

WHEATLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE NEWS



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Syracuse, KS
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FROM THE MANAGER

WOTUS Regulation Impacts Co-ops

In May, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) finalized a water regulation that removes power and responsibility from local officials and relocates it to Washington, D.C.

It's called "WOTUS," standing for "waters of the U.S.," and it defines what is subject to regulation under the federal Clean Water Act. These "waters" include the "60 percent of streams in the U.S. [that] flow only seasonally or when it rains" as Ken Kopocis, the EPA Acting Assistant Administrator for Water, explained recently. Currently, most of these are subject to state control.

In this new regulation, the EPA and the Corps maximized their regulatory reach by suggesting only federal employees can adequately protect our water. And they did this without consulting with state and local co-regulators.

They continued down the path of more Washington-based decision making, meaning that federal agencies will be regulating everything from the mighty Mississippi River to ponds and dry creek beds that only temporarily have water after rainfall.

What does this mean for members of Wheatland Electric Cooperative? Well, more regulated streams (with or without water in them) mean more federal permits to obtain to expand our electric distribution network—that's 4,276 miles of power lines covering

4,632 square miles. Past experience does not suggest a quick and timely response.

The reliable electricity you pay for every month depends on a robust and well-maintained system—and our ability to quickly make necessary adjustments to keep your lights on. That's why we are advocating for a new rule. Wheatland Electric Cooperative takes our responsibility to protect our land and water seriously—after all, we live here, too. But we believe this task belongs close to home, here in Kansas, where folks understand the opportunities and challenges.

We believe Congress knew what it was doing when it gave the EPA, the Corps and the states shared responsibility for protecting our water—federal jurisdiction over waters that support commerce, interstate waters and U.S. territorial waters; state jurisdiction over everything else. This arrangement made good sense.

So, what are we doing about this? Electric cooperatives across the country are working together with other interested groups in supporting Congressional action directing the EPA and the Corps to withdraw the rule, return to the drawing board and consult with affected parties—especially state and local governments—before re-proposing anything.



Bruce Mueller

Until next time take care.

Even More Ways to Save

Wheatland Adds New Local Deals to Co-op Connections Card

Wheatland Electric has added 15 new local deals to its Co-op Connections Card program.

The new deals include great savings at places like The Taylor House, Pizza Hut and Gifts Etc. in Scott City, and Papa Murphy's, High Call Outfitters and Great Bend Coffee in Great Bend. The discounts range from discounted pizza to half-price drinks and more!

"I think it's a great program and we're excited to be a part of it," said Lisa Crist, owner of Gifts Etc. in Scott City. "We're always looking for ways to generate buzz and get people excited about shopping with us. With this program, we get to offer our customers a great discount and Wheatland promotes it for us. It really is a win-win."

At Gifts Etc., Wheatland members can get \$5 off a Trapp Candle as a part of the local Connections Card program. Simply show your



To view a complete list of local and national Co-op Connections offers, visit Connections.coop.

card and save. It's that easy!

Wheatland launched its Co-op Connections Card program in partnership with Touchstone Energy back in October 2012 by mailing a card inserted in *Kansas Country Living* to every member.

"The program is a money-saving tool we're proud to offer our membership," said Bruce Mueller, General Manager of Wheatland Electric. "We're always looking for ways to provide value to our members and our community. This card connects you with national discounts on everything from hotel stays to

The program is a money-saving tool we're proud to offer our membership. BRUCE MUELLER, GENERAL MANAGER

Check Out these New Local Offers!

Garden City

- ▶ **PAPA MURPHY'S TAKE 'N' BAKE PIZZA**—\$3 off any Family Size Pizza

Great Bend

- ▶ **BECKER TIRE & TREADING**—\$25 off a set of new tires (passenger and truck only, not valid with any other offer)
- ▶ **GREAT BEND COFFEE**—½ off coffee drinks from 2-3 p.m. Monday-Friday
- ▶ **HIGH CALL OUTFITTERS**—Buy one get one half off Denim (details in store)
- ▶ **MARIA'S MEXICAN GRILL**—Buy one en-

tree and get a non-alcoholic beverage free

- ▶ **PAPA MURPHY'S TAKE 'N' BAKE PIZZA**—\$3 off any Family Size Pizza
- ▶ **PERKS**—20% off specialty drinks on Saturdays
- ▶ **PLAYA AZUL**—Buy one entrée and get a non-alcoholic beverage free

Scott City

- ▶ **GIFTS ETC.**—\$5 off a Trapp Candle (limit one per visit)
- ▶ **PIZZA HUT**—Large pizza for medium charge

- ▶ **SUZY B'S FLOWERS & MORE**—\$1 off a pound of any bulk Jelly Belly jelly beans.
- ▶ **TATE'S**—Buy one get one half off Cheeseburger (excludes specialty burgers)
- ▶ **THE BROILER RESTAURANT & CLUB**—Two ¼ Rack Rib Baskets for \$8.95 on Thursday nights
- ▶ **THE COUNTRY STORE**—20% off Lasered Pictures through Christmas
- ▶ **THE TAYLOR HOUSE**—15% off flavored espresso drinks 10 a.m.-noon. Monday-Friday

With this program, we get to offer our customers a great discount and Wheatland promotes it for us. It really is a win-win.

