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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.

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

FROM THE MANAGER

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



Kirk Girard

ACE Hardware, State Farm, REI, Land O'Lakes and Prairie Land Electric all share something in common: We're all cooperatives.

We may be

in different industries, but we all share a passion for serving our members and helping our communities to thrive. In fact, all cooperatives adhere to the same set of seven principles that reflect our core values of honesty, transparency, equity, inclusiveness and service to the greater community good. October is National Co-op Month, so this is the perfect time to reflect on these principles that have stood the test of time but also provide a framework for the future. Let's take a look at the first three cooperative principles.

Voluntary and Open Membership

Just like all co-ops, Prairie Land Electric was created out of necessity — to meet a need that would have been otherwise unmet in our community. So in 1938, a group of neighbors banded together and organized our electric co-op so everyone in our community could benefit. For a modest membership fee to the co-op, any farmer could get electricity brought to his farm. Neighbors came together to tackle a problem that they all had but couldn't

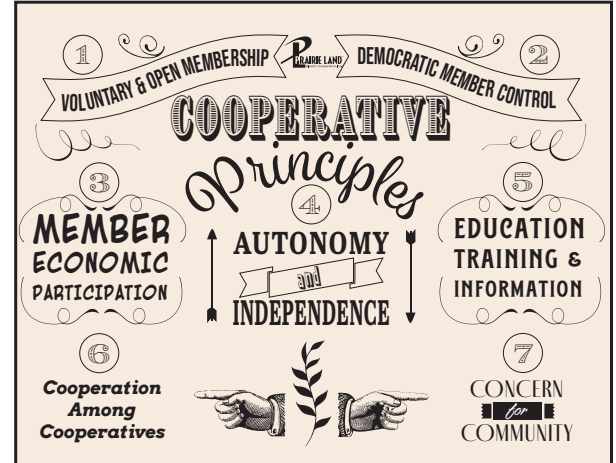
solve alone. They worked together for the benefit of the whole community, and the newly established electric lines helped power economic opportunity in our community.

While this history may be forgotten, key parts of that heritage remain — the focus on our mission and serving the greater good. We call on everyone to improve the quality of life and economic opportunity for the entire community. Membership is open to everyone in our service territory, regardless of race, religion, age, disability, gender identity, language, political perspective or socio-economic status.

Democratic Member Control

Our co-op is well suited to meet the needs of our members because we are

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

locally governed. Each member gets a voice and a vote in how the co-op is run, and each voice and vote are equal. Prairie Land Electric's leadership team and employees live right here in the community. Our board of directors, who helps set long-term priorities for the co-op, also live locally on co-op lines. These board members have been elected by neighbors just like you. We know our members have a valuable perspective, and that's why we are continually seeking your input and encourage you to weigh in on important co-op issues and participate in co-op elections.

Our close connection to this community ensures we get a first-hand perspective on members' priorities, thereby enabling us to make more informed decisions on long-term investments, such as equipment and technology upgrades.

Members' Economic Participation

As a utility, our mission is to provide safe, reliable and

affordable energy to our members. But as a co-op, we are also motivated by service to the community, rather than profits. Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of Prairie Land Electric. At least part of that capital remains the common property of the cooperative. Members allocate surpluses for co-op programs, initiatives, capital investments and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

Because we are guided by Seven Cooperative Principles, it's not just about dollars — it's about opportunity for all and being fair when engaging with our members. The cooperative way is a values-based business model.

Prairie Land Electric is a reflection of our local community and its evolving needs. We view our role as a catalyst for good and making our corner of the world a better place. This sums up the Seventh Cooperative Principle, Concern for Community, which our cooperative routinely celebrates.

TOP 9 ENERGY VAMPIRES

If you collect your spare change in a jar, all those coins add up over time, usually to a larger amount than expected.

Small amounts of consumed energy throughout your home add up as well. Plug "energy vampires" into a smart power strip that detects dormant devices or unplug items when not in use, especially those with illuminated controls.

- SURROUND SOUND SYSTEMS
- STANDBY COFFEE MAKER
- CELL PHONE AND TABLET CHARGERS
- COMPUTERS
- TVS
- SATELLITE / CABLE BOXES
- MICROWAVES
- VIDEO GAME CONSOLES
- PRINTERS



Trent Heersink

New Apprentice Lineworker

On July 25, 2021, **TRENT HEERSINK** accepted a full-time position as an apprentice lineman for the St. Francis area. He had started as an intern with Prairie Land Electric in February.

