

COVID-19 Affects Your Cooperative

This spring, just as the sunlight began to extend our daylight hours and invite us outdoors to enjoy our parks, lakes, picnics and ball games, the COVID-19 pandemic swept in and closed the door on life as we know it. Even as public gathering restrictions are eased, it's hard to predict how long it will be before our lives return to the way they used to be.

In early March, the COVID-19 coronavirus forced change to business operations at Prairie Land Electric Cooperative. Early on, the changes were simple. We enhanced employee training about COVID-19 personal care and canceled non-essential business travel. Our freight deliveries were left outside, and employee interaction in the workplace was restricted. As the seriousness of the pandemic became more apparent, we closed the Norton and Concordia offices to the public, and the Prairie Land Annual Meeting that had been scheduled for April 7 was canceled.

Also in March, the board of trustees implemented a policy to comply with Kansas Governor Kelly's executive order No. 20-05 to not disconnect member electric services for non-payment of their monthly bills. At their April meeting, the board again reviewed this policy and ordered it be extended until at least the first week in June.

In early April as the coronavirus became more prevalent in our service

areas, Prairie Land employees and the executive staff began working from home to protect our business continuity and line crews were limited to one or two-man crews. Additionally, we staggered line crew shift times and construction projects were put on hold to decrease interaction between crews. For several weeks all the meetings we normally travel to have been held via teleconference or video conference, including Prairie Land's April board meeting.

It was mentioned above that the April 7 annual meeting had been canceled. At that time, the expectation was that the meeting would be rescheduled after the COVID-19 pandemic had subsided and large public gatherings were again permitted. When the board met at the end of April, the imminent risk of COVID-19 contamination in a large public gathering was more dangerous than at any time to date and the great uncertainty about our capability to guarantee the welfare and safety of our members attending the meeting was a huge concern. For those reasons, the board exercised appropriate caution by canceling the 2020 Prairie Land Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting altogether.

The support of our members during this unprecedented pandemic health issue has surpassed our highest expectations. Many of you have had to make other arrangements to pay

your electric bills because our office has been locked. Our phone system functionality isn't as efficient with personnel working from home as it is when we are all in the same office, and you've had to wait for a return phone call on occasion.

Despite all that, we are pleased that you still call us when you need help with something and we will continue to do our best to meet your needs, day or night. Things might go a little slower than they used to, but we'll still get the work done. On behalf of the board of trustees and all the employees who work here, I want to say thank you to the members of Prairie Land Electric Cooperative. You have patiently accepted the changes that have been implemented to conduct your business. We look forward to the day when we can meet with you in our office or give you a handshake at an annual meeting. Hopefully, those days are edging closer. Until then, keep yourself and your family safe. Thank you for your time today.

Regards,



CHUCK LOOK, CEO
Prairie Land Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Members Can Now Enjoy Clean, Cost-Effective Energy

The Johnson Corner Solar Project entered commercial operation on April 7. The \$37 million project, which was financed and constructed by Lightsource BP, is located approximately two miles southwest of Johnson City in Stanton County, Kansas.

All the energy from the project is being sold under a 25-year power purchase agreement to Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, adding yet another renewable fuel source to their diversified generation portfolio.

The project delivers 20 megawatts of clean and affordable on-peak electricity — more than doubling the state's utility-scale solar capacity, previously at 14.1 megawatts. In addition to providing low-cost, on-peak energy, the Johnson Corner Solar Project will reduce loading on a nearby transmission line that is approaching capacity. As a result, Sunflower's members will save costs by deferring or ultimately canceling the requirement for expensive infrastructure upgrades.



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Prairie Land Electric Cooperative's Next CEO

The Board of Trustees of Prairie Land Electric Cooperative recently announced the appointment of **KIRK GIRARD** as the cooperative's next CEO.

Girard, currently Prairie Land's assistant CEO, will succeed Chuck Look, who is retiring in January 2021 after more than 42 years of service with Prairie Land Electric. Look has been CEO since January 2019.

Ronald Griffith, board president, said that, "Kirk is the latest in a long line of Prairie Land executives who was recognized as an outstanding talent when he was hired, who set himself apart by the way he conducted himself while handling mission critical responsibilities, and who responded to the mentorship of the senior members of the management team in a positive way to become the leader he is today."

Kirk will be a strong advocate for rural electric cooperative principles and for the members of Prairie Land Electric Cooperative. The Prairie Land Electric family will be in very capable hands.

CHUCK LOOK, CEO



Kirk Girard will succeed Chuck Look as CEO in January 2021.

Look also commented on Girard's readiness for the job. "Not only has Kirk been a key management partner here at Prairie Land, he is a highly respected member of the rural electric cooperative community across the state of Kansas having been involved in meetings at Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. and Sunflower Electric Power Corporation for several years. In those organizations' board rooms, Kirk will be a strong advocate for rural electric cooperative principles and for the members of Prairie Land Electric Cooperative. The Prairie Land Electric family will be in very capable hands."



Congratulations 2020 High School Graduates

Prairie Land extends its congratulations and best wishes to area high school graduates and children of Prairie Land employees: Maddie, Dianna, Tyson, Lexi, Nathan, Abby, Bailee and Lexi.

MADDIE BLOCHLINGER, daughter of Jamie and Justin LeDuc, graduated from Concordia High School. Maddie will attend Cloud Community College to obtain a nursing degree. Jamie is a customer service representative in Concordia.

DIANNA DOUGLAS, daughter of Julie and Pat Douglas, graduated from Norton Community High School. Dianna will attend Kansas State University and major in elementary education. Julie is the CIS Manager in Norton.

TYSON GLENNEMEIER son of Gregg and Ashley Glennemeier graduated from Norton Community High School. Tyson will be joining the Marines. Gregg is a crew foreman in Norton.

LEXI KATS, daughter of Monica and Sean Kats, graduated from Norton Community High School. Lexi will

attend Fort Hays State University for nursing and will be a member of the cross country and track teams. Monica is an accountant in Norton.

NATHAN LAWRENCE, son of Karla and Willie Lawrence, graduated from Concordia High School. Nathan plans to work after graduation. Karla is a customer service representative in Concordia.

ABBY LISTER, daughter of Candace and Luke Lister, graduated from Valley Heights High School. Abby will attend Hutchinson Community College and major in physical therapy. Luke is a lineman in Concordia.

BAILEE LISTER, daughter of Candace and Luke Lister, graduated from Valley Heights High School. Bailee will attend Central Community College in Hastings, Nebraska, and major in dental hygiene. Luke is a lineman in Concordia.

LEXI WOOD, daughter of Lindsey and Cory Johnson, graduated from Phillipsburg High School. Lexi will attend the University of Kansas and major in business. Cory is a crew foreman in Phillipsburg.

Hand Cleanser Delivered to 16 Counties

As people rushed to equip themselves to defend against COVID-19, many products fell into in short supply. Around the country, distilleries stepped up to respond to the increased demand for hand cleanser.

Boot Hill Distillery in Dodge City began producing cleanser using the formula recommended by the World Health Organization.

Prairie Land Electric and our power supplier, Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, were both able to partner with Boot Hill Distillery to get hand sanitizer for our local communities. Working together, Prairie Land was able to donate a total of 1,865 bottles to local emergency response or medical services in the following counties: Cheyenne, Clay, Cloud, Decatur, Graham, Jewell, Mitchell, Norton, Osborne, Phillips, Rawlins, Republic, Rooks, Sheridan, Smith