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www.prairielandelectric.com

PRAIRIE LAND  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

# NEWS

## PRAIRIE LAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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CEO

## POWER LINE ISSUES

Call 800-577-3323 to report outages and other power line issues.

**POWER**  
*to make life better*

## FROM THE CEO

# How Extreme Winter Temperatures Impact Electric Reliability

When outdoor temperatures drop, electricity use increases, which can create demand spikes, placing significant strain on the electric grid.

At Prairie Land Electric Cooperative, we work closely with our generation and transmission provider, Sunflower Electric Power Corporation (Sunflower), headquartered in Hays, to plan for the resources and infrastructure needed to keep your lights on and your home or business running. While this local partnership is essential, it is important to remember we're also part of a much larger regional network. The electric grid is an interconnected system that stretches well beyond Prairie Land and Sunflower.

This system includes a diverse mix of energy resources, some of which can vary in output depending on weather and other factors. This variability adds complexity to maintaining a stable power supply, especially during periods of extreme demand.

During winter months, when electricity use spikes nationwide, demand can occasionally exceed available supply, particularly during



Kirk Girard

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## TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS



Never make a utility payment to anyone who calls, texts, or emails you demanding immediate payment. While Prairie Land Electric Cooperative may call to follow up on a past-due bill, we will always send a written disconnect notice by mail first.

If you're ever unsure, call us directly at 800-577-3323 or visit our website to verify your account status.

**STAY ALERT. STAY SAFE.**



# Celebrating Employee Anniversaries

## GARRETT

**WILLOUR** began his employment in Norton on Jan. 30, 2006, as an apprentice lineman. In April 2011, he advanced to journeyman lineman. In May 2015, he became a safety coordinator. In April 2024, he returned to work as a journeyman lineman. In his spare time, he attends his kids' sporting events and enjoys cooking.



**GARRET  
WILLOUR**

**JOURNEYMAN  
LINEMAN**

*20 Years*



**JAROD  
ROHR**

**MAINTENANCE  
FOREMAN**

*20 Years*



**LACEY  
SMITH**

**BILLING  
CLERK**

*20 Years*



**BRETT  
MCCHESNEY**

**AREA  
SUPERVISOR**

*20 Years*



**JESSIE  
HAHN**

**MEMBER SERVICE  
REPRESENTATIVE**

*5 Years*

**JAROD ROHR** was hired on Jan. 16, 2006, as a journeyman lineman for the Hill City area. In 2018, he advanced to foreman. Jarod serves our members in the same area where he was born and raised. "If you find a job you love, you will never work a day in your life," he said. Jarod has three children: Sylan, 19; Slade, 16; and Sabri, 15. In his spare time, he enjoys fishing with his family.

**LACEY SMITH** began her Prairie Land career on Jan. 3, 2006, as a member service representative in Norton. In March 2013, she joined the billing department, where she currently serves as a billing clerk. Away from work, Lacey raises registered quarter horses, tends to an admittedly oversized vegetable garden, and is quickly becoming an enthusiastic rockhound.

**BRETT MCCHESNEY** started his employment Jan. 6, 2006, as a temporary employee working out of the Norton office to help with storm damage cleanup. In July 2006, he became a permanent employee for Prairie Land and assumed the duties of apprentice lineman. In 2009, he advanced to journeyman lineman. In 2024, he was promoted to area supervisor of the Norton location. Brett and his wife, Allison, reside in Norton. In his spare time, he enjoys hunting and trapping.

**JESSIE HAHN** has been with Prairie Land for five years, serving as a member service representative. Outside of work, Jessie enjoys spending time with her partner, Hayden, their children, Isla, 5, and Miller, 2, and their two dogs, Taco and Beans. When not at work, she values quality time with friends and family.



## APPLY FOR OUR YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

Apply today for the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., June 13-19, 2026, and the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp near Steamboat Springs, Colorado, July 10-16, 2026.

Prairie Land will sponsor two winners for each trip. Get more information and apply online by scanning the QR codes. You can also find the form in your December 2025 bill, request one from your high school counselor, or contact us at 800-577-3323 or [speltier@ple.coop](mailto:speltier@ple.coop).

**APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY 5 P.M. JAN. 2, 2026.**

# How Extreme Winter Temperatures Impact Electric Reliability

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prolonged cold snaps. In these rare situations, the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), which operates the regional grid across 14 states including Kansas, may issue an Energy Emergency Alert (EEA).

These alerts ask participating utilities to encourage consumers to reduce electricity use. If conditions worsen, SPP may direct utilities to implement temporary controlled outages — often referred to as rolling blackouts — to help stabilize the grid and avoid wider disruptions.

Should this happen, we will keep you informed by posting EEA updates on our website and Facebook page, and when appropriate, by calling affected members using the current phone number on file.

To prepare for these scenarios and minimize risks, Prairie Land and Sunflower partner to take proactive measures to strengthen reliability year-round. Through regular system maintenance and investment in grid modernization, we strive to ensure our portion of the grid remains resilient even under extreme conditions. Yet, maintaining a reliable electric system requires a collective effort — especially during extreme cold — and that includes you.

