



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

PRAIRIE LAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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FROM THE CEO

Preparing for the Big Hunt: Look out for Power Lines



Kirk Girard

As hunting season approaches, excitement builds for time outdoors. But before you head into the woods, make sure electrical safety is part of your preparation checklist. Power lines and utility equipment are often out of sight — and out of mind — especially in wooded or rural areas. Ignoring them can lead to serious injuries or even death.

Never install a tree stand near a power line or on a utility pole. Electricity can arc — jump through the air — up to 10 feet from high-voltage lines. This means you don't even have to touch a wire to be at risk of electrocution.

Never shoot near or toward power lines, utility poles, transformers or substations. Stray bullets or pellets could damage equipment, possibly interrupting electric service. Even more concerning, they could drop a power line to the ground, causing a hazardous scenario: Those who get within 50 feet of a downed line could be shocked or electrocuted.

KEEP THESE TIPS IN MIND TO STAY SAFE AND AVOID COSTLY OR DANGEROUS INCIDENTS:

Scout the area. Before hunting, take time to scout your area during daylight. Look for power lines, poles and electrical

Continued on page 12C ▶



POWER LINE ISSUES

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

POWER
to make life better

VETERANS DAY

Honoring All Who Served
NOV. 11, 2025



**OUR OFFICE
WILL BE
CLOSED ON
NOV. 11.**

EMPLOYEE
SPOTLIGHT

GRAHAM LOTT



Originally from Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, Penn State graduate **GRAHAM LOTT** now lives in Norton and brings his skills to Prairie Land Electric Cooperative as our new IT data analyst.

In his free time, he enjoys staying active at the gym, watching sports, and relaxing with a good movie.

We're glad to have him on the team!

CLAYTON DUBOIS



CLAYTON DUBOIS grew up in Idaho Springs, Colorado, and now calls Norton home. He attended Kansas Wesleyan University before building his career here in northwest Kansas.

Outside of work, he enjoys golfing, watching sports, and cheering on his kids at their games. He and his wife, Ashley, stay busy with their two children — Teigen, 9, and Grayson, 7.

We're excited to welcome him as our new work order and purchasing clerk at Prairie Land Electric Cooperative!

EMPLOYEE
ANNIVERSARY

BLAKE KRIEN began his employment with Prairie Land on Nov. 10, 2005, as an apprentice lineman in Bird City.

In 2009, he advanced to journeyman lineman in Saint Francis, the position

he currently holds.

Blake and his wife, Cassondra, have two children, Maddox, 12, and Taycee, 10.

In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with family, helping his dad on the farm, and being outdoors.

2026 Trustee Election Process

The cooperative's bylaws anticipate for the following positions to be filled in the 2026 trustee election:

- ▶ **DISTRICT 1** — Cheyenne, Rawlins, Sherman and Thomas counties. **MIKE ROGERS** of Saint Francis currently holds this position.
- ▶ **DISTRICT 2** — Decatur, Norton and Phillips counties. **KEITH ROSS** of Long Island currently holds this position.
- ▶ **DISTRICT 4** — Smith, Jewell, Osborne and Mitchell counties. **RON GRIFFITH** of Smith Center currently holds this position.
- ▶ **DISTRICT 5** — Republic, Washington, Cloud and Clay counties. **LOWELL THOMAN** of Concordia currently holds this position.

A nominating committee has been appointed to meet and nominate candidates for these positions. If you are interested in being nominated for one of the positions, contact a member of the committee to discuss your nomination.

The committee will meet at **1 P.M. ON MONDAY, DEC. 15, 2025**, at the Prairie Land Electric office at 14935 U.S. Highway 36 in Norton. (A secondary date of Fri., Dec. 19, 2025, has been set in case the meeting is postponed due to inclement weather).

Nominations may also be made by petition. Interested candidates should contact the Norton office to request the appropriate form. The petition must be signed by no less than 25 members of the district for whom the trustee is to be elected. Petitions need to be delivered to the Norton office **BY 5 P.M. ON MONDAY, JAN. 12, 2026**.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE
MEMBERS INCLUDE:

- ▶ **ROGER ZWEYGARDT**
St. Francis, 785-332-8253
- ▶ **STEPHEN WASHBURN**
Norton, 785-202-0338
- ▶ **RODNEY BELLEAU**
Hill City, 785-421-8149
- ▶ **RON MORGAN**
Smith Center, 785-620-7665
- ▶ **JERRY STENBERG**
Clyde, 785-243-0129

All nominations shall be posted in the Norton office. The election shall be conducted on an "at large" basis; therefore, every member of Prairie Land Electric Cooperative is eligible to vote for all positions in the election.

Upon completion of the nominating process, voting materials will be mailed to Prairie Land members **BY FRIDAY, JAN. 23, 2026**. The bylaws, as amended, require the use of mail ballots for trustee elections. Ballots and a postage-paid return envelope will be furnished for the member to use.

