

P.O. Box 360, 14935 U.S. Highway 36, Norton, KS 67654
785- 877-3323 or 800- 577-3323
www.prairielandelectric.com

**PRAIRIE LAND
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

NEWS

By the Community, for the Community

October is notable for more than pumpkins, Halloween and beautiful fall foliage—it's National Co-op Month! This is the time of year when cooperatives across the country, including Prairie Land Electric Cooperative, Inc., celebrate who we are and more importantly, the members we serve.

Cooperatives are different than other types of businesses. When the market declines to offer a product or service, or does so at a very high price, co-ops intervene to fill the need. Prairie Land Electric Cooperative, Inc. was built by members who came together to bring electricity to our community. Likewise, cooperatives are conveners for the common good. Our mission to enrich the lives of the members we serve is just as important to us as providing safe, reliable and affordable energy.

As a co-op, we are well-suited to meet the needs of the community because we are locally governed. Prairie Land's

leadership team and employees live right here in the community. Our board of directors, who help set long-term priorities for the co-op, live locally on co-op lines. These board members have been elected to the position by neighbors like you.

Our close connection to the community ensures we get a firsthand perspective on local priorities, thereby enabling us to make more informed decisions on long-term investments, such as community solar programs, equipment and technology upgrades and electric vehicle programs.

Another feature that sets our co-op apart from a traditional utility is one of our core principles, "Concern for Community." We participate in the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, present safety programs, sponsor poster contests, host food drives and volunteer for community activities. Ultimately, the larger community benefits from these programs because of you and your neighbors. You empower the co-op through your membership and through your participation in and support of these programs.

We hope you will think of Prairie Land Electric as more than your energy provider, but instead as a local business that supports this community and powers economic development and prosperity for the people.

We will continue to learn from our members about their priorities so we can better serve you—because your electric co-op was built by the community, for the community.



Prairie Land Crew Foreman, Vonley Frey, provided a safety presentation to youth for Farm Bureau Safety Day on Sept. 5 in Concordia.

Cooperative Principle No. 1: Voluntary and Open Membership

Cooperative services are open to all people without discrimination. Membership spans generations.



October is National Co-op Month

Our cooperative employees don't just work for the co-op, they're your neighbors and fellow members. Membership is an important part of the cooperative structure and helps guide our vision for the future of our co-op.

If You Depend on Life Support, Please Let Us Know

Prairie Land Electric strives to maintain the best possible service with minimum outages. However, outages do occur. We request the name and address of any cooperative member who depends on life support equipment.

We keep a register of members on life support equipment, and it is important this information be current and accurate. We will make every effort to give priority service restoration to members on life support systems. However, Prairie Land advises that it is imperative for the member to have an alternate plan, such as a stand-by generator or a family/friend's house to stay during outages.

If you or a family member depend on life support equipment, please contact our office at 800-577-3323 or 785-877-3323 to request a form to complete. Forms are also available at www.prairielandelectric.com.



Congratulations Prairie Land Employees!

Prairie Land extends its congratulations and appreciation to Shawn Miller and Monica Kats for their years of service to our members and the cooperative.



Shawn Miller
30 Years

SHAWN MILLER began his career with Prairie Land on Oct. 1, 1989, as an apprentice lineman working on the construction crew in Norton.

In 2004, Miller advanced to crew foreman, the position he currently holds with Prairie Land.

Shawn and his wife, Pam, have two children: Dalton, who is also a lineman and Baylee who is completing her nursing degree at Fort Hays State University.

In his spare time, Miller enjoys spending time with his family and working with his horses.



Monica Kats
10 Years

MONICA KATS began her employment with Prairie Land on Oct. 21, 2009, as an accountant.

In 2009, Monica and her family moved back to this area so her husband could work with the family farming operation.

She and her husband, Sean, have three children: Lexi, 17; Ellie, 14; and Ayston 12.

In her spare time, she enjoys being involved in and attending her children's activities, spending time with family, reading and exercising.

Fall Back on Nov. 3

On Sunday, Nov. 3, remember to turn your clocks back one hour.



Summer Intern Hired at Prairie Land



Jace Winder

JACE WINDER completed his summer internship with Prairie Land and graduated from Dodge City Community College with a Technical Certificate in Electric Power and Distribution. On Aug. 1, 2019, Winder began a full-time apprenticeship in Norton.

Winder and his wife, Whitney, were recently married. In his spare time, he enjoys roping and hunting.

Welcome to the Prairie Land family!

Cold Weather Rule

Effective Nov. 1 through March 31

Prairie Land Electric Cooperative wants members to have the electric service needed to keep their homes warm during the winter. Prairie Land also recognizes the customer's responsibility to make arrangements to pay for those services. The Cold Weather Rule was designed to ensure both goals are met.

What does the Cold Weather Rule mean for me?

The Cold Weather Rule helps existing members maintain electric service for your home during the winter. You must make payment arrangements with Prairie Land.

How do I qualify?

If you can't pay your entire electric bill, call Prairie Land to make payment arrangements: Agree to pay 1/12 of the overdue amount of your bill, plus 1/12 of your current bill, all disconnection and connection fees, and agree to pay the remainder in equal payments over the next 11 months; or negotiate a payment plan to pay the overdue amount off sooner than 12 months.

Remember, you must also pay your current monthly bill, while paying off the overdue amount. If you are behind in a previous payment plan and cannot catch up, you need to make a new payment agreement with Prairie Land.

