



WHEATLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

NEWS

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FROM THE MANAGER

Save with Co-op Energy Efficiency Programs



Bruce Mueller

As a member of Wheatland Electric Co-operative, you are in a unique position to take advantage of energy efficiency programs offered by Wheatland.

Because we are a member-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperative, our goal is to provide safe, reliable power at a competitive price for our members. This means helping you save money on your monthly electric bill.

How exactly does practicing efficiency habits save you money? It's common sense that if you use less electricity, your bill will be lower, but there's more to it than that. Wheatland purchases electricity from Sunflower Electric/MKEC, our wholesale power provider. When electric use is high, we pay peak demand charges for the electricity we purchase. By incorporating energy efficiency into your daily routine, you are helping to reduce the demand for electricity, thus lowering its overall cost. As a cooperative, we pass these savings directly on to you!

As you will see in the article on 16-B, there are a number of ways to save by implementing basic energy efficiency practices. Things like caulking around windows and doors, turning off lights when you leave the room and

using a programmable thermostat, are great ways to start saving.

There are also some larger investments you can make in your home like replacing your old heating and air conditioning system (HVAC), replacing doors and windows and updating your home lighting to more efficient LED lighting. Wheatland offers rebates to residential members to help offset the cost of replacing your old HVAC system. (Visit our website and click on "Get Rebates" for more information.)

Wheatland also helps you monitor your energy use with our Kill-A-Watt energy monitor program. You can check out a Kill-A-Watt energy monitor at your local library and use it at home to see which appliances use the most energy and adjust your usage accordingly. With the implementation of our new Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) you can utilize SmartHub to help monitor your energy use. You can track when your energy use is high and see other details about your usage.

Wheatland is pleased to offer these energy efficiency programs and tips for you, our members. As you can see, there are many ways to save, and we want to be your trusted energy adviser. To find out more about energy efficiency programs and tips, contact your local Wheatland office or visit our website at www.weci.net.

Until next time, take care.

Energy Efficiency MAKEOVER

Invest in Your Home—Invest in Your Community

Last year, Wheatland tried a new project designed to help our members learn more about how to make their homes more energy efficient while at the same time assisting a local member by making improvements to their home at no cost to them. The project quickly grew legs and became what we now call our Energy Efficiency Home Makeover. We had so much fun and received such great feedback after helping last year's project recipient, **VARNA JOHNSON** from Great Bend, that we knew we wanted to do another project this year.

Selecting a Candidate

Like last year, we began this year's project by contacting several local organizations in our service territory to identify a member candidate. This year's search led us to Wheatland member **CINDY HORNBACK** of Scott City. Cindy has been living in her house for 19 years. The loss of her husband three years ago combined with her recent health problems made it difficult enough to keep up with general maintenance around her house, let alone make improvements in energy efficiency. When we called Cindy to explain the project and what we'd like to do, she was ecstatic. "I just can't believe it," she said. "That sounds wonderful, thank you so much."

Preparing for the Makeover

The next step was to perform an energy evaluation of Cindy's home and determine what improvements needed to be made. After putting the word out for someone to perform the evaluation, our old friend **MATT HOISINGTON** from C&V Home Improvements in Great

Bend came to the rescue. Matt was our project partner last year and performed both the evaluation and the work necessary to make the improvements to Varna's house.

Energy Evaluation Results

A few days after completing a thorough walk-through of Cindy's house with Matt, we received a detailed evaluation with recommendations that would improve the home's energy efficiency. Recommended improvements included the following:

- ▶ Obtain a complete heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) evaluation: There were a few indicators throughout the house that there might be some air circulation issues. (The presence of a window air conditioner for example.)
- ▶ Adjust and install weather stripping on three entry doors.
- ▶ Replace broken window in kitchen.
- ▶ Repair and replace two broken panes of glass in north bathroom and south living room.
- ▶ Install sash locks on windows where missing.
- ▶ Replace front and back storm doors.
- ▶ Remove two courses of vinyl siding (4 -foot and 7-foot from the bottom of the wall) from entire home and install dense pack cellulose insulation (R-13) and reinstall the siding. (Except the addition which is already adequately insulated.)
- ▶ Caulk around windows where gaps in existing siding are observed.
- ▶ Install R-19 fiberglass insulation to rim joists in

Rod McCleary of MTM Siding and Glass replaces Cindy's old basement windows with new vinyl windows that will help seal up her house from leaky drafts.