To help keep the power flowing to your home and your neighbors, here are a few simple ways you can reduce strain on the grid:

## ▶ SET YOUR THERMOSTAT TO THE LOWEST COMFORTABLE TEMPERATURE AND LOWER IT

**WHEN YOU'RE AWAY.** The greater the difference between indoor and outdoor temperatures, the harder your heating system works.

▶ **PRO TIP:** If you use a programmable thermostat, set it to automatically lower the temperature while you're asleep or away from home.

## ▶ SEAL AIR LEAKS AROUND WINDOWS AND DOORS WITH CAULK OR WEATHERSTRIPPING TO KEEP WARM AIR INSIDE.

▶ **PRO TIP:** Adding inexpensive door sweeps to exterior doors can significantly cut down on drafts.

## ▶ AVOID RUNNING TOO MANY MAJOR APPLIANCES AT THE SAME TIME.

Stagger use of dishwashers, ovens, and dryers throughout the day to ease peak demand.

▶ **PRO TIP:** Try starting the dishwasher before bedtime.

## ▶ USE CEILING FANS TO BOOST COMFORT.

They can help circulate warm air throughout the room without raising the thermostat.

▶ **PRO TIP:** In winter, set fan blades to rotate clockwise at a low speed to help circulate the warm air that naturally rises to the ceiling, bringing it back down into your living space.

## ▶ USE YOUR WINDOWS TO STAY WARM.

▶ **PRO TIP:** Open your curtains during the day to let in natural sunlight, which helps warm your home, and then close them at night to keep the heat from escaping.

## ▶ COOK SMART.

Smaller appliances like slow cookers, toaster ovens, and air fryers use less electricity than a full-size oven.

▶ **PRO TIP:** Batch-cooking meals on one or two days a week reduces how often you run your oven or stove.

Understanding how extreme cold and today's evolving energy mix impact the grid is key to keeping our system strong and reliable. By using energy wisely, you not only help reduce stress on the grid but also lower your electric bills and support power reliability in our community all winter long.

## HEATING SAFETY TIPS FOR WINTER



### Simple precautions can help you avoid FIRE HAZARDS and ELECTRICAL DANGERS.

There is nothing like curling up by the fire on a cold winter day. But heating equipment is one of the leading causes of home fire deaths. With a few simple steps, you can prevent most heating fires from happening.

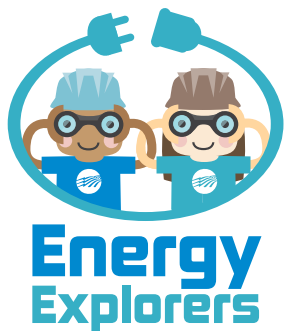
#### STAY COZY AND SAFE THIS WINTER:

- ▶ Maintain a 3-foot zone around heating equipment like furnaces, radiators, fireplaces, electric or wood stoves and space heaters where no items, kids or pets enter.
- ▶ Plug heaters and electric fireplaces directly into wall outlets and only one appliance into an electrical outlet at a time.
- ▶ Turn off and unplug portable heaters when leaving the room or going to bed.
- ▶ Never use your oven to heat your home.
- ▶ Test smoke alarms every month.
- ▶ Hire a qualified professional to install or service stationary heating equipment and water heaters.
- ▶ Have your heating system, vents and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.

#### SMART TIPS

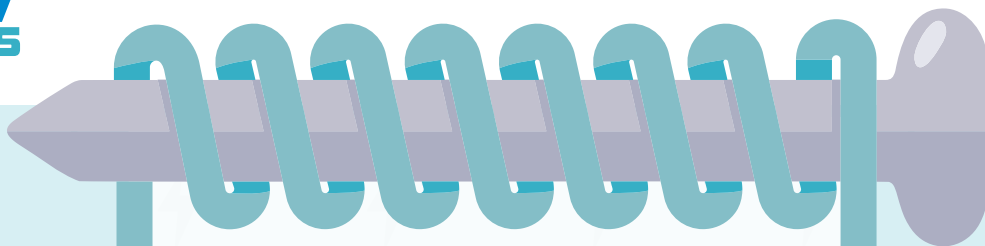
- ▶ Install and test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms to alert you before it's too late.
- ▶ Create your home fire escape plan and practice it with your family.

SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG



# POP QUIZ ELECTRICITY TERMS

How well do you know terms related to electricity? Test your knowledge! **Read the definitions below. Then, look at the word bank to match the correct terms to the definitions.** You can only use the words once, so choose carefully. Check your work in the answer key.



## WORD BANK

Conductor

Circuit

Insulator

Volt (Voltage)

Static Electricity

1. A complete path that electricity flows through.

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2. Something that allows electricity to pass through, such as metal or wire.

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3. The standard unit of measurement for electricity.

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4. Something that does not allow electricity to pass through easily, such as rubber.

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5. Electricity build-up caused by rubbing two surfaces together.

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Answer Key:  
1. Circuit  
2. Conductor  
3. Volt (Voltage)  
4. Insulator  
5. Static Electricity