What will Prairie Land do?

Prairie Land will inform you of the Cold Weather Rule payment plan as well as other available payment plans. Remember,

under the Cold Weather Rule, you always have the option of spreading your payments over 12 months.

Prairie Land will send written notice to members 10 days before disconnection, plus attempt a phone or personal contact the day before.

Prairie Land will inform members of agencies offering funds to help pay electric bills.

Can I be disconnected during the Cold Weather Rule?

Prairie Land won't disconnect your primary residence when the temperature is forecasted to drop below 35 degrees or be in the mid-to low-30s over the next 24 hours, except in certain circumstances.

To prevent disconnection when it is 35 degrees or above, or to be reconnected regardless of temperature, you must make pay arrangements with Prairie Land.

Prairie Land may start the final notification and disconnection process if there is a 48-hour forecast of temperatures above 35 degrees.

If the 48-hour forecast changes before the period ends and there is a forecast of below 35 degrees, Prairie Land will not disconnect until there is another Cold Weather Rule 48-hour forecast of temperatures above 35 degrees.

PLEASE NOTE: The Cold Weather Rule applies only to existing residential members at their primary residence and is subject to the Rules and Regulations of the Cooperative.

KILOWATT TIPS

Air Leaks and Insulation

Improving your home's insulation and sealing air leaks are the fastest and most cost-effective ways to reduce energy waste and make the most of your energy dollars.



Kilowatt

If you have insulation in your attic graded at R-19 or less, consider bringing it up to R-38 in moderate climates and R-49 in cold climates. Be sure to seal air leaks before you insulate because insulating materials won't block leaks.

Make sure there are no openings from the attic into the home, e.g., air ducts, openings around chimneys and open cavities into the home.

National Fire Prevention Week, Oct. 6-12

Have you done everything you can to protect your home from electrical fires? Take the following steps to avoid highly preventable home fire tragedies:

- ▶ Don't overload extension cords, and use them only for temporary wiring.
- ▶ Check appliance cords and plugs for cracked or broken insulation, or ground pins that have been removed from three-pronged plugs.
- ▶ Do not place cords or wires under rugs or high traffic areas.
- ▶ When plugging in an appliance, notice whether switch plates and outlet covers are discolored or warm to the touch. This would indicate a problem that needs to be checked out.
- ▶ Immediately shut off light switches that are hot to the touch and have them professionally replaced.
- ▶ Have a working smoke alarm.
- ▶ Remember to practice a home escape plan frequently with your family.

KILOWATT was adopted by Prairie Land after the December 2006 ice storm. She now brings you energy and safety tips each month.

Account Management at Your Fingertips



SmartHub allows you to manage all aspects of your utility account online or with your mobile device.

Download the FREE mobile or tablet app in the Apple App Store or Android Marketplace.

WWW.SMARTHUBAPP.COM

No Credit Checks, Deposits, Late Payment Penalties, or Disconnection Fees?

Does the timing of your bills match the timing of your payday?

Prairie Land Electric Cooperative, Inc. will soon launch a new program that takes the stress out of due dates and avoids the costly charges associated with an overdue bill.

It's a voluntary option called Prepaid

Billing. The program gives you the power to pay for electricity on your own schedule. It can be daily, weekly, monthly or whenever it works for you, and at an amount that fits your budget. The choice is yours. You



purchase electricity on an as-needed, pay-as-you-go basis, without deposits, late fees or reconnection fees.

The electrical service rates are exactly the same, and the service delivery is identical. You even still accrue capital credits at the same rate. The biggest differences are that the member sets his/her own payment schedule, avoids the consequences of late penalties, and eliminates the hassle of a credit check and subsequent deposit.

Please follow us on Facebook for more program details that will be shared as the program launches. At left, you can find a handy chart that lines up the cost differences side-by-side.

| Cost Comparison | Traditional vs. Prepaid | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|------|
| New Member Connect Fee | \$15 | \$15 |
| Deposit | \$240 & up | \$0 |
| Billing Due Date | 25th day of each month | None |
| Late Fee | 2% of current bill | \$0 |
| Disconnect NP Fee | \$25 | \$0 |
| Reconnect NP Fee | \$25 | \$0 |
| Monthly Convenience Fee | \$0 | \$5 |

Stop Energy Vampires from Draining Your Money

As Halloween approaches, we may be looking for scary things to be lurking around the corner. In your home, it's the vampires you have to be on the lookout for—the energy vampires that is. Televisions, computers, DVD players, cable boxes with DVR, cell phone chargers, printers and game consoles are just a few of the culprits that could be sucking energy, even though they are turned off.

“While these appliances may be turned off, they go into standby mode, sucking electricity for features like displays and remote controls,” says Jeff Hardiek, Prairie Land Director of Member Services.



Energy Vampires Top Offenders

1. TVs
2. Home Computers
3. Video Game Consoles
4. Surround Sound Systems
5. Cell Phone and Tablet Chargers

Take steps to stop energy vampires from sucking money out of your wallet.

When possible, unplug electronics not in use. Plug electronics into a power strip and turn the power strip off when items are not in use.

Purchase smart power strips for your computers and televisions. These devices sense when the computer or television is sleeping or off. The smart strip cuts off power to related electronics.

Buy low-standby products. Most Energy Star-endorsed products draw smaller than average amounts of electricity when turned off.