Thank You to Our Project Partners

MTM SIDING & GLASS

Rod McCleary
1130 W Highway 96, Scott City
620-872-2315

FAUROT HEATING & COOLING

Brent Faurot
910 W 5th St, Scott City
620-872-3508
www.faurotheatingandcooling.com

FREEDOM CONSTRUCTION

Dave Clinton
620-874-1133

Additional Assistance Provided by:

GARDEN TRUE VALUE

Von Hunn
1615 Taylor Plaza W, Garden City
620-275-4136
www.gardentruevalue.com

C&V HOME IMPROVEMENT

Matt Hoisington
1107 10th St., Great Bend
620-796-2500
www.cvhpros.com

SERVICE CONCEPTS

7172 Lakeview Parkway W. Dr., Indianapolis, Indiana
877-738-6824
www.serviceconcepts.coop

PROVIA

2150 State Route 39, Sugar Creek, Ohio
877-389-0835

- ▶ crawl space areas.
- ▶ Install R-13 fiberglass insulation "curtain" to ambient walls in crawl space areas.
- ▶ Replace three basement windows with new insulated windows.

Unlike before, due to distance and other logistical issues, we wouldn't be able to call on Matt to help us check off our list this year. We'd done a little recruiting ahead of time for potential local partners to help with this year's project. Now that we had the list, it was time to find someone (or someones) to help us pull off the makeover.

Working with Donors

My first call was to **VON HUNN** of Garden True Value in Garden City. We had pitched the

Dave Clinton of Freedom Construction repairs holes to the ceiling that were required to make the necessary improvements to Cindy's HVAC system.





Brent Faurot of Faurot Heating and Cooling works on a new supply line to improve the air flow to a room addition in Cindy's house.



A view of the new supply line that will carry more air volume and to a better location in the room addition.

Visit Wheatland Electric's website at www.weci.net for tips on making your home more energy efficient.

project idea to Vonn a couple of months earlier, as we initially thought this year's project would be in close proximity to Garden True Value. At the time, we agreed to reconvene once we had a better idea of how this year's project would take shape. With list in hand, we called Von to discuss the evaluation. After reviewing the list, Von agreed to donate the insulation needed to insulate the crawl space areas, as noted in the evaluation. Now we just needed someone to install the insulation.

We reached out to local contractor **DAVE CLINTON** of Freedom Construction to see if he'd be willing to install the insulation in the crawl space areas as well as the exterior walls as noted in the evaluation. After explaining the project to Dave, he graciously agreed to donate the work required to install the insulation.

Next up, we needed someone to help us with **a lot** of window and door replacements and repairs. We contacted local contractor **ROD MCCLEARY** of MTM Siding and Glass and pitched him the project and held our breath—this was a **big** piece of the puzzle. Thankfully, Rod was on board and agreed to help us. Even better, Rod worked closely with ProVia, the same company that Matt worked with last year. We were optimistic that ProVia would be willing to help us again this year. After a call to his sales rep at ProVia who then consulted with ProVia Director of Corporate Relations **JOE KLINK**, ProVia agreed to discount all the doors and windows needed to

complete the project. Now we were really rolling!

The last thing we needed was to find someone to evaluate Cindy's current HVAC system to see if there was anything we could do to help make Cindy's house more comfortable and energy efficient. We called local HVAC contractor **BRENT FAUROT**, owner of Faurot Heating and Cooling. (Brent is the contractor Wheatland uses to maintain our local facilities in Scott City and we thought our best chance at calling in a favor.) After reviewing Matt's evaluation with Brent and catching him up on the project, he agreed to stop by Cindy's house and take a look.

We met with Brent and did a complete walk-through and evaluation of Cindy's existing HVAC system. Per Matt's notes in the initial evaluation, we identified a circulation issue in a room addition. There wasn't enough supply air flow to the room, and Cindy was having to supplement with a window air conditioning unit in the summer and space heating in the winter. Brent agreed to help us correct the problem by running a new supply vent to the far side of the room and to also service her furnace, air conditioning unit and water heater, as well as install a new programmable thermostat. The new supply line was going to be rather involved as we'd need to cut a hole into the ceiling of one of Cindy's basement bedrooms to tie into her existing HVAC supply trunk. Hey Dave—we're going to need to add another item to your list! (Thankfully, Dave said no problem, we can fix that hole, too.)