BALLOTS MUST BE RETURNED TO THE NORTON OFFICE BY 5 P.M. ON TUESDAY, FEB. 10, 2026. An election and credentials committee will count the ballots by Feb. 20, 2026, and the election results will then be announced to members.

If you have questions regarding this year's election, please call the Prairie Land office in Norton at 785-877-3323 or 800-577-3323.

Happy Thanksgiving
from our co-op family to yours

*Our offices will be closed Thursday, Nov. 27,
and Friday, Nov. 28, to celebrate the holiday.*

Preparing for the Big Hunt:

Look out for Power Lines Continued from page 12A ►

equipment. Note their locations to avoid them later.

- **POWER SAFELY.** If you're using a portable electrical generator on your hunting trip, don't use it inside a cabin or RV, or in a confined area. Use it outside where there is plenty of ventilation.
- **AVOID AIMING TOWARD POWER LINES OR EQUIPMENT.** Never fire near or toward poles, lines, substations or transformers. A stray bullet could knock down a line, interrupt power or create a deadly hazard.
- **KEEP YOUR DISTANCE.** Always stay at least 10 feet away from overhead lines, poles and other electrical infrastructure when setting up or taking down tree stands.
- **NEVER CLIMB A UTILITY POLE.** Even if it looks like the perfect vantage point, don't do it. Poles carry high-voltage lines and climbing them can be deadly.
- **DON'T USE UTILITY POLES FOR SUPPORT.** Tree stands or blinds should never be attached to or supported by power poles or electrical equipment.

KNOW THE DANGER OF DOWNED LINES

If you come across a downed power

QUICK TIPS

- Never install stands or blinds on utility poles or near electrical equipment.
- Stay at least 10 feet from overhead power lines when climbing or placing a tree stand.
- Stay a minimum of 50 feet from a downed power line and call 911 to report it.
- Don't aim or shoot near power lines, poles or substations.
- Always assume power lines are live and dangerous, even if they appear inactive.

line or damaged electrical equipment, stay at least 50 feet away, even if it doesn't appear to be live. Power lines can still carry electricity when on the ground, posing a risk of shock or electrocution. To help prevent a dangerous situation, call 911, or Prairie Land (or the local electric provider if you are outside our service area).

Whether you're a seasoned hunter or heading out for the first time, staying aware of your surroundings could save your life.



Fall back on Nov. 2

On Sunday, Nov. 2, remember to turn your clocks back one hour. It is also a good time to change the batteries in your smoke detectors and have a professional check your fire extinguishers.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

With the holiday season approaching and more time spent in the kitchen, consider ways to save energy in the heart of your home. When possible, cook meals with smaller, energy efficient appliances, such as toaster ovens, slow cookers and air fryers. When using the range, match the size of the pan to the heating element. Keep range-top burners and reflectors clean so they reflect heat more efficiently. After your holiday meals are complete, load the dishwasher fully before starting the wash cycle. SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV



STAY TOASTY AND WARM WHILE TURNING DOWN THE THERMOSTAT



When the winter winds blow, it is tempting to adjust the thermostat up a few degrees. However turning to other ways to help keep you warm could help reduce your energy bills. Each degree you reduce your thermostat saves 1% on your heating bill.

No one home during the day? Lower your thermostat 7-10 degrees to save!



Ways to stay warm when it's cold outside:



BUNDLE up by wearing layers and heavy socks.

GET your body moving and stay active.

CAULK windows and doorframes that leak air.



REPLACE OR UPDATE old or ineffective door seals.



REDUCE how long you use ventilation fans (they transfer warm air outside.)

KEEP your furnace clean and change your filter monthly.

MAKE SURE your home's heating system is working properly.



HUMIDIFY your home to make air feel warmer.

LET THE SUN SHINE IN during the day and close window coverings at nights.

KEEP the fireplace damper closed when not in use.



Use portable space heaters safely and for short amounts of time — extended use can cause your energy bill to spike!

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG



CONTACT PRAIRIE LAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE FOR MORE INFORMATION



FALL SAFETY CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Fall is in full swing, and that means the leaves are changing, the weather is crisp and the holiday season is just around the corner! But the fall season also brings a higher risk of home fires and electrical safety hazards. Read the safety tips below and use the clues to complete the crossword puzzle.

CHECK YOUR WORK IN THE ANSWER KEY.



Energy Explorers

3 DOWN

4 DOWN

2 ACROSS

1 ACROSS

--	--	--	--	--	--

1 ACROSS:
An _____ should always be in the kitchen when something is cooking.

2 ACROSS:
Keep any items that can burn away from the stove, _____ and other cooking appliances.

3 DOWN:
Candles and _____ should only be used by adults.

4 DOWN:
Make sure all _____ are blown out before leaving a room.

5 DOWN:
Smoke _____ should be tested every month to ensure they are working properly.

ANSWER KEY: 1 ACROSS: ADULT; 2 ACROSS: TOASTER; 3 DOWN: MATCHES; 4 DOWN: CANDLES; 5 DOWN: ALARMS