LISA CRIST, OWNER OF GIFTS ETC.



prescription drugs. Add in all the great local deals and this really is a great program for our members.”

The program features a member discount card that is accepted by a number of merchants throughout our service territory that offer local deals. To access the discount, members need only show their card and ask for the featured deal.

In addition to the local deals, through its partnership with Touchstone Energy, Wheatland is able to offer our members access to a number of national deals, as well. National deals include discounts on office supplies, car rentals, health services and much, much more. Visit Connections.coop for a full listing of local and national offers.

“The website is a great tool,” said Shawn Powelson, Manager of Member Services and Corporate Communications. “Members just have to visit Connections.coop and enter their zip code, select Wheatland Electric and they can start finding all of the great deals!”

In addition to featuring all of the local and national deals, the website also offers access to the Cashback Mall, an online shopping site that gives shoppers cashback for shopping through

the site and a coupons and rebate finder section.

Local businesses can participate in the program free of charge. Wheatland will list their deal on the website, provide the business with signage and even promote their participation through our website, Facebook page and other member communications.

“We’re out there adding deals and talking to businesses as often as we can,” Powelson said. “But businesses don’t have to wait for us to come to them, they can sign-up anytime they want. Just give us a call or stop by one of our local offices and we’ll be glad to talk to them about getting started with the program.”

Members who may have missed the card in the mail or never received one are encouraged to stop by any local Wheatland Electric office to pick one up.



Discounts on pet care items, travel, dining and prescriptions are all available with the Co-op Connections Card.

Find More Local Deals with Your Connections Card

Caldwell

- ▶ Nostalgia Nook
- ▶ The Red Barn Family Restaurant

Cheney

- ▶ Unique Enterprises

Garden City

- ▶ AJ Graphics
- ▶ J&M Paint and Decorating

Center

- ▶ Key Office
- ▶ Paper Graphics
- ▶ Renewal by Andersen
- ▶ Revolt Technology Group LLC
- ▶ YMCA

Great Bend

- ▶ A440 Musical Instruments
- ▶ Cornerstone Interiors

- ▶ Midwest Appliance Service
- ▶ TNT Renovations

Harper

- ▶ D'Mario's Pizza
- ▶ Hairport

Scott City

- ▶ Dairy Queen
- ▶ First National Bank
- ▶ Revcom Electronics

- ▶ The Green Haus

Syracuse

- ▶ Hamilton County Museum
- ▶ Northrup Theatre

Wichita

- ▶ Eagle Med
- ▶ Wichita Comfort Inn
- ▶ Wichita Hampton Inn

Horton Attends Cooperative Yo



Thirty-four students from Kansas joined students from four states at the camp.

MALLORY HORTON, Syracuse, was selected by Wheatland Electric to attend the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp near Steamboat Springs, CO, July 11-17. This local youth joined approximately 100 high school students from across Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and Wyo-

ming to participate in the leadership camp sponsored by the electric cooperatives in each state.

As part of the week-long adventure, the students established a candy cooperative business, in which they elected a general manager and board of directors, participated in daily membership meetings and paid their dues membership of 50 cents to the newly established co-op business.

"The Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp is specifically designed to empower student leaders and help them better understand the cooperative business model," said Shawn Powelson, Youth Tour Coordinator. "This camp not only highlights the co-op's commitment to their communities, but it also helps teach the students to become community leaders."

When not tending to their candy cooperative, the students learned about electric co-



Mallory Horton enjoys the view of the Rockies during the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in July.

This camp not only highlights the co-op's commitment to their communities, but it also helps teach the students to become community leaders.

SHAWN POWELSON, YOUTH TOUR COORDINATOR

Youth Leadership Camp

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

ops, witnessed a high-voltage safety demonstration and built a transmission line from craft supplies. They also created multiple committees to help plan and implement the week's activities while improving leadership and interpersonal communication skills.

The youth toured Fish Creek Falls, Trapper Mine, Craig Power Plant and a solar array; visited Steamboat Springs; experienced the adrenaline rush of river rafting; and enjoyed traditional camp activities, such as volleyball, swimming, dancing, and competing in a talent show.

