

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

### Board of Trustees

**Ronald Griffith** President

**Mike Rogers** Vice President

**Sandy Benoit** Secretary

**Robert Paxson** Treasurer

**Ivan Bohl** Trustee

**Jerry Gallagher** Trustee

**Otto Levin** Trustee

**William Peterson** Trustee

**Keith Ross** Trustee

**Scott Urban** Trustee

**Eric Witmer** Trustee

### Staff

**Kirk Girard**  
Chief Executive Officer

### Power Line Issues

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

**POWER**  
*to make life better*

## FROM THE CEO

# Celebrating Membership

## October is National Co-op Month



**Kirk Girard**

Fall is a busy time, and October is a particularly eventful month with school, community and sports activities in full swing. It's also when

all cooperatives celebrate National Co-op Month.

When I say Prairie Land Electric celebrates Co-op Month, it really means we are celebrating you! After all, our co-op wouldn't exist without you, our consumer-members.

Our core business purpose is to serve as your electricity provider, but the larger mission of the co-op is to help make our corner of the world a better

place. Concern for Community is one of Seven Cooperative Principles that all co-ops share.

Similar to how our wires run through our service territory, our concern for community flows through all of our decisions — because being a co-op means being a responsible partner and good neighbor.

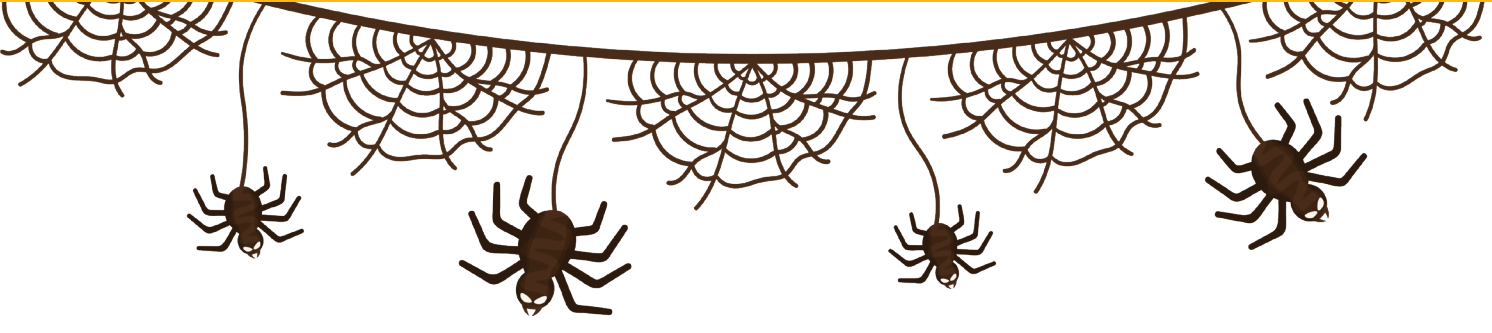
Prairie Land Electric works to help our community thrive through initiatives led by our employees and a local board that's comprised of neighbors who live right here in our community. Because we're local, we understand our community's unique needs and strive to help meet them. We're proud to support local youth through our Youth Tour and scholarship programs.

*Continued on page 12B* ▶

*Focused on*  
**YOU.**

**OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH**

Electric cooperatives were created to serve their members. Because we're a co-op, we're able to adapt to our community's unique needs. That's the power of co-op membership.



## Celebrating Membership

Continued from page 12A ▶

The word “cooperative” is close to “cooperation,” meaning people working together toward a common goal — mutually benefitting one another and the larger community. That’s the essence of the cooperative spirit. Our employees and member-elected board members are invested in the community in which they live and serve.

Above all, as a co-op we put our members’ priorities first. As your trusted energy partner, we know that saving energy and money is important to you. We want to empower you to manage energy use at home. If you haven’t already, I encourage you take a moment and download our app, SmartHub. Through the app, you can conveniently monitor and manage your energy use. And we’re of course here to help, so give us a call if you have questions about your energy bills.

Prairie Land Electric is continuously examining ways to operate more efficiently while continuing to provide the highest level of friendly, reliable service you expect and deserve. After all, we’re your local co-op. We were built by the members we serve.

Be sure to enter our cooperative month giveaway below.

## 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 standby 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](http://www.prairielandelectric.com).



### CO-OP MONTH GIVEAWAY

*Each October, we’re reminded of our cooperative principles and how much our members mean to us. This year, to show our appreciation, we’re giving away prizes and bill credits each Friday in October. Your entry stays in the drawing each week, so the sooner you enter, the more chances you have to win.*

*Use the QR code to enter online, or complete and return this entry form to*  
**P.O. Box 360, Norton, KS 67654.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Member for: \_\_\_\_\_ months/years






*to make life better*

# Congratulations PLEC Employees!

Prairie Land extends congratulations and appreciation to Connie and Waylon for their milestone anniversaries and their decades of service to our members.

**CONNIE PFANNENSTIEL** began her career with Prairie Land on Oct. 1, 1982, as a billing clerk in Norton. In 2017, she advanced to senior billing clerk.

Connie has three sons and is the proud grandma of seven grandchildren.

In her spare time, she enjoys being with her family and grandchildren.

Area Supervisor **WAYLON LAWSON** has served the Concordia area since Oct. 14, 2002, when he was hired by Aquila, Inc. Prairie Land was pleased to add him to the employee roster after the 2007 acquisition.

He and his wife, Tina, live in Talmo and have six children.

In his spare time, he enjoys being with his family and spending time at the lake.



**Connie Pfannenstiel**  
40 Years



**Waylon Lawson**  
20 Years

# Don't Get Burned

Electricity usually makes life easier by powering kitchen appliances, gadgets, and electronics we use for entertainment. However, that same electricity contains the potential to destroy homes and take lives. Electric fires are more destructive than any other type of fire, and they are twice as deadly. Safe Electricity has the following information to help you keep your electric system safe.

- ▶ Consider getting an electric inspection of your home, especially if it is an older home, or you have never had an inspection.
- ▶ If an electrical fire starts in your home, do not use water to extinguish it. Water conducts electricity, and you could get an electric shock. Use an extinguisher that is approved for use on electrical fires.
- ▶ Flickering lights, warm, cracked, or sparking outlets all indicate electric problems.
- ▶ If circuits trip, fuses blow or someone gets a shock, your home has an electric problem. Get an electric inspection.
- ▶ Do not overload outlets, use an extension cord as a permanent wiring solution, or use lightbulbs that are not rated for the socket.
- ▶ Contact an electrician about installing an arc fault circuit interrupter (AFCI). An AFCI monitors the flow of electricity in your home. If the flow of electricity is irregular and could cause a fire, the AFCI shuts off electricity. An AFCI costs around \$35, plus the cost of professional installation. The cost also depends on the size of your home and how many circuit breakers you have.
- ▶ Inspect electric plugs and cords annually. If they are frayed or cracked, repair or replace them. Do not place cords under rugs, or staple or nail them to the wall.

## Dress Up with Care for HALLOWEEN

When dressing your little ones (or yourself), keep these safety tips in mind



- ▶ Always wear costumes that are labeled flame resistant.
- ▶ Wear bright, reflective costumes or add strips of reflective tape to improve visibility.
- ▶ Do not wear decorative (colored) contact lenses unless you have seen an eyecare professional.
- ▶ Wear makeup and hats rather than costume masks that can obscure or obstruct your vision.
- ▶ Test the makeup you plan to use in advance for a possible allergy.

In addition, inspect any plug-in decorations for signs of wear and tear (fraying or bare wires or broken plugs) and replace them if damaged.



NATIONAL  
PREVENTION  
**FIRE** MONTH  
OCTOBER

# Cold Weather Accommodation *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 Accommodation was designed to ensure both goals are met.

### What does this mean for me?

The Cold Weather Accommodation helps existing members maintain electric service for their homes during the winter. Members 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 Accommodation payment plan as well as other available payment plans. Remember, under the Cold Weather Accommodation, 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 Accommodation?

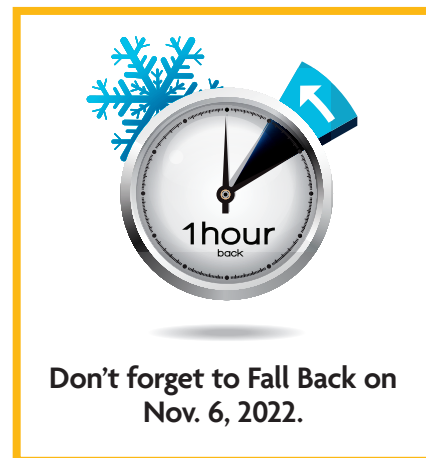
Prairie Land won't disconnect your primary residence when the temperature is forecasted to drop below 35 degrees or be in the mid-to-low-30s over the next 24 hours, except in certain circumstances.

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 Accommodation 48-hour forecast of temperatures above 35 degrees.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Cold Weather Accommodation applies only to existing residential members at their primary residence and is subject to the rules and regulations of the cooperative.



## Don't Become ELECTRICITY'S Path to Ground

When electric utility equipment becomes damaged, the ground and objects can become energized.

If you are in a situation where there could be downed power lines or a damaged pole, guy wire or padmount transformer (green box), know what to do to save your life and the lives of others.

### Car Accident —

- 1 Stay inside your vehicle or cab since the ground or objects could be energized.
- 2 Call 911 and report there are downed or damaged power lines or a dislodged green box.
- 3 Wait for the utility crew to arrive to deenergize the power.
- 4 Do not exit until someone from the utility says it is safe to do so.



### Only Exit if the Vehicle is on Fire —

- ▶ Cross your arms over your chest and make a clean jump out.
- ▶ Do not touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time.
- ▶ Make solid hops with your feet together as far away as you can.
- ▶ Do not return to the vehicle.



### Bystanders —

- ▶ Do not approach the scene. Call 911 for help.
- ▶ Stay at least 50 feet away and do not lean on or touch anything, including fences or guardrails.

