over seven tons of food through Cram the Van. What you may not know are the stories behind those collections. When you spend two months in a big red van, traversing 2/3 of the state of Kansas, meeting thousands of members, there are bound to be a few stories along the way.

Oh, You Have a Van?

I spend a considerable amount of time on the road during September and October, traveling to the various Cram the Van events, most often pulling the grill behind me. Some of the trips are short, just a few miles down the road when I'm traveling in the west and some of the trips are long, four to five hours when I'm traveling to parts of our east territory.

One thing I can always count on, are the long looks I get while out on the road. Let's face it, a big bright red van, covered in decals, urging you to support your local food bank and pulling a large grill down the highway always makes for some good conversation. Hey folks, it's not like it's easy to miss.

But perhaps one of my all-time favorite comments from someone at an event after they saw the van for the first time was, "Oh, you have a van?" (Like a "real van", for Cram the Van is what they were trying to say.) **Yep, we have a van.**

Within a Nickel

Before we deliver the food to each of the food banks, we typically take the cash we collected for that community and buy groceries with it at the local grocery store.

The amount we have to spend can vary greatly from one store to the next. It's always a kick to watch the store employees stare at us as we pile carts high with canned vegetables, rice, beans, jars of peanut butter and more.

One of the best parts about buying the groceries is seeing how close we can get to the total cash we have without going over. The record so far? **A nickel.** A grocery cart full of food, a nickel leftover.

The Thanksgiving Box

After our event in Holcomb at **RON'S MARKET**, we were picking everything up and I had gone back inside to settle our account. The lady at the cash register asked me where we were taking all of the food we had

2 Months. 11 Stops. 10 towns. 3,000 miles.

collected for that event. I told her that everything we collected in Finney County would go to the United Methodist Mexican American Ministries (UMAM). She kind of cocked her head to the side and said, "Oh."

With tears in her eyes, she went on to tell me that last year she had received a Thanksgiving box from UMAM. Wheatland's collections from last year were used to help make those boxes. I signed the ticket and thanked her for sharing that with me.

As I walked away, I was reminded that **this is more than collecting food for a food bank.**

Giving Can Be Fun

One of my favorite things about Cram the Van is putting on the events and getting a chance to witness the generosity of so many of our members. Whether it was someone buying a grocery cart full of donations for an event we did at a grocery store or someone stuffing the donation box with a \$100 bill, people were always willing to give and they gave with a smile.

Perhaps one of my very favorite things to witness though, was watching children drop their donations in the donation bins or down the food slide at the Halloween Finale. Being generous and giving can be fun, too.

Empty Shelves

Another great part of Cram the Van is delivering the food to each of the food banks. At the end of the drive, we gather up all of the collections from each community and deliver it to the local food banks. All

of the workers are always so appreciative of our efforts and seem to really enjoy the work they do.

I won't forget the faces of the people waiting to receive assistance, smiling in appreciation as we dropped off more food to stock the shelves. I also won't forget the empty shelves at some of those food banks when we showed up with a van full of food just in time for the holidays. **It struck me, the danger in thinking "someone else will do" lies in the reality of the question, "what if nobody does?"**



That's your van, right?

I was in Harper, buying groceries with the cash we had collected there before we made the delivery to the food bank. I had a cart full of groceries and was checking out. (Sadly, this wasn't one of my best efforts and I was well short of a nickel for this checkout.)

As the lady at the register finished totaling everything she looked at me and held up a \$20 bill, I looked at my envelope of money and then looked at the floor and asked, "Did I drop that?"

She kind of shrugged her shoulders and looked over at an older gentleman standing behind me and then back at me. I joined in the look-

ing carousel, looking at the lady at the register and back at the man, trying to figure out what was going on.

Finally, the gentleman said, "That's your van out there right?" I nodded yes. He said, "Well then ..." And with a little twinkle in his eye and a subtle nod, that was the end of the conversation.

I told the lady at the register I would be right back, and went and bought another \$20 worth of food. **Yep, that's my van sir.**

That's your van, right? Part II

After I had finished and paid in Harper, one of the workers proceeded to help me out to the van to help me unload the cart. I climbed inside the van and she handed me the various bags and boxes from the cart. As we unloaded the cart together she stopped as she handed me one of the bags.

She said, "I just think what you guys are doing is great. My mom really depends on the food bank and well thank you. I can't say anymore or I'm going to cry."

And with that, she turned away and reached for another bag. You know what? I think what WE are doing together is pretty great, too.