Horton was chosen by Wheatland Electric through an ap-



A Peregrine Falcon was apart of a presentation on how electric cooperatives protect birds of prey.

plication and interview process based on academic achievements, positive attitudes and involvement within her community

"The thing that has impacted me the most was the leadership and motivation presentation," Horton said. "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 to try to be the best versions of themselves."

Wheatland Electric sponsors one student to attend Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp each year as part of our strong commitment to the community and our mission to help the future generations to become leaders.

For more information about the trip contact Shawn Powelson, Manager of Member Services, at 620-872-5885.



Denver Broncos player Ben Garland took photos and shared words of inspiration with campers.

Get to Know Your Co-op Staff

Beth Looney

Assistant General Manager
in Garden City
2 Years at Wheatland

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY

(SPOUSE, CHILDREN, PETS). My husband, Mike, and I have two boys, Seth, 15, who is currently learning to drive (yikes!) and Jake, 14, who is my techie and keeps me in the know on how to use the six or so remote controls we have. We have two cats and a new Maltese puppy, Buddy.



Beth Looney

WHERE ARE YOU FROM ORIGINALLY?

Springfield, MO.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME? I like to travel and work in the garden.

WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

I went back to college as an adult student with two babies. I graduated summa cum laude. It was one of the hardest things I ever did.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE BOOK OR MOVIE AND WHY?

It's a toss-up between Dr. Zhivago and Good Fellas. Both excellent: enduring love vs. the fabulous Robert De Niro.

WHAT IS SOMETHING NOT MANY PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT YOU?

I love to cook. My family frequently endures my creations—some hits, some misses—but they are always interesting, challenging dishes with fresh herbs and unusual ingredient combinations.

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

A cat. Who wouldn't want to sleep 15 hours a day, play with laser pointers and have all your needs met without asking?



Returns!

Help Wheatland Electric Cram the Van this Fall!

Last year, Wheatland's Cram the Van food drive collected more than three and a half tons of food to help food banks and hungry people in your local communities. We're excited to Cram the Van again this year and we need your help!

Members can drop off non-perishable food items at their local Wheatland Electric office from September 1 to October 31. You can also drop off your donation at Caldwell City Hall or Hired Man Grocery in Conway Springs.

At the conclusion of the campaign, we'll collect all of the donations and deliver them to the local food bank in your community.

Just like last year, we're planning on firing up the big red van and hitting the road! We're headed to Holcomb on September 8, and we'll keep right on rolling until our final event in Scott City on Halloween.

We'll be at grocery stores, football games, city parks and everywhere in between over the next couple of months, where we'll ask you to help us Cram the Van on site. We have a number of events already planned and we still have a few more to add to the calendar. Look for the van at the locations listed below.



Cram the Van donated more than 3.5 tons of food to area food banks in 2014. We are excited to Cram the Van again this year!

Our friends at the Hotel at Waterwalk in Wichita have teamed up with us again this year to offer free night stays and weekend vacation packages as drawing items at almost all of the events. Help us Cram the Van at a local event and you may win a free night stay or vacation package at the Hotel at Waterwalk!

We're ready to hit the road and break last year's record, but we need your help to do it. Watch for the big red Wheatland van in your community or bring your donation to a local Wheatland office and help us Cram the Van again this year!

Cram the Van at these Local Events

- ▶ **SEPT. 8**—Ron's Market (Holcomb)
- ▶ **SEPT. 10**—Clarion Inn-Western Kansas Broadcast Women's Fair (Garden City)
- ▶ **SEPT. 17**—Wheatland Electric (Great Bend Office)
- ▶ **SEPT. 24**—Caldwell Bluejays Football Game (Caldwell)
- ▶ **SEPT. 30**—Wichita County Courthouse Lawn (Leoti)
- ▶ **OCT. 9**—Chaparral Roadrunners Football Game (Harper/Anthony)
- ▶ **OCT. 16**—Cardinal Challenge (Conway Springs)
- ▶ **OCT. 28**—Wheatland Electric (Syracuse Office)
- ▶ **OCT. 31**—Halloween Finale (Wheatland Broadband-Scott City)

Right: Members slide donations in the van at our 2014 finale. Help us Cram the Van and enjoy the festivities at our Halloween finale on October 31.



How AMI Will Help Wheatland Help Our Members in the Future

In the August issue of *Kansas Country Living*, Wheatland Electric announced plans to install new Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) as part of a technology upgrade aimed at streamlining operations and improving customer service.

Advanced meters represent the next generation of electric meters and replace antiquated metering units. They take advantage of two-way communication to enable Wheatland Electric to communicate with the electric meter at your home or business, enhancing reliability and providing additional capabilities. Remote communication and data transfer capabilities of these technologies enable remote meter-reading, outage notification, optional pricing programs and alerts to help with troubleshooting and preventative maintenance.

