



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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## POWER LINE ISSUES

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

**POWER**  
*to make life better*

## FROM THE CEO

# The Power Surge

Across the U.S., the demand for power is climbing at one of the fastest rates in decades. As the economy becomes more reliant on electricity and data centers continue to sprout up in many parts of the country, electric cooperatives are preparing to meet the challenges that skyrocketing demand brings.

The North American Reliability Corporation — the watchdog for the U.S. electric grid — recently released the 2025-2026 winter reliability assessment, which echoed other recent reports, including longer-term outlooks that expect sufficient energy resources during normal conditions but potential supply shortfalls and outages under more intense weather conditions.

Extreme weather, coupled with other factors driving increased demand, poses challenges for electric utilities, including cooperatives, in their mission to provide reliable power around the clock.

Several key factors are driving increased demand — including economic growth, expanded manufacturing, data center development and increased electrification in transportation. Together, these trends are reshaping



Kirk Girard

*Continued on page 12B ►*

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**PRAIRIE LAND ANNUAL MEETING**  
14935 US HWY 36, NORTON, KS • 785.877.3323  
**April 9, 2026**  
Lunch at Noon • Meeting at 12:45 p.m.

## The Power Surge *Continued from page 12A ►*

how much electricity we consume and how quickly utilities like Prairie Land Electric Cooperative must adapt to meet future needs.

One of the biggest drivers of rising demand is increased electrification. More homes and businesses are transitioning to electricity for home heating, water heating and transportation. EVs are becoming more common on the road, and many states are offering incentives to help consumers make the switch. Additionally, electric heat pumps are replacing traditional furnaces in many homes due to their efficiency. These transitions mean greater energy use and increased pressure on our electric grid.

Data centers and the growth of advanced manufacturing are also contributing to higher electricity use. As businesses expand and new industries take root, the demand for reliable, high-capacity power is increasing. The resurgence of domestic manufacturing has led to major construction of facilities. These facilities often require substantial energy loads, and many operate continuously to keep production lines running. This growth brings jobs and investment, but it also requires solutions for the pressures put on the electric grid.

Population growth and housing development are also contributing to rising demand in some areas, and everyday life is becoming more energy-dependent, too. Smart appliances, connected devices, home offices and entertainment systems are adding to overall consumption, even as efficiency improves.

While increased demand presents new challenges for electric

utilities, it also creates significant opportunities for co-ops and the communities they serve, including job growth, steady revenue, downward pressure on residential electric rates, and improved infrastructure. Electric co-ops are responding by planning carefully for the future — investing in grid modernization and offering programs and services to help co-op members conserve energy.

Prairie Land is investing in advanced grid technologies that strengthen reliability and operational efficiency. As detailed in the April 2025 issue of *Kansas Country Living* (which can be found on our website), the implementation of Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) and installation of Automatic Circuit Reclosers (ACRs) enables real-time monitoring, faster outage detection and restoration, improved safety, and reduced service interruptions. These strategic investments are part of a comprehensive construction work plan, totaling over \$36 million, to help proactively address member needs and ensure the grid is prepared for future demands.

Electricity powers nearly every aspect of today's economy, and its role will only grow stronger. As electrification accelerates, long-term planning becomes more important than ever.

Prairie Land is ready to meet rising demand in our local communities. Through innovation, investment and collaboration, we are preparing for a more reliable and resilient energy future.

**Source:** National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) is the national trade association representing nearly 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56% of the nation's landscape.

## 3 REASONS TO VOTE IN CO-OP TRUSTEE ELECTIONS

Electric co-ops are led by the members they serve, which means you have a say in who governs our co-op. Here are three reasons why you should participate in trustee elections.

- 1 As a member of the co-op, your input matters.
- 2 Trustees represent you on important energy-related issues.
- 3 Trustees' decisions can impact electricity rates and future projects.

*Help shape our community's energy future by voting in the 2026 trustee elections.  
Reminder: Ballots must be returned by 5 p.m. on Feb. 10.*



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Ensure you're making the most of your home heating system. Replace or clean filters to keep your furnace or heat pump running efficiently. Listen for strange noises and check for uneven heating — these signs indicate that the system may need servicing. Ensure vents and radiators aren't blocked by furniture or rugs as proper airflow helps your system work less and saves energy. A little maintenance along the way can prevent costly repairs and keep your home cozy through winter. SOURCE: NRECA



## 2025 County Tax Distribution

Prairie Land Electric paid \$2,503,434 in property taxes in 2025. This amount is an increase of \$160,066 from taxes paid the previous year. The details below show the amount of taxes paid to each county.

Although your cooperative signs the check that pays for the property taxes, we realize that you, our members, ultimately pay the bill. Using a portion of your bill payment each month, co-op property tax is paid by co-op members and, in turn, supports the communities in our area.

COUNTY	2025	2024	% CHANGE
Cheyenne	\$140,420	\$120,136	16.9%
Clay	\$6,004	\$5,625	6.7%
Cloud	\$285,000	\$266,786	6.8%
Decatur	\$166,590	\$171,280	-2.7%
Graham	\$129,458	\$121,795	6.3%
Jewell	\$95,685	\$92,314	3.7%
Mitchel	\$63,909	\$59,845	6.8%
Norton	\$393,182	\$352,262	11.6%
Osborne	\$72,208	\$60,228	19.9%
Phillips	\$433,491	\$431,549	0.4%
Rawlins	\$127,218	\$123,564	3.0%
Republic	\$117,405	\$109,571	7.1%
Rooks	\$164,431	\$147,134	11.8%
Sheridan	\$25,527	\$26,192	-2.5%
Sherman	\$510	\$506	0.8%
Smith	\$196,033	\$173,368	13.1%
Thomas	\$146	\$148	-1.8%
Washington	\$86,219	\$81,064	6.4%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$2,503,434</b>	<b>\$2,343,368</b>	<b>6.8%</b>

PROPERTY TAXES FOR PRAIRIE LAND ARE ASSESSED BASED UPON REVENUES RATHER THAN ACTUAL PROPERTY VALUE.