Thank you to everyone who has helped us Cram the Van the last two years. Seven tons of food is a lot of food. Safe to say, more than anyone here at Wheatland could have ever imagined. What we're doing together IS pretty great. So, let's do it again next year, shall we? **You bring the food, we'll bring the van!**

Attention High School Juniors



Each year, students from Kansas join more than 1,700 youth in Washington, D.C., to attend the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. Next year's Youth Tour is scheduled for June 9-16.



Kansas delegates attend Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp along with students from three other states to develop leadership skills and learn about cooperatives. The 2016 camp will be July 16-22.

Don't Miss These Leadership Experiences

Wheatland Electric will select three students to take an all-expense-paid trip in the summer of 2016.

Two winners will be chosen to join over 1,700 young people in Washington, D.C., for the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. Delegates will fly to our nation's capital to tour important historical sites, learn about our nation's government, and to develop their leadership skills. To see what's in store, check-out this video <http://bit.ly/dcytvideo2015>.

One winner will be chosen to attend the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, CO. Campers will stay at the scenic Glen Eden Resort in the beautiful Rocky Mountains. At camp, he or she will join winners from other cooperatives in Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming to form one of the most outstanding leadership camps in the country.

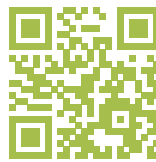
As part of the week-long adventure, the students will establish a candy cooperative business, tour Fish Creek Falls, Trapper Mine, Craig Power Plant; visit Steamboat Springs; experience the adrenaline rush of river rafting; and enjoy traditional

Scan these Codes to Get More Information

Washington, D.C.



Steamboat Springs, CO



camp activities, such as volleyball, swimming, dancing, and competing in a talent show. Get more information at <http://bit.ly/CYLCVideo>.

Both trips are funded entirely by Wheatland Electric Cooperative. All you need is spending money for souvenirs and a desire

to have a great leadership experience.

The winners will gain knowledge and experience that will help them grow as they pursue their future career. For more information or to apply, contact your guidance counselor at one of these participating high schools: Argonia, Caldwell, Chaparral, Conway Springs, Deerfield, Great Bend, Greeley County, Holcomb, Norwich, Scott Community, South Haven, Syracuse or Wichita County. Children of Wheatland employees are not eligible to apply.

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY FEBRUARY 1, 2016.

Camp made me realize that to become the best person I can be, I have to build better relationships with those around me and trust people...

MALLORY HORTON, 2015 CAMPER

You're Invited to...

Harper Office Grand Opening

Join us on Tuesday, January 12 for a tour of the newly constructed office to enjoy cookies, cake, hot chocolate & cider.

906 Central
Harper, KS
Ribbon Cutting - 10 a.m.
Open House - 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.



New Authorized Pay Agent in Conway Springs

Attention Wheatland Electric members in Conway Springs and the surrounding area: as

of January 4, 2016, **HIRED MAN'S GROCERY AND GRILL**, 424 N 5th Street in Conway Springs, will be serving as Wheatland's authorized pay agent.

Wheatland members in the Con-

HIRED MAN'S GROCERY & GRILL HOURS

- ▶ Monday-Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.
- ▶ Saturday: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- ▶ Sunday: 8:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

way Springs area will be able to make payments on their account or sign up for new service at

this location.

Also, coming soon to this location is a full-service payment kiosk that will allow members to process their own cash, credit card and check payments.

Wheatland Offers 13 Scholarships

Applications for Wheatland Electric's Empowering the Next Generation Scholarship Program are now available. Wheatland will award 13 \$1,000 scholarships to graduating seniors going on to a post-secondary institution.

Those who qualify for the scholarship must:

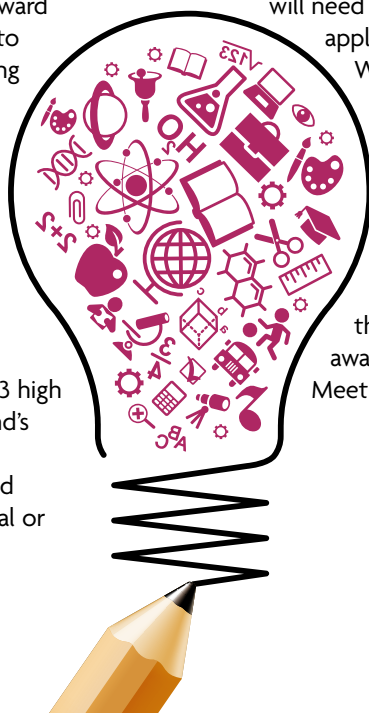
- ▶ Have a parent/guardian who is a member of Wheatland Electric.
- ▶ Attend one of the 13 high schools in Wheatland's service territory.
- ▶ Attend an accredited college or a technical or vocational school.