Adding the Final Touches

When reviewing last year's project, we noted that our friends at Service Concepts had donated LED bulbs to update the interior lighting

of Varna's entire home. So we reached out to **RACHEL BARKER**, their director of sales and marketing, to see if they'd be willing to help on this year's project. Once again, they graciously agreed to donate more than 25 LED bulbs to update Cindy's entire home.

Nearly all the items on Matt's list of recommended improvements were finished as of the publication of this article. The few that hadn't were delayed due to weather or other minor hiccups but will be completed soon.

We'd like to say a **great big** thank you to all our partners on this year's project. We were blown away by the generosity of everyone involved. An extra special thank you to **ROD MCCLEARY** of MTM Siding and Glass for his time and effort in replacing, repairing and weatherizing all those doors and windows.

"I love doing things like this," said McCleary. "If I didn't have to earn a living, I'd just do work like this for people that need it. If someone could pay for it fine, if not fine too. There are people who could use help with these types of things—some of them little—that would really help them and they just can't afford them.

“These past three months, I’ve been so blessed, not only by this project but lots of other things that all seemed to have happened at the same time. I’m so thankful.”



Cindy stands proudly beside one of her two new storm doors that were installed as a part of the makeover project.

I like helping people.”

“I'm so thrilled,” Cindy said. “I still can't believe it. I'm just so thankful for everything that's been done. I'm so excited to have a kitchen window that I can actually open, and I can't wait to turn on my air conditioning this summer and see the improvements in my room. These past three months, I've just been so blessed, not only by this project but lots of other things that all seemed to have happened at the same time. I'm so thankful.”

While we realize not everyone can afford to make all the improvements that we helped Cindy with on this project, we hope we've inspired you to look around your house and see those problem areas with a new

perspective. How about setting aside a weekend, going to your local hardware/home improvement store and purchasing a tube of caulking and some foam weather stripping? Caulking around those leaky windows and sealing up those drafty doors could provide real savings this summer and into the winter.

If you're ready to get started or just want to learn more about making your home more efficient, visit Wheatland's website at www.weci.net and click on the “Education” tab. Or feel free to contact one of our great partners from this year's project to see how they can help you with your very own energy efficiency home makeover.

5 SMALL CHANGES Equal Big Savings

- 1** Install and set a **programmable thermostat** and save an estimated 10 percent a year on heating and cooling costs.
- 2** Seal **leaky ductwork**. Air loss through ducts account for nearly 30 percent of a cooling system's energy consumption.
- 3** Replace any **light bulb**, especially ones that are on more than one hour per day, with a light-emitting diode (LED) bulb.
- 4** Caulk, seal and weather strip **cracks and openings in your home**.
- 5** Use a **power strip**. Save up to \$100 a year by plugging electronics into a powerstrip and turning it off when not in use.

Source: Energy.gov



McCleary installs a new vinyl window in Cindy's kitchen.

Get to Know Your Co-op Staff

Neil O'Connell

Wireless Service Tech
10 years in Scott City



Neil
O'Connell

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.

Cheryl and I got married in 2008. Combined, we have four children and nine grandchildren. We also have three rescue dogs.

WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY?

I was born in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. My family traveled around the U.S. when I was a child because of my father's job, until we settled in Woodward, Oklahoma. It was there I finished all 12 grades. I lived in Oklahoma City and Puerto Rico for a time and then moved to Scott City to take the job at Broadband.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

I am an avid motorcyclist, so I fill a voluntary position as a District Representative for ABATE of Kansas. ABATE is a not-for-profit organization that advances the education and safety of motorcyclists through communication and legislation. It absorbs a great deal of my spare time, but it's something I'm passionate about.

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR IDEAL JOB?

A fishing guide. Who would not want to get paid for fishing every day and watching people's faces light up with huge smiles?

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MOVIE?

"The World's Fastest Indian." It's a true story of a motorcyclist who overcame all odds to beat the world's land speed record on the Salt Flats in 1967, and he still holds the record today. I like the true stories that show the strength of the human spirit.

WHO HAS INSPIRED YOU AND WHY?

