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**PRAIRIE LAND
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

NEWS

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POWER
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Use Energy Wisely

We hear a lot about peak energy demand, but what is it and how does it impact electricity use? As the name implies, peak energy demand occurs when energy consumption is at its highest. In much of the U.S., energy use spikes in summer and winter due to the need to heat and cool indoor spaces.

Although it depends on where you live, summertime energy demand increases when outdoor temperatures soar. For Prairie Land Electric, peak demand is generally on weekdays between 3-7 p.m., when most individuals are returning home, cooking dinner and preparing for evening activities. In the winter, there are two high-use times of day: early morning and late afternoon/evening. For Prairie Land Electric, peak usage in winter is from 8-11 a.m. Weekends and holidays are typically considered off peak.

Changing the time of day for some of your energy usage can mitigate the

amount the cooperative pays to purchase electricity for our members and aids in our commitment to meeting everyone's energy needs.

To do this, consider running major appliances during off-peak times; smart devices or appliances that have delay starts can help achieve this goal.

Do your part to use energy wisely when temperatures are high. In the summer months, help decrease demand by doing the following:

- ▶ Turn your thermostat temperature up by 2 degrees or more and program your thermostat to a higher temperature when no one is home.
- ▶ If you do not have one, consider purchasing a smart thermostat.
- ▶ Make sure your HVAC system is in good working order. Remember to keep your unit and the area around it clean and clear.



Kirk Girard

Continued on page 12C ▶

ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

Summer is a prime opportunity to enjoy the great outdoors. To reduce home energy use, avoid using your oven and use a grill instead. Not only will cooking outdoors eliminate the electricity used to power the stove, but it will also avoid raising the temperature inside your home, reducing the need for air conditioning or cooling. You can also avoid using the oven with tasty no-bake recipes. (Check out Page 20 in the magazine for no bake recipes this month.)

SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV





Coleton Frack



Tyler Sabatka



Tatum Lee



Rylan Wildeman



Ciara Kearn

Meet Our Interns and Summer Help

Prairie Land is pleased to introduce our interns and summer employees that joined us in mid-May.

There are three lineworker interns. The Norton crews welcomed **COLETON FRACK** back to his hometown after working on a utility line degree at Northeast Community College in Norfolk, Nebraska. He will complete his associate degree in May 2024, and likes to fish, hunt and work on cars.

TYLER SABATKA, who grew up in McDonald, is working with the St. Francis crews. After his internship, he will earn his lineworker certificate from Pratt Community College. In his spare time, he likes to bow hunt, play guitar, fish and ride dirt bikes.

Interning with the Concordia crews is Caldwell native,

TATUM LEE, who is also completing his certification from Pratt Community College. Lee likes to go to the lake or work out in the gym after work.

Both the Norton and Concordia offices have hired summer help this year. **RYLAN WILDEMAN** just graduated from Norton High School and plans to attend the University of Kansas this fall, majoring in chemistry. He is also interested in rodeos.

CIARA KEARN grew up near the Concordia office and has just wrapped up a bachelor's degree in communication sciences and disorders from Fort Hays State University. She will return to work on her master's in speech pathology this fall. She enjoys playing tennis and reading books.

Picnic Food Safety

Summer is a great time for picnics; however, food left out too long can mean foodborne illnesses. Keeping cold food cold and hot food hot, indoors and out, is critical for preventing bacterial growth in food, according to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Do not let your picnic food remain in the "danger zone" — between 40 and 140 Fahrenheit (F) — for more than 2 hours, or 1 hour if outdoor temperatures are 90 F or above. This is when bacteria in food can multiply rapidly and lead to foodborne illness, according to the FDA.

The FDA's tips include the following for cold food:

- ▶ Cold perishable food should be kept in the cooler at 40 F or below until serving time.
- ▶ Once you have served it, it should not sit out for longer than 2 hours, or 1 hour if the outdoor temperature

is above 90 F. If it does sit out that long, discard it.

- ▶ Foods such as potato salad and desserts in individual serving dishes can be placed directly on ice or in a shallow container set in a deep pan filled with ice. Drain off water as ice melts and replace ice frequently.

The following should be observed for hot food:

- ▶ Hot food should be kept hot at 140 F or above.
- ▶ Wrap it well and place it in an insulated container until serving.
- ▶ Just as with cold food, hot food should not sit out for more than 2 hours, or 1 hour at temperatures above 90 F. If food is left out longer, throw it away.

