

PRAIRIE LAND
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

NEWS



Hardiek Hangs up His Hard Hat

JEFF HARDIEK will be retiring on July 9, 2021, after 34 years of service to the members of Prairie Land Electric.

Hardiek began his career with Norton-Decatur on Dec. 1, 1987, as a member of the construction crew in Norton, soon moving to Hill City as a maintenance lineman and advancing to crew foreman. Most recently he has served as director of member services.

"After all these years, the members in my service territory and my fellow employees feel like family. I'm eternally grateful for the guys who convinced me to go this direction after college."

Jeff has always had an entrepreneurial spirit, so it's reasonable to expect to see some exciting projects coming soon.

Jeff and his wife, Colleen, are currently expecting grandchildren from both of their kids and will be traveling between Hill City and Tennessee to spoil them. He will also be spending more time at the lake and perfecting his golf game.

Enjoy every moment, Jeff! We will miss you!

At the final safety meeting of his career, Jeff and his lineworker brothers enjoyed cake and shared special memories.



LED: A Rising Star in Energy Savings

Back in 2007, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) passed the Energy and Independence Act. Within a few years it became evident that the future of incandescent lightbulbs was quite dim.

While this legislation included a wide range of recommendations for the energy industry, the main and probably most memorable requirement was that new lightbulbs use 25% less energy. As a result, there was a huge push between 2012 and 2014 to replace older incandescent lightbulbs with newer, more energy-efficient versions.

Oftentimes, regulations come and go without much fanfare. However, when incandescent lightbulbs were phased out, it directly impacted lightbulb choices and left many of us wondering what all the fuss was about.

Traditional incandescent bulbs produce light by heating a wire filament to a temperature that results in the



LED bulbs account for 65% of lightbulb orders.

generation of light. Incandescent bulbs were popular because they were inexpensive and available in a wide range of colors. However, much of their energy went into heat production and very little toward emitting light.

Incandescent lightbulbs also have a very short life span, lasting only about one year on average. Although they are no longer available in U.S. stores, the energy costs associated with the once-popular bulb, along with its stunted life span, far outweigh the initial savings at

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HAPPY
★
4TH OF JULY
★★★
INDEPENDENCE DAY
Our office will be closed on
Monday, July 5, for the holiday.

Cooking for Kids

KENZIE GRIFFITHS and **KIRK GIRARD** were among five employees who spent the morning of June 5, 2021, grilling burgers and hot-dogs for OK Kids Day at Prairie Dog State Park. It was a beautiful day and, with the help of Prairie Land's equipment and manpower, the event served up 600 sack lunches for the participants.



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the cash register. Since incandescent bulbs produce a lot of heat, they may cause burn injuries and pose a fire risk.

Nowadays, the three most popular lightbulbs are the light-emitting diode (LED), the halogen incandescent and the compact fluorescent light (CFL). According to the National Electrical Manufacturers Association, in the third quarter of 2018, lightbulb orders were broken down as follows:

- ▶ LEDs accounted for 65%
- ▶ Halogens made up 28%
- ▶ CFLs made up the last 7%

What makes LEDs different? LED lightbulbs work when an electrical current passes through a microchip, which illuminates the tiny light sources we call LEDs, and the result is visible light. LED lightbulbs produce light up to 90% more efficiently than traditional incandescent lightbulbs. They also include features that keep the bulb cooler to the touch, which avoids potential injuries and fire risks.

LEDs are also safer than their closest competitors, CFL and halogen bulbs. CFLs contain a small amount of mer-

cury, which is dangerous if ingested. In addition, this type of bulb should not be thrown in the trash. Halogen bulbs operate at very high temperatures, which means they can cause burns to the skin if touched. They may cause a fire when they are knocked over or come in contact with something flammable.

Moreover, many LEDs are rated with a life span of 50,000 hours. That means if one is used 8 hours a day, it is projected to last 17 years! Residential LEDs, especially those that are designated with the Energy Star logo, use at least 75% less energy and last 25 times longer than incandescent lighting, according to the DOE.

In comparison, halogen lightbulbs last about a year and CFL bulbs about three years (both based on 8-hour-a-day usage).

LEDs help the environment while reducing energy costs. According to the DOE, their widespread use is on track to save the equivalent annual electrical output of 44 large electric power plants, with a total savings of more than \$30 billion by the year 2027!

FREE AND EASY Ways to Save Energy

1 Close or lower window coverings during the heat of the day.



2 Set your thermostat a few degrees higher than normal.



3 Take cooler showers (this is better in the summer anyway!)



4 Use countertop appliances or a microwave instead of an oven.



5 Better yet, grill or smoke food outdoors.



6 Unplug that extra fridge, especially older, inefficient models (they have to work even harder in a hot garage.)



7 Optimize your programmable thermostat's features (around 40% of homeowners never program them.)



8 Check the airflow around windows and doors (add weatherstripping if needed.)



9 Unplug all chargers and electronics before leaving the house.



10 Shut the front door (don't air-condition the outdoors.)





John Atkins

Atkins Completes 15 Years of Service with Prairie Land

JOHN ATKINS joined the Prairie Land family on July 5, 2006, as a billing clerk. In 2010, he advanced to mapping technician, and in 2015 he became project manager for Prairie Land, the position he currently holds. In his spare time he enjoys spending time with family, golfing and riding motorcycles.