I'd have to say my wife. She has helped me in more ways than I can express. She has taught me that patience and forgiveness are both blessings.

Power Strips vs. Surge Protectors BY TOM TATE



Tom Tate

As the proliferation of electronics impacts our daily lives, we realize there simply are not enough outlets in our homes. This is particularly true

for older homes. As a result, we end up with a number of "outlet expanders," commonly known as power strips.

Power strips are generic and fulfill a very simple function. They are inexpensive, and the quality, I suspect, is on par with the price.

Keeping this in mind, let's look at factors to consider when purchasing a power strip or a surge protector—the power strip's more talented cousin.

Important tip: Make sure you know the amperage rating of the outlet into which you are connecting the strip and other equipment. A residential circuit can overload if you are not careful.

Purchasing a Power Strip

- ▶ Look for power strips with a built-in circuit breaker. If you connect too many electronics and devices, the strip will kick out the circuit breaker rather than causing the breaker in your electric panel to trip.
- ▶ Pay attention to the orientation of the outlets. The typical design is along the length of the strip, facing the bottom or end of the strip. I recommend power strips with the outlets perpendicular to the length of the strip.
- ▶ Get a smart strip. These are becoming more common and less expensive. With smart strips, one outlet serves as a master, receiving power all the time. The other

outlets don't receive power until the master device is turned on (ideal for home entertainment setups).

If you are connecting expensive electronics, you may want to consider a surge protector. Here, price is even more important because a cheap surge protector can be worse than none at all for two reasons. One, they use cheap, small surge fighting components. Two, these components can fail and the strip still will provide power, all without any indication that its protective side is gone.

Like power strips, there are some key factors to consider when buying a surge protector.

- ▶ Significant joule (jewel) rating. This is a measure of how much energy it can withstand.
- ▶ Cable and internet connection protection. You may want to consider this for your entertainment and computing needs as surges can enter via any wired connection. Be sure the protector is designed to handle a digital television. Otherwise, it can cause pixilation if it's only designed for analog signals.
- ▶ Indicator light that shows if protection has burned out.
- ▶ The same outlet orientation as previously mentioned.
- ▶ Power conditioning feature (for PCs, this is a nice-to-have feature but not a necessity).
- ▶ Smart capability (mentioned above).

Power strips and surge protectors are worth the investment when you follow these simple suggestions. Don't get "burned" by purchasing cheap, inefficient strips and protectors. Pun intended.

A surge protector can keep your expensive electronics safe. Look for protectors that offer cable and internet connection protection, a significant joule (jewel) rating and a "smart" component.



CO-OP CONNECTIONS SPOTLIGHT

Co-op Connections Card Savings

RENEWAL BY ANDERSEN is the full-service window replacement division of 113-year-old Andersen Corporation—the

owner of the most trusted family of window brands in America. Renewal by Andersen was founded with a mission to redefine the industry and to offer a different and better window replacement experience.

For most homeowners, window replacement isn't something they've done before, and for many, it isn't something they necessarily want to do right now, but rather something they have to do.

Use your Co-op Connections Card at Renewal by Andersen in

Renewal by Andersen



WINDOW REPLACEMENT an Andersen Company
Receive free installation (for basic installation only) on your new windows when you use your Co-op Connections card at Renewal by Andersen in Great Bend.

Great Bend and receive free installation (for basic installation only) on your new windows.

Use your Connections Card at these other local businesses for more great savings. For a complete list of deals visit <http://www.connections.coop/weci>.

- ▶ Suzy B's Flower's & More, Scott City
- ▶ D'Mario's Pizza, Harper
- ▶ Cornerstone Interiors, Great Bend

Still need a Connections Card?

Contact your local office for more information on how to start saving now!

HVAC

rebate program

Rebates Available to Upgrade Your HVAC

Save Energy, Save Money

Did you know that Wheatland offers rebates to residential members for the installation of energy-efficient heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems?

Heating and cooling a house often accounts for the majority of a household's monthly energy costs. Many homeowners have a great opportunity to save energy and money by installing a more efficient HVAC system.

Essentially, higher efficiency equates to lower monthly energy bills and improved comfort. For example, you could receive a \$410 rebate for a four-ton (48,000 BTU) heat pump.