The FDA also offers four simple tips for safe food handling:



- ▶ **CLEAN:** Wash hands and surfaces often.
- ▶ **SEPARATE:** Keep raw meat away from other food.
- ▶ **COOK:** Cook food to the right temperature; color and texture are unreliable indicators.
- ▶ **CHILL:** Refrigerate food promptly.

As you plan or attend picnics this summer, take steps to avoid foodborne illness. When eating outdoors, safe food handling is critical since bacteria can multiply rapidly as food heats up in summer temperatures.

Prairie Land Welcomes New Employee

NATE STORMONT joined the Prairie Land family as a journeyman lineworker serving the Norton area starting June 5, 2023.

Nate grew up in Scott City, earned his lineworker certificate from Pratt Community College and has been working in Dodge City. He is relocating to Norton and appreciates being closer to his parents in Phillipsburg.

Nate has two children: Kendall, 16, and Dillon, 14. In his spare time, he enjoys hunting, softball and motorcycles.



Nate Stormont

How to Help Someone Who's Having a Heat Stroke:



- ▶ Call 911.
- ▶ Stay with them until help arrives.
- ▶ Move them to a shaded, cool area.
- ▶ Remove outer clothing.
- ▶ Place cold cloths on the skin.
- ▶ Soak clothing in cool water.
- ▶ Circulate air around the person.

Use Energy Wisely *Continued from page 12A* ▶

- ▶ Use bathroom and kitchen fans temporarily to remove heat and humidity. Remember: Fans cool people, not rooms. Turn them off before you leave the room.
- ▶ Use your countertop toaster, air fryer and/or convection oven instead of your oven. Even better, keep the heat outside by cooking food on the grill.
- ▶ Use major appliances in the early morning or late evening. Delay turning on your dishwasher or clothes washer until you are heading to bed.
- ▶ Program smart devices to run appliances at off-peak times.
- ▶ Close window coverings during the hottest part of the day.
- ▶ Use minimal lighting and try using LED lighting instead of traditional incandescent bulbs.
- ▶ Turn off and disconnect electronics that are not in use.
- ▶ Turn off stand-alone dehumidifiers.

Making small changes to conserve energy can help even out energy use, save money on your utility bill and avoid service interruptions caused by high demand.



FREE & EASY ways to save energy

(Spoiler Alert: Your clothes and dishes won't know the difference)

Major home appliances account for approximately 16% of an average home's energy consumption.

16%



- ▶ Run full loads of laundry instead of several smaller ones.
- ▶ Use cold water to wash your clothes.

- ▶ Keep your refrigerator at 35-38 F and your freezer at 0 F.
- ▶ Regularly defrost manual-defrost freezers and refrigerators.



- ▶ Skip the heated dry setting on your dishwasher.
- ▶ Fully load your dishwasher before washing.

- ▶ When buying new appliances, consider Energy Star® versions.
- ▶ Unplug appliances you're not using.



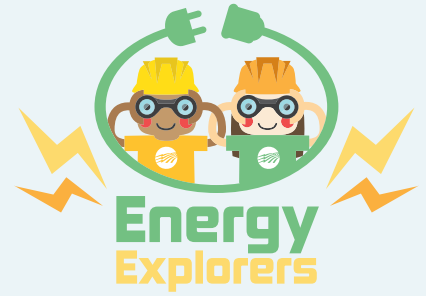
Time to replace that old appliance? Replacing older versions with energy-efficient models can save the average household more than

\$500 per year.

SOURCES: NATIONAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL, U.S. ENERGY INFORMATION ADMINISTRATION

HOW SOLAR PANELS WORK WORD SEARCH

Did you know energy from the sun can be used to create electricity? Read the following information about how solar panels work, then find and circle the **bolded** words in the puzzle.



- ▶ Solar panels contain **photovoltaic** cells that convert sunlight into electricity.
- ▶ **Sunlight** hits the **solar** panels and generates a direct current.
- ▶ The direct **current** flows to an inverter, which converts it to an alternating current. (This is the kind of electricity we use in our homes.)
- ▶ The alternating current flows from the **inverter** to the home's breaker box, where it's used to **power** appliances and electrical devices in your home.
- ▶ If the solar **panels** generate more **electricity** than the home needs, the unused electricity is sent back to the power lines.

C	N	B	S	T	T	G	Z	O	V	S	U	Y	V	K
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T	H	T	Q	Y	N	P	A	R	F	N	R	C	A	E
L	X	O	D	W	G	R	Q	W	R	B	Z	S	U	T
O	P	K	T	X	D	S	T	O	Y	U	T	U	Q	R
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V	S	B	F	U	E	I	U	E	J	N	C	C	T	Z
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