



MARCH 2022

## THE WHEAT BELT CONNECTION



### 2022 NEBRASKA YOUTH ENERGY CAMP

LACEY GULBRANSON  
General Manager/CEO

Each summer, Wheat Belt participates in the Nebraska Youth Energy Camp. The camp is designed to give high school students an opportunity to learn about the rural electric industry, have fun, and meet new people. The camp is hosted by NREA (Nebraska Rural Electric Association), the publisher of this magazine and takes place at the 4-H Campground at Halsey, NE. A few years ago, I had the opportunity to go to camp for a week and be a counselor...not a job for everyone (being around 65 high school students), but I had a great time! Monday morning me and three campers, loaded into the Wheat Belt van and we drove the four hours to camp, we got settled for the day and learned about what to expect for the week. Day two we participated in a STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) lab where we worked as a team to build an electric circuit. Day three we hit the road to tour Gerald Gentleman Station (a coal generation facility) at Sutherland, NE and the Kingsley Dam (a hydro generation facility) at Lake McConaughy. Day four a Public Power District near Halsey brought their linemen and bucket trucks, where we climbed power poles, experienced bucket rides and witnessed a live, high-voltage demonstration. We ended the day with a canoe trip down the Loop River. On Friday morning we finished up and headed back home.

*Continued on 12-B*

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Editor - Yolanda Hruska

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#### HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY!

MAY YOUR TROUBLES BE LESS AND YOUR BLESSINGS  
BE MORE, AND NOTHING BUT HAPPINESS COME  
THROUGH YOUR DOOR.

### LUCKY DRAWING

Congratulations to Coral Production, our January "Lucky Winner"!

Coral Production Corporation headquarters is in Denver, Colorado and a satellite office is in Sidney. Coral has been operating oil and natural gas in the United States since 1986 and was founded by James Weber. Shortly after, James Chonka became co-owner. In the late 90's they began exploring and growing their company. Coral operates several wells in the panhandle of Nebraska, Wyoming, Kansas and Colorado. Jim Weber loves dogs and Jim Chonka loves to golf.

If you would like to be included in our next \$50 drawing, and avoid the \$5 delinquent fee, please send your payment before the 16th of the month.

For your convenience, we offer several payment options. Please contact us, 308-254-5871, or visit [wheatbelt.com](http://wheatbelt.com). Select the Customer Engagement page for information.

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# Youth Energy Camp cont'd from 12-A

In addition to the activities I mentioned, just attending camp provides an opportunity to participate in the National Youth Energy Tour in Washington, D.C. the following summer. While at camp, campers can participate in the scholarship program where they campaign and deliver a speech about an energy topic provided during camp. At the end of camp, the other campers vote for the scholarship winner(s). The winner of the scholarship gets their trip to D.C. paid for. Additionally, Wheat Belt identifies campers who are interested in attending the Youth Energy Tour in D.C. and, at the Wheat Belt Board of Directors discretion, sponsors campers to travel to D.C. with others from Nebraska and participate in the Youth Energy Tour.

Nebraska Youth Energy camp is not for everyone and we understand summer is a busy time of year and students already participate in sports, other camps and work. Remember, it's always fun to attend these events with friends. If you have a high school student or know of one that you think could benefit from camp, encourage them to bring their friends.



## 2022 NEBRASKA YOUTH ENERGY CAMP INFORMATION:

JULY 18 - 22, 2022

REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS MAY 13, 2022

For more information, contact Yolanda at our office 308-254-5871. The application form is on our website, [wheatbelt.com](http://wheatbelt.com). Select "Youth Info" under the News & Events menu.

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## SURGE PROTECTION 101



By Abby Berry

A power surge is an unexpected increase in voltage, and it can occur from a variety of sources. Regardless of the cause, power surges can majorly damage electronic devices and equipment in your home.

Let's take a look at common causes of power surges and how you can protect your sensitive electronics.

One of the most common causes of a power surge is lightning. Most of us have experienced this during a severe thunderstorm. When lightning strikes an electrical system, the excess current must be channeled somewhere—unfortunately in many cases, it's sent through a home. Your best bet is to unplug all unused devices and electronics during severe thunderstorms.

Another common cause of power surges is electrical overload. This happens when devices or appliances are plugged into an outlet that can't handle the required amount of voltage, or if multiple devices are plugged into one outlet through an extension cord. If you're experiencing power surges due to electrical overload, it's time to call a qualified electrician to evaluate your home's circuits and electrical needs.

Faulty wiring in a home can also cause power surges. Damaged or exposed wires can cause spikes in voltage, creating a potentially dangerous situation. If you notice signs of faulty wiring, like visible burns on outlets, buzzing sounds from outlets or frequently tripped circuit breakers, your home may be due for electrical wiring repairs and updates.

Surges can also occur after a power outage.

Sometimes, when electricity is being restored and reconnected, it's common to experience a quick surge in current. Similar to advice for a surge caused by lightning, it's best to unplug sensitive electronics during the outage—then wait to plug them back in after power is fully restored.

Aside from unplugging devices when you suspect a power surge, there are two ways you can take additional precautions to protect electronics in your home.

Point-of-use surge protection devices, like power strips, can protect electronics during most surges. But remember, not all power strips include surge protection, so read the packaging label carefully before you buy, and don't overload the power strip with too many devices. You can also install specialized electrical outlets that offer additional surge protection. Talk to a trusted electrician to learn more.

Another option is a whole-home surge protector, which can help protect your home from larger, more powerful surges. In most cases, whole-home suppressors are connected to your home's service panel and include features like thermal fuses and notification capabilities that indicate when a device has been impacted by a surge. Whole-home surge protection prices vary based on the size of the home and suppressor. Whole-home suppressors should always be connected by a licensed electrician, so consider the cost of installation as well.

Occasional power surges are inevitable, but by unplugging devices when you think a surge may occur and using additional levels of protection like power strips or whole-home suppressors, you can better safeguard your sensitive electronics and devices.



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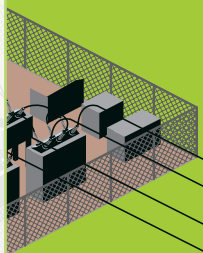
## ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT WORD SEARCH

Did you know we use a variety of equipment to send electricity to your home?

Read the facts below to learn about the equipment we use, then find and circle the bolded words in the puzzle below.



C Y F S S B U R U X S Z P Z S  
T U R S O E Q N S G E W S E K  
N H Z T B V N Z E B F U S K C  
Z N B Z R S M I K Y X U I J U  
E J A D K X Z T L Z S E E E R  
S G L F Y M O G I R E N C O T  
V Z Q O W K V D C H E U K O T  
U S C T A S W J I E O W B H E  
S N O I T A T S B U S E O X K  
X S R E M R O F S N A R T P C  
E L E C T R I C M E T E R S U  
Y B G V H U N P D L K C R R B  
B L P T G I F N Z T S M B G E  
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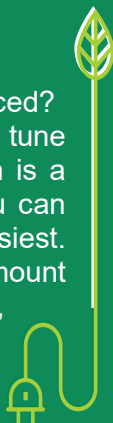
- **Transformers** look like large metal cans on top of utility poles or big green boxes on the ground. They reduce the voltage of electricity for safe use in your home.
- **Power lines** hang overhead or are placed underground to carry electricity from where it's generated to homes and businesses.
- Lineworkers use **bucket trucks** to reach power lines and poles when making repairs and updates to the electrical system.
- **Electric meters** are placed on the outside of homes to measure the amount of electricity you use.
- **Substations** are facilities that contain equipment to help control the flow of electricity.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

### Tip of the Month

When was your cooling system last serviced? Most manufacturers recommend an annual tune up for your home's cooling system. March is a great time to schedule this service so you can beat the summer rush when the pros are busiest. A qualified professional can check the amount of refrigerant, accuracy of the thermostat, condition of belts and motors and other factors that can greatly impact the efficiency of your system.

Source: Dept. of Energy



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