Heersink is from Prairie View and is a 2020 graduate of Manhattan Area Technical College. In his spare time, he enjoys hunting and shooting.

Working on the LINE



Kilowatt the cat took a break from patrolling the tree line to attend the safety meeting with the lineworkers on Sept. 8. As an avid climber, she takes particular interest in the pole top rescue training.

Congratulations Prairie Land Employees!

Prairie Land extends its congratulations and appreciation to Cally Engel and Tom Huber for their years of service to our members and the cooperative.



Tom Huber
15 years

TOM HUBER began his employment with Prairie Land Electric on Oct. 3, 2006, as an apprentice lineman for the Norton area. In April 2010, he advanced to

journeyman lineman, the position he currently holds.

Tom lives in Norton with his wife, Chelsey, and their 9-year-old daughter, Payton. In his spare time, Tom enjoys hunting, fishing and spending time with his family.

CALLY ENGEL began her career with Prairie Land Electric on Oct. 4, 2011, as a billing clerk. In 2020, Cally accepted the position of operations assistant, the position she currently holds.

Cally and her husband, Chad, live in Norton and have two adult children. In her spare time, Cally enjoys spending time with family, working with her goats, baking and traveling.



Cally Engel
10 years

KILOWATT'S TIPS

Safe Decorating Tips

Decorating is not just for Christmas anymore. Halloween has become a time to string up lights, plug in fog machines, light up those electric powered decorations and create a yard that is scare-worthy to any trick-or-treater that may stop by.



Kilowatt

Prairie Land Electric offers these tips to make your Halloween safe and fun:

- ▶ Carefully inspect each electrical decoration. Check for cracking, fraying or bare wires, as they may cause a serious shock or start a fire.
- ▶ Replace any damaged decorations.
- ▶ Make sure any lights, animated displays, or other electrical outdoor products are Underwriters Laboratory (UL) approved and marked for outdoor use.
- ▶ Follow the care and instructions that accompany your electrical decorations.
- ▶ Don't overload extension cords or allow them to run through water on the ground.
- ▶ Plug outdoor electric lights and decorations into outlets protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). If your outlets don't have them, either contact a qualified electrician to install them or use portable GFCIs instead.
- ▶ Keep electrical cords out of walkways to avoid tripping hazards.
- ▶ Turn off all electrical decorations and lights before leaving home or going to sleep. Consider using a timer.
- ▶ When decorating outside, always make sure to look up and check that you and any equipment, such as ladders, are at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines. Avoid any tricks this Halloween by enjoying your treats and decorating safely. Get more safety tips at SafeElectricity.org.

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

PASSWORD DO'S AND DON'TS

A strong password can make all the difference in protecting your personal information.

Follow these tips for stronger passwords.



DO

- ▶ Change the manufacturer's Wi-Fi password on your router.
- ▶ Use two-factor authentication.
- ▶ Use unique phrases (like lyrics to your favorite song) to remember passwords.

DON'T

- ▶ Don't use common words or numbers like "password" or "1234."
- ▶ Don't use personal details like your date of birth in a password.
- ▶ Don't use the same password for multiple accounts.

**October is
Cybersecurity
Awareness Month.**

Do Your Part. #BeCyberSmart

SEVEN COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

1



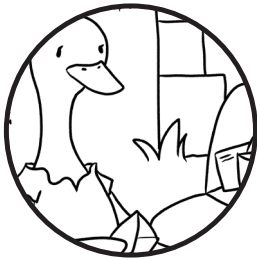
Open and
Voluntary
Membership

2



Democratic
Member
Control

3



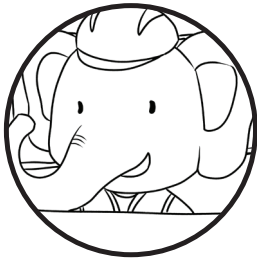
Members'
Economic
Participation

4



Autonomy and
Independence

5



Education,
Training and
Information

6



Cooperation
Among
Cooperatives

7



Concern for
Community

Did you know all co-ops use the same set of seven principles to guide their work?