Children of Wheatland employees are not eligible to apply. Seniors who meet the qualifications will need to complete the

application found on Wheatland's website www.weci.net under the Community Tab **BY FEBRUARY 1, 2016.**

A committee will then choose the winning applicant from each school, and the scholarships will be awarded at the Annual Meeting in April 2016.

APPLICATION DEADLINE FEB. 1, 2016



Get to Know Your Co-op Staff

Steve Gerard

Warehouseman in Syracuse
8 Years at Wheatland

TELL US ABOUT YOUR

FAMILY. Married 32 years, three kids - two girls and a boy age 24, 22, and 20 respectively. Two beagles, two Corgie/border collie mutts, numerous cats, and two chickens.



WHERE ARE YOU FROM

ORIGINALLY? Born and raised here in Hamilton County.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE

TIME? What spare time? Paint, I like to paint.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE

VACATION? Camping in the Rocky Mountains. The higher the altitude the better.

WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENT ARE YOU MOST

PROUD OF? Our three kids; who aren't afraid to work, always ready to help, and are smarter than I am.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE BOOK OR MOVIE

AND WHY? Favorite book is *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien. Favorite movie is *The Thomas Crown Affair* with Pierce Brosnan and Rene Russo.

WHAT WOULD YOUR IDEAL JOB BE?

If it were ideal, it wouldn't be a job! I'd like to have a place where I could do paintings and ceramics and be able to sell them. Ideally, I'd like to be able to live off of selling them.

WHAT IS SOMETHING NOT MANY PEOPLE

KNOW ABOUT YOU? That I am completely deaf in my left ear.

WHO HAS INSPIRED YOU IN YOUR LIFE AND

WHY? My parents and my wife's parents, having lived and braved the elements out here in western Kansas, farming all their lives, raising kids, etc. My parents were married 67 years before my mom died this last summer. They lived for 66 years on the same farm.



Trent Suchy
 Journeyman Substation Maintenance
 7 Years at Wheatland in Great Bend

A Day in the Life

Trent Suchy

BY BETH LOONEY,
 ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

TRENT SUCHY picked me up at the office in his big bucket truck at 7:30 a.m. and off we went to the warehouse. After the usual get to know you chit chat, Trent enlightens me that today we will be changing out old meters to the new Automatic Metering Infrastructure (AMI) meters.

In addition to being a journeyman lineman, Trent also has had special education which enables him to do meter work and substation work. Trent explained that substation work is his favorite because there is a lot going on in a sub and many details that must be considered while doing work in them.

Today though, we are doing meters. We load up a smaller truck with boxes of meters and an iPad and off we go. We arrived at the first residence and knocked on the door. The resident was helpful and talkative while we did our work. Trent showed me how to input all the information and scan the meter barcode with the iPad while he did the dirty work changing out the meter. The whole process only took 10 minutes.

As we continued to install meters, the rain started falling. At this point I am cold AND wet. Trent courteously blasted the heat for me in the truck. So, we went from cold and wet to stifling hot every stop we made.

Many of the homes had dogs in the backyard or in a run in the front yard where the meters were located. As we were “intruders,” the canines, rightfully so, barked, growled and snarled. I’m a bit wary, but Trent had my back and we quickly maneuvered past the dog’s protected lair. We were nearly done for the day when the sky opened up. It really came down and Trent was on the other side of a fence that he had to hop over because there is no gate. Sliding in the wet grass, he barely made it over – in one piece.

As we dried off in the truck, Trent tells me about his experiences as the previous area chairman for Ducks Unlimited, the Bible study class he teaches at Central Baptist Church, and his love for training Labradors. With every story, I got a good sense that he is passionate about wildlife and community, as well as his wife and family. When I asked him where he sees his future at Wheatland, he humbly said, “I just want to advance my career and knowledge.”

We finished our day telling teenage driving stories and having lunch with service representative Leroy Keith. When I asked the final question, “What do you like most about working for Wheatland?” No big surprise – he said he likes the people he works with. Thanks Trent. I’ll be your meter wingman anytime!