

**PRAIRIE LAND
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**

NEWS



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Power Line Issues

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

Prairie Land Electric Cooperative, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

FROM THE MANAGER

It's a Matter of (Co-op!) Principles Part II

For me, this is a time of year for reflection, and topping my list of things I'm grateful for is our wonderful community. I know I speak for all Prairie Land Electric employees when I say we are thankful to be in such an incredible community. We are fortunate to live in the same place where we work, which makes our ties to this community that much stronger.

You may recall last month, my column touched on the first three Cooperative Principles, so this month, I'd like to tell you about the remaining four principles. The Cooperative Principles are essential to the co-op business model and benefit all members of the co-op.

Autonomy and Independence

The fourth principal, Autonomy and Independence, means that the co-op operates in an autonomous way that is solely directed and guided by its mem-

bers, reflecting the values and needs of our local community. This means the co-op is not being influenced by leaders or shareholders several states away. Instead, the co-op is led by the local members it serves.



Kirk Girard

Education and Training

The fifth principle, Education and Training, focuses on enhancing the knowledge of co-op employees and board members, which enables them to contribute to the development of the co-op.

By investing in continuous learning for our employees and board members, our co-op is making a commitment not just to individual professional and personal growth, but to the future of the co-op and the high quality of service our members expect and deserve. It's a win-win situation.

Continued on page 16C ▶



Notice to Members: Proposed Rate Changes

In September, we informed you that Prairie Land was undergoing a rate study — a process that evaluates the cooperative's costs of providing electric service and rates charged for this service. The purpose of this study was to (1) identify the overall revenue needed to cover Prairie Land's operating expenses and debt obligations while generating enough capital to reinvest in our electrical system and (2) review the cost of providing service to each individual rate class (i.e., residential, commercial, irrigation, etc.). This study, performed by an outside independent rate consultant, has now been completed. On Tuesday, Nov. 23, 2021, at 1 p.m., the board of trustees will hold a member rate meeting at the Norton office.

Action on the retail rates may be taken at that time. The meeting is open to any member who wishes to attend and hear the rate proposal presentation.

Rate Study Results

The study showed that overall electric rate revenues should be increased by \$5.6 million, or about 8.3% , in 2022. After considering the magnitude of the potential financial impact to our members, Prairie Land's board elected to lower the margins to the bare minimum but still adequate to meet loan covenants set by our lender. Additionally, we will phase in the

Proposed Rate Change Impact By Rate Class	
Rate Class	%
Residential & Farm	9.4
General Service Small	6.2
General Service Medium	0.0
General Service Large	0.0
Irrigation	9.8
Industrial Service	0.0
Idle Service	0.0
Interruptible Industrial	2.2
Athletic Field Lighting	9.8
Temporary Service	3.1
STR-Sub Transmission	0.0

Proposed changes as of Oct. 8, 2021

increase over three years instead of adjusting rates in a single year.

After the adjustment to margin requirements, the required revenue increase for 2022 was reduced to \$2.5 million, or about 3.9%, with an additional \$900,000 needed in 2023 and \$1.2 million in 2024. If approved by the board of trustees, the proposal will become effective on Jan. 1, 2022.

Rate Change Summary

Rate design entails a balancing act between meeting our revenue needs and minimizing our members' financial impact. While the cost-of-service (COS) study indicates the need for a 3.9% increase in overall rate revenue, some rate classes will require more than the average, while others may need little or no increase. As a not-for-profit organization, we must recover our costs of doing business and maintain sufficient margins to reinvest in our electric distribution system.

The amount of the rate change will vary by rate class. This is because the cost to provide service varies with each rate class depending on the size of the loads and the relative level of consumption. Some increases indicated by the COS were more significant, yet as proposed, the average increase to any affected customer class was capped at 9.8%.

The table above gives an overview of the proposed rate changes by rate class. The percentages shown reflect the impact for the average usage customer within the class. However, the effect to each member within each rate class will vary depending on individual consumption.



COOK UP ENERGY SAVINGS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

- ▶ Clean oven burners regularly.
- ▶ Match the pan size to the burner you're using.
- ▶ Use small appliances like slow cookers and toaster ovens when possible.
- ▶ Only run full loads of dishes in the dishwasher.
- ▶ Keep your freezer full for better efficiency.

**From our table to yours,
Happy Thanksgiving!**

It's a Matter of (Co-op!) Principles Part II *Continued from page 16A* ▶

We also strive to inform our members and the public about the mission and operations of the co-op. In fact, that's why you receive this magazine every month, so we can share the latest co-op news and updates, as well as energy efficiency and safety tips.

Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Cooperation Among Cooperatives is the sixth principle and fosters the way co-ops work together to address bigger challenges. While this principle applies to all types of cooperatives, it is especially relevant in the energy industry. In our case, we put this principle in action after major storms and disasters that cause widespread power outages. When this happens, we call on nearby co-ops to come to our aid and assist with restoration efforts — and we of course extend the same help to them when they are in need. I can't think of a better example of cooperation among cooperatives.

In addition, because we are part of

the national electric co-op network, we can connect and collaborate with other electric co-ops to tackle industry-related challenges, like cybersecurity and an ever changing energy landscape.

Concern for Community

The seventh principle, Concern for Community, is essential to who we are as cooperatives. We serve our community not only by being an essential service, but by helping to power our local economy. Whether through economic development, volunteerism, or donations to local causes, we invest in this community because it's our home too.

I think you'll find that most cooperatives bring good people together to make good things happen in the community. We hope you feel that way about us, your local electric co-op.

On behalf of everyone at Prairie Land Electric, we're thankful for your membership, and we hope you have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

KILOWATT'S TIPS

Keep Safety on Your Holiday Menu

The kitchen can be a busy place during the holiday season, and it's important to keep electrical safety in mind.

According to the National Institutes of Health, the United States has 30,000 shock incidents per year, and approximately 1,000 deaths.

Watch for these shocking kitchen hazards:

- ▶ Damaged or worn electrical cords
- ▶ Appliances with improper or faulty wiring
- ▶ Damp cloths or water near sources of electricity

Following these tips may help prevent electric shock in your home:

- ▶ Always read and follow an appliance's operating instructions.
- ▶ Always dry your hands before handling cords or plugs.
- ▶ Ensure appliance cords are thoroughly dry before plugging them in.
- ▶ Pull on the plug, not the cord, to disconnect an appliance from an outlet.
- ▶ Discard any item with a cord or plug that has damaged insulation or exposed wiring, or that is frayed, cracked, taped or otherwise questionable.
- ▶ Do not overload extension cords, multi-pack "power strips" or surge protectors and do not plug them into each other. These are only for temporary use.
- ▶ Never remove the third (round or U-shaped) prong from a plug, which is a grounding/safety feature designed to reduce the risk of shock and electrocution.
- ▶ Have your home inspected by a licensed electrician.
- ▶ Educate your household on how to properly turn off your home's power in case of an emergency.

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



Kilowatt



Safety Demos Available

Local linemen help with the high voltage safety demonstrations when possible. Travis Stites, Jacob Epley and Austin Wieden introduce the new PVC man for a presentation in Phillipsburg. **To schedule a demo for your group, call Kenzie at 1-800-577-3323.**

Daylight Saving Time

Turn your clocks back one hour on Sunday, Nov. 7 at 2 a.m. Many devices update automatically. It's also a good reminder to change the batteries in your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors.

2022 Trustee Election Process

The bylaws of the cooperative state the following positions will be elected in the 2022 trustee election:

- ▶ **DISTRICT 1** – Cheyenne, Rawlins, Sherman and Thomas counties
THIS POSITION IS CURRENTLY OPEN.
- ▶ **DISTRICT 2** – Decatur, Norton and Phillips counties
IVAN BOHL of Norton currently holds this position.
- ▶ **DISTRICT 3** – Sheridan, Graham and Rooks counties
SANDRA J BENOIT of Damar 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 on **DEC. 14, 2021, AT 1 P.M.** at the Prairie Land Electric office at 14935 U.S. Highway 36 in Norton.

Nominating Committee Members Include:

- ▶ **ROGER ZWEYGARDT** – St. Francis
785-332-3458
- ▶ **STEPHEN WASHBURN** – Norton
785-202-0338
- ▶ **RODNEY BELLEAU** – Hill City
785-421-8149
- ▶ **DENNIS HANSEN** – Smith Center
785-282-3211

▶ **JERRY STENBERG** – Clyde
785-243-0129

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 not 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 JAN. 11, 2022**. 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 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 JAN. 25, 2022**. 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 FEB. 10, 2022**. An Election and Credentials committee will count the ballots by Feb. 20 and the election results will then be announced.

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.

Notice of Rate Meeting

The Board of Trustees of Prairie Land Electric Cooperative, Inc. will meet on Tuesday, Nov. 23, 2021, at 1 p.m. to discuss proposed rate changes. This meeting will be held at the cooperative’s headquarters located at 14935 US Highway 36, Norton, KS, and will be open to any member who wishes to attend.

Action on the retail rates may be taken at that time. Members have the right to request review by the Kansas Corporation Commission of any rate change approved by the cooperative as provided by K.S.A. 66-104d(g).

Please **RSVP** to ensure adequate seating. Call Prairie Land at 785-877-3323 or 800-577-3323.

Attention High School Juniors

Applications for the 2022 Youth Tour contest are now available. See your high school counselor or contact:

KENZIE GRIFFITHS
kgiffiths@ple.coop
785-877-3323



Kansas CLOSE-UPS

Share your holiday and winter photos with *Kansas Country Living* by emailing photos@kansascountryliving.com.

Submit your photo **BY NOV. 10 AT 5 P.M.** and, if your photo is published in the December issue, you will receive a From the Land of Kansas holiday gift box. Include the photographer’s name, name of subjects (if you want them identified), name of your electric co-op, and where in Kansas the photo was taken. (Photos must be at least 300 pixels per inch)

ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

Fall is the perfect time to prep your home for the upcoming winter chill. One of the best ways you can save energy and stay comfortable is to caulk and weatherstrip areas that typically need sealing. Start by sealing around windows and doors. Seal plumbing, ducting, and areas where electrical wiring comes through walls, floors and ceilings for additional energy savings. **SOURCE: ENERGY.GOV**