Information coming from the meters will allow us to improve our efficiency during “peak” energy usage periods, which helps keep the cost of electricity lower. Modernizing

the grid will also promote better power quality and enable Wheatland Electric to be more efficient when responding to outages, conducting maintenance or planning for new equipment. Instead of using models or educated guesses, decisions can be made by utilizing real information throughout the electric system. Advanced meters also increase accuracy of electric bills, keep electric costs low, and allow us to diagnose issues that lead to increased energy bills.

Our system upgrade paves the way toward eventually providing consumers greater access to energy use information and offering more options to see savings on their electric bills.

This project takes advantage of new technologies for our customers to use and provides benefits that extend beyond our utility. We have a vision of what the energy future looks like, and we look forward to working collaboratively on reaching that vision for a more efficient, secure and reliable energy environment.

AMI Installation Begins this Month

Wheatland Electric will begin installing advanced meters this month.

When Wheatland’s service-men change out the meter, they will notify the member by knocking on the door. If the member is home, the service-men will explain the meter exchange process.

The impact of the installation is minimal, and we will work with businesses to minimize any inconvenience. Wheatland Electric members can expect to lose power for a few minutes on the day of installation.

Following the installation,



Meter installations will begin this month and take 12-18 months to complete.

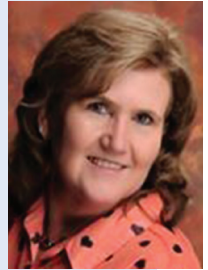
members will receive a bill with two readings: one for the old meter and one for the new meter.

The majority of our members will have the new meters in place within 12-18 months of the initial rollout.

Get to Know Your Co-op Staff

Eilene Jacobs

Senior Consumer Service Rep. in Harper
29 Years at Wheatland Electric



Eilene Jacobs

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.

I’ve been married to Richard (Snake) Jacobs for 44 years and have two children. My husband owns his own business, Jacobs Welding LLC. Our son, Matthew, 43, lives in Bozeman, MT, and has three children. Our daughter, Amy, 40, lives in Harper and has two children. I also have a cat named Sheila, and she is very spoiled.

WHERE ARE YOU FROM

ORIGINALLY? I was born in Wichita and my family moved to Harper when I was seven years old.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME? Motorcycling, reading, playing with grandchildren and working in my flower garden.

WHAT SPORT OR TEAM IS YOUR FAVORITE? All sports my grandkids are involved in, but I do like to watch pro football with my husband.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE VACATION? Long motorcycle trips to see different parts of the U. S.

WHAT IS SOMETHING NOT MANY PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT YOU? I have five brothers and one sister, plus I married into a very large family consisting of six girls and four boys.

WHO HAS INSPIRED YOU IN YOUR LIFE AND WHY? My mother-in-law, Ella Louise Jacobs, because she has been and still is (at the age of 82) a very hard-working, wonderful lady.



Mario Diaz
Geographical Information System Coordinator
2 Years at Wheatland Service

A Day in the Life

Mario Diaz

BY BETH LOONEY,
ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

I knew I wanted to do a “Day in the Life” with **MARIO DIAZ** as soon as I saw his five monitors and enormous TV screen mounted on the wall. Surely he must do something really cool to need that kind of computing power. When I first arrived, Mario explained to me in his contagious up-beat personality that his two main functions are to map Wheatland’s electric system and to process power outages.

While I was watching, two new outage reports came in. These typically are initiated by a member call-in and are entered into the system by one of the customer service representatives. Once in the system, Mario can track the lineman or serviceman who investigate and repair the outage. When Wheatland has fully implemented the new automated metering system, these outages will self-report back to Mario without the need for a member to call-in. Pretty cool!

The thing I found most fascinating about Mario’s job was mapping. He said it was his favorite, too, as he gets to learn something new every day. I had no idea that each and every piece of equipment (poles, transformers, meters, wire, etc.) is mapped according to

geospatial specs. When you identify a piece of equipment on the map it zooms into a “Google Earth” type map and pulls up the entire history of each piece of equipment including serial number, cost, date of installation, among others. Talk about a **SERIOUS** inventory management program. This map helps Mario see all the equipment between a reported outage and the nearest substation so in the event of a major storm we can identify which customers are along the path.

After my day with Mario, we went to lunch with Brandon Barrett, Mario’s friend and one of Wheatland’s electrical engineers. Mario’s love-of-life attitude followed us to lunch. When I asked what his favorite thing was about working for Wheatland he said that he always feels welcome and wanted by the employees. He also enjoys the fact that he is challenged in his work and feels empowered to make decisions.

As far as career aspirations go, he said he wants to continue to be challenged but hopes to be a mentor and leader for others someday. I don’t know if he recognizes it, but if you ask his peers, he already is. Thanks Mario!