



JULY 2020

THE WHEAT BELT CONNECTION

Lacey Gulbranson
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STRATEGIC UPDATE

First of all, as of June 1st our doors were open to the public again. If you have been in the office since then, you noticed a few changes...mainly the plexiglass up at the front desk. Come on in, we are happy to serve you!

What does zero to 60 mph in 3.2 seconds feel like? Well, according to my kids it feels like “fun” and “good and fun and that’s all”. Wheat Belt’s power supplier, Tri-State Generation and Transmission out of Westminster, CO, recently purchased a Tesla Model 3 and is allowing their members to borrow the car for a month at a time. Wheat Belt had the Model 3 for the month of May. The employees and the board of directors were able to experience the technology and performance of an electric vehicle.

The Model 3 is equipped with a large screen mounted on the dash which replaces traditional gauges. This computer controls/monitors everything from temperature and fan to battery life and navigation to locations of charging stations. If you have read much about electric vehicles, you have probably heard of “range anxiety”. Range anxiety is defined as worry on the part of a person driving an electric car that the

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Editor - Yolanda Hruska

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DRAWING WINNER

Congratulations to Given Smith, our May “Lucky Winner”! Mr. Smith has been a long-time customer of Wheat Belt. For his prompt payment he received a \$50 credit.

If you would like to be included in our next drawing, and avoid the \$5 delinquent fee, please send your payment before the 15th of the month. In addition to Pay Your Bill Online, we offer several options.

Please give us a call or visit wheatbelt.com, and select the Customer Engagement menu.

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battery will run out of power before the destination or a suitable charging point is reached. The Tesla navigation system attempts to eliminate range anxiety as it calculates how much battery you will have left when you get to your destination, where you need to stop for charging, and how long you need to charge to reach your destination. The vehicle is equipped with other technologies such as a beta version of autopilot, all wheel drive, regenerative braking, and video streaming to pass the time while charging the car.

No doubt, the car is fast; from zero to 60 in 3.2 and a max speed of 162 mph, according to Tesla's website. Just like me, I'm sure you are wondering how charging a car with electricity compares to filling a car with gasoline. Well, let's say a similar gas-powered car gets 30 mpg and an average gallon of gas costs \$2.50 (of course this is debatable). This means, to drive one-mile costs just over eight cents in fuel. Compare this to roughly four cents per mile for electricity. The battery range of the Tesla Model 3 vehicle is about 300 miles, ideal for most destinations but not all. Consider driving to Lincoln, NE, you would need to plan on adding an additional hour to your trip for charging the car. Is an electric vehicle right for everyone? Not yet, as quickly as technology advances and regulations change it may not be too long before electric vehicles become mainstream.

In addition to experiencing the Tesla Model 3 for a month, we will be leasing a Chrysler Pacifica Hybrid. The Pacifica Hybrid runs all electric for the first 30 miles, which will adequately get us to Sidney and back for daily errands. What does this all mean for Wheat Belt and our customers? Being immersed in electric vehicles will give us the information and data to craft rates to better serve our residential customers who may consider purchasing an electric vehicle. Our goal is to look at residential time-of-use rates, where energy is less expensive during "off peak" generation hours and has the ability to better serve ALL residential

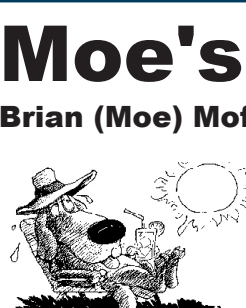
customers, not just those looking to purchase an electric vehicle. The next question is when...we are in year three of a five-year meter replacement project which will give us better technology to deploy new rates. We hope to be able to fully deploy a residential time-of-use rate with the completion of the meter project. So, more to come!

Please visit wheatbelt.com, Modern Energy, Choose EV for information about electric vehicles.




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ENJOY WATER RECREATION SAFELY

Electricity is essential energy—it keeps us cool in the summer, lights our house, keeps the refrigerator cold, and runs the TV, stereo, and computers. However, water and electricity are a dangerous combination. Whether it's swimming, boating, or fishing, Safe Electricity reminds everyone to avoid electrical hazards during water recreation.

Swimming Pools and Hot Tubs

Ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) are one form of protection from electrical hazards. GFCIs detect dangerous situations where a shock may occur and cut off power to prevent shock. Any situation where electricity is used near water is a shock hazard. You should have GFCI protection on underwater lighting circuits, lighting around pools, and hot tubs and spas. Safe Electricity offers the following tips to stay safe in or around swimming pools:

- Build pools and decks at least 5 feet away from all underground electric lines and at least 25 feet away from overhead electric lines.
- Do not put electric appliances within 10 feet of a swimming pool. When practical, use battery-operated appliances near swimming pools.
- Any electric outlets within twenty feet of a pool should have a GCFI.
- If a swimmer is in the water and feels electricity or appears to be shocked, don't dive in, or you could be shocked as well. Turn off the power and then use a fiberglass shepherd's hook to pull the victim out of the water.
- Never swim during a thunderstorm.

When you leave the pool, don't change the radio station or touch any electrical appliances until you are dry—never touch any electrical appliances when

you are wet or standing in water. If children wish to play with sprinklers or hoses, emphasize they should be set up well away from appliances. Usually, if potential safety hazards are considered and handled proactively, accidents and deaths can be avoided.

Lakes and Rivers

Electricity is dangerous around larger bodies of water. If you plan to go boating or fishing this summer, be aware of your surroundings and potential electrical hazards. Never go swimming near boats plugged into shore power or docks with electrical service.

Check for the location of power lines before fishing. Make sure you are casting the line far away from power lines to avoid contact.

Contact between your boat and a power line could be devastating. Maintain a distance of at least ten feet between your boat and nearby power lines to be safe.

If your boat comes in contact with a power line, never jump out of the boat into the water—the water could be energized. Instead, stay in the boat and avoid touching anything metal until help arrives or until your boat is no longer in contact with the line.

Your boat's wiring should comply with American Boat and Yacht Council Standards. Have work done by a professional familiar with marine electrical codes and standards.

Dock electrical systems should be installed, and then inspected annually by professionals familiar with marine codes, and include ground fault (GFCI) protection.

<https://safeelectricity.org/public-education/tips/life-saving-lessons-to-be-learned/>



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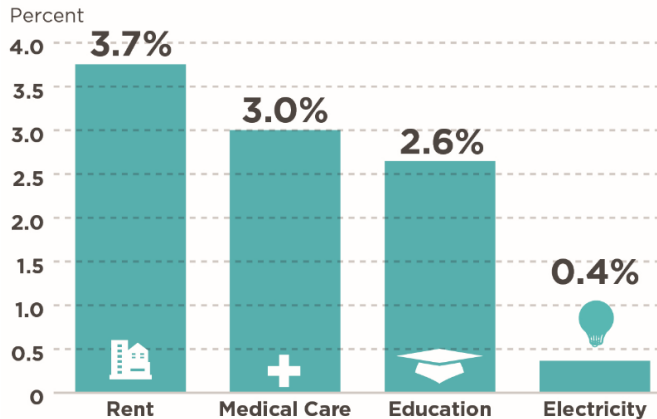
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ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

The cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common expenses. Looking at price increases over the last five years, it's easy to see electricity remains a good value!

Average Annual Price Increase 2014-2019



Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Consumer Price Index

WHEAT BELT PROJECT UPDATES

During the month of June, Wheat Belt contractors conducted pole testing on the east and west side of Highway 385 between Huntsman and Gurley. Wheat Belt crews will be changing poles, that failed testing, throughout the summer months.

Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) is a system of newer digital meters, often referred to as smart meters. We are in year three of a five year plan to transition meters to AMI. A note to customers in the Oshkosh area, our technicians will be changing those meters during the month of July.

For questions, concerns, or to update your contact information, please give us a call, 308.254.5871 or 800.261.7114.



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