Prairie Land Welcomes New Employees

DAKOTA JULIAN is a recent graduate of the University of Wyoming and began working as an electrical engineer for Prairie Land on May 24, 2021. Originally from Colorado, Dakota just purchased a home in Norton with his new wife, Jacqueline. In his spare time, Dakota enjoys hunting, fishing and renovating their home.



Dakota Julian



Kenny Sanders

KENNY SANDERS became a summer employee on June 1, 2021, and will be mowing our substations and other facilities. Kenny is from Stafford, Kansas,

but will be living in Norton for the summer. He will be a sophomore at Bethany College, where he is on the track team. In his spare time, Kenny likes working out and running.

Peterson Begins Internship

JACOB PETERSON began a three-month internship with Prairie Land Electric in Norton on May 10, 2021, one year later than originally planned due to the COVID-19 policies in place last summer. Jacob is from Norton and will graduate from Pratt Community College upon completion of his internship. In his spare time, he enjoys golfing and working with mechanics.



Jacob Peterson

KILOWATT'S TIPS

Play Outdoors Safely

Before you send your kids outside to fly kites, climb trees or play games with friends, make sure they are aware of electrical dangers that could put a frightening halt to playtime.



Kilowatt

Always look up and look out for power lines. It is important to keep yourself and any play items away from anything that could be in contact with power lines.

Kites should only be flown during ideal weather in large open areas like a park or a field. In addition, kites should be flown away from overhead power lines or other electrical equipment. A kite string can conduct electricity from an overhead line directly to the person on the ground.

Children also need to be aware that a tree tangled in a power line can be energized with electricity and lead to electric shock or death while climbing.

Additionally, children should never play around pad mounted transformers. These are green metal boxes that contain the above ground portion of an underground electrical installation. They carry high voltages and are safe when locked, but they can be deadly if someone reaches inside.

In addition to talking to your children, there are also steps parents and caregivers can take to help ensure safe outdoor play.

- ▶ Ensure all outdoor outlets are equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) to help prevent electric shock.
- ▶ Keep all long-handled tools out of reach of children so they will not use them and hit an overhead power line.
- ▶ Do not plant trees near power lines. If a tree has grown into a power line, make sure to call a professional to trim the tree.

For more information on outdoor electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

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

Manage your Prairie Land account any time, anywhere.

- Check your electricity usage.
- Update contact information.
- Set up notifications.
- View your bill.
- Make a payment.
- Go paperless.

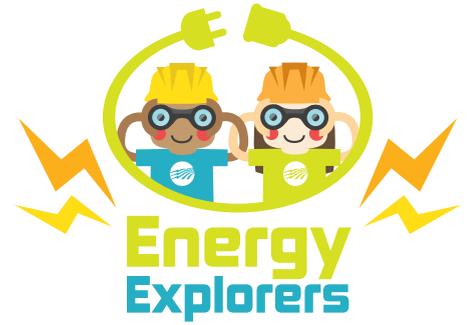
Download the mobile app or use the SmartHub button on prairielandelectric.com.



COOPERATIVE WORD SEARCH

As a member of an electric cooperative, you're part of something special!

Read the facts below to learn how co-ops are unique, then find and circle the words in **BOLD** type.



I	S	V	S	L	N	V	Q	O	S	N	M	F	S	E
F	E	Q	G	I	T	H	W	K	E	X	B	G	L	Z
B	V	M	E	M	B	E	R	S	R	H	F	E	U	H
K	I	B	P	O	E	G	E	N	V	W	C	H	D	Q
S	T	W	U	R	M	W	X	X	E	T	N	L	W	S
U	A	S	T	L	I	P	F	F	R	P	A	Q	V	Q
X	R	H	U	E	M	N	O	I	L	K	Y	F	F	M
O	E	F	O	R	O	Y	C	E	O	T	O	H	G	Q
G	P	F	A	K	Y	N	O	I	I	B	A	E	A	J
A	O	H	W	X	P	E	N	N	P	K	G	Y	U	D
P	O	I	C	E	O	A	U	O	I	L	V	X	E	P
Y	C	P	W	N	W	M	I	C	G	Z	E	S	V	T
K	A	Q	V	T	M	Z	G	L	Z	I	U	S	G	T
Q	K	M	S	O	G	W	A	Q	O	B	H	C	I	A
A	P	T	C	M	D	X	J	W	L	Q	V	B	R	W

WORD BANK

1. Electric **COOPERATIVES** are local organizations and businesses, so they understand the communities they serve.
2. Co-ops don't have customers; instead, they have consumer-**MEMBERS**.
3. All co-ops are guided by the same set of cooperative **PRINCIPLES**.
4. "Concern for **COMMUNITY**" is the seventh cooperative principle.
5. Co-ops are led by the consumer-members they **SERVE**.
6. You're a consumer-member of an **ELECTRIC** cooperative, but there are also housing, grocery and other types of co-ops.