## GENERATOR

SAFETY TIPS

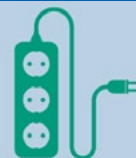
**Never connect a generator directly to your home's wiring unless your home has been wired for generator use.** This can cause backfeeding along power lines and electrocute anyone coming in contact with them, including lineworkers making repairs. Have a licensed electrician install the equipment necessary to safely connect emergency generators to your home.



**Always plug appliances directly into generators.** Connecting the generator to your home's circuits or wiring must be done by a qualified, licensed electrician who will install a transfer switch to prevent backfeeding.



**Use heavy-duty, outdoor-rated extension cords.** Make sure extension cords are free of cuts or tears and the plug has three prongs. Overloaded cords can cause fires or equipment damage.



**Never overload a generator.** A portable generator should only be used when necessary to power essential equipment or appliances.

For more information, visit:  
[www.prairielandelectric.com/generator-safety](http://www.prairielandelectric.com/generator-safety)

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## Whether Traveling or Snug at Home, Be Prepared for Winter

When Mother Nature strikes this winter, make sure you're ready. Hundreds of Americans are injured or killed in the winter months due to car accidents on slippery roads and in home fires caused by improper use of heaters. In addition, winter storms increase the risk of hypothermia, frostbite, carbon monoxide poisoning, and heart attacks due to overexertion.

Because wintertime brings its own set of challenges to staying safe, Prairie Land reminds you prepare for extreme weather and to stay home during storms and their aftermath whenever possible.

### BE READY

Do all you can to prepare ahead of time for massive snowfall, blizzards or ice storms that could last for days at a time. Tune in to local radio or TV stations for the latest winter storm updates. In addition, use your cellphone to stay informed by signing up for weather alerts. Make sure you have a portable charger and extra batteries on hand. You might also want to have a battery-operated radio available (with extra batteries) as another way to listen for updates or instructions.

### IN PREPARING FOR A STORM, PACK AN EMERGENCY KIT WITH AT LEAST THREE DAYS' WORTH OF SUPPLIES TO SUSTAIN YOU AND YOUR FAMILY. INCLUDE:

- ▶ Non-perishable food

- ▶ Plenty of drinking water
- ▶ First-aid kit.
- ▶ Flashlight with extra batteries
- ▶ Cash in case ATMs are unavailable, or credit/debit card systems are down
- ▶ Blankets and clothing, including sturdy shoes

And consider special needs or medical issues in your household; have an ample supply of all medications.

### ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO CONSIDER:

- ▶ Moist towelettes and hand sanitizer for personal hygiene
- ▶ Toothbrushes and toothpaste
- ▶ Medical supplies (hearing aids and batteries, glasses, contact lenses, etc.)
- ▶ Extra set of keys for your house and car
- ▶ Matches that are waterproof or in a waterproof container

### STAY INSIDE

Stay home during snow and ice storms and wait until roads are passable. This may sound obvious, but some people think whatever they have planned is too important to miss. Whatever the commitment, it's not worth getting into an accident or finding yourself stranded.

If you must travel and get caught in extreme conditions, do not leave your car to look for help. Your car should be equipped with several of the same emergency kit items during colder months, such as a first-aid kit, portable

car charger and batteries, blankets, water, snack food, a windshield scraper, extra hats, coats and mittens or gloves; tire chains; canned and compressed air with sealant for emergency tire repair; booster cables; emergency flares; and road salt and sand for traction.

If you're at home and the power goes out, please know we will restore power as efficiently as possible without compromising safety. Do not turn on the stove for heat; it is not safe. Instead, use blankets, sleeping bags and warm winter coats. You can also use an up-to-code fireplace or portable heaters when used correctly.

### WHEN IT COMES TO PORTABLE HEATERS, FOLLOW ALL INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE AND DO NOT:

- ▶ Place any clothing on or near a portable heater
- ▶ Put a portable heater up on the counter or other surface
- ▶ Leave it unattended
- ▶ Place on rugs or near papers or anything else that could ignite; make sure there is 3 feet of unobstructed area

When using a portable generator for power, never use it indoors and make sure it is not close to any windows, doorways or air-intake vents. Do not use it in an attached garage, even with the doors up. Never touch it with wet hands or use in areas with rain, snow or standing water.

## WINTER EMERGENCY KIT

### Top Must-Haves For Your Emergency Kit

Be ready with at least three days of supplies and don't forget to stock your vehicles with a similar kit.

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| ▶ Battery-powered radio               | ▶ First-aid kit                             |
| ▶ Blankets, clothing and sturdy shoes | ▶ Medications, medical equipment            |
| ▶ Cash                                | ▶ Non-perishable food and manual can opener |
| ▶ Cellphone and charger, power bank   | ▶ Water: 1 gallon per person, per day       |
| ▶ Flashlight and batteries            |   |

### ADD TO YOUR VEHICLE KIT

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| ▶ Canned and compressed air with sealant for emergency tire repair | ▶ Emergency flares       |
| ▶ Extra coat, gloves and hat                                       | ▶ Jumper cables          |
|  | ▶ Sand bags or road salt |
|  | ▶ Windshield scraper     |