For eligibility requirements or to download a rebate form, visit www.weci.net and click on the "Energy Education" tab and then on "Rebates." You can also contact any local office.



Get to Know Your Co-op Staff Brandon Barrett

Electrical Engineer
5 years in Garden City

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.

My wife, Melissa, is a teacher from Michigan. We have a dog, Mowgli.

WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY?

Pawnee Rock

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

I like to read, play with the dog or volunteer.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE VACATION?

Our recent honeymoon to Mexico was pretty amazing. Playa del Carmen has caves, amusement parks, great beaches and tons of culture.

WHO HAS INSPIRED YOU AND WHY?

My dad has been one of my biggest inspirations. He never hesitates to help others and I hope that has rubbed off on me, as well.

WHAT IS SOMETHING NOT MANY PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT YOU?

In fifth grade, I competed in the AAU Junior Olympics in Orlando. Well, I wasn't much competition but we got to go to Disney World.

IF YOU COULD BE ANY ANIMAL, WHAT WOULD YOU BE AND WHY?

My dog seems to be living the good life most days, and I'm pretty sure I could handle the baths better than he does.



Brandon Barrett

SAFETY Tip of the Month

Many energized power and utility lines are buried just a few feet underground, and digging into one could be fatal. Always call 811 before you dig, and utilities will come out to locate and mark their underground lines.

A DAY in the LIFE

BY ALLI, HEATHER AND TERESA



Shawn Powelson
Manager of Member Services
and Corporate Communications
6 years in Scott City

A Day in the Life of **SHAWN POWELSON** is exhausting, and we are just writing about it and not living it. You've heard a lot from Shawn in this column when he shares information about other employees, but he can be less than forthcom-

ing when speaking about himself. That's why we, his trusty Member Services team (Alli Conine and Heather Rufenacht in Scott City; and Teresa Mazouch in Great Bend), have hijacked his Day in the Life column this month. That, and he's currently too busy to write it.

Shawn is the manager of Member Services and Corporate Communication, which means when you see Wheatland's logo, hear ads for Wheatland Electric or Broadband on the radio, request a donation for your sports team or community event, attend Annual Meeting, apply for a scholarship or Youth Tour opportunity, attend a Cram the Van event, or read a news story about Wheatland—he's there. And that is just scratching the surface.

There isn't really a "typical" day in the life of Shawn. At any given moment, he could be on the phone coordinating a meeting for Kansas Member Services Directors Association (he served as the committee's president for the past three years), meeting with one of Wheatland's key accounts, preparing his presentation for the monthly board meeting, proofreading the centerspread for the *Kansas Country Living* magazine, or meeting with his team to divvy up responsibilities.

Teresa explains, "Since I'm located out of our Great Bend office my daily interaction with Shawn can be minimal. So when we get together for our monthly team meetings, we try and get as much accomplished as possible."

Shawn starts off by reviewing items from last month's meeting, checking tasks off the list that have been completed and reviewing those still in progress. We then move on to upcoming events and the next month's issue of the magazine. He's generally making notes on his notes during the meeting, his brain moving 90 miles a minute. It is not unlike us to get off on a tangent and he inevitably needs to say "come back now." Depending on the time of year, juggling a full member services schedule can be tricky but Shawn does a great job of keeping us all on track.

If you ask anyone at Wheatland about Shawn and what he does for Wheatland the list is long. Some will say he eats, sleeps and breathes his job. Others will tell you that he is out of the office more than he is in the office. We would tell you that he is a good communicator, always willing to listen, compromise and explain. We would tell you that he is a strong leader. He inspires us, and that he is personable. He has an even temperament, a sense of humor and a sense of humility. We would also tell you that he is understanding. All three of us have families and little kids. He is compassionate, understanding and accepting, and helps us maintain an appropriate work-life balance.

Typically, Shawn will ask "what's your favorite part about working at Wheatland." We'd like to share what our favorite part about working for Shawn is: He makes working at Wheatland fun.

Here is a quote from Simon Sinek that Shawn has shared with us in hopes that we will share his enthusiasm: "If you hire people just because they can do a job, they'll work for your money. But if you hire people who believe what you believe, they'll work for you with blood and sweat and tears."

We think we do.

ALLI CONINE, HEATHER RUFENACHT and TERESA MAZOUCH, Wheatland Electric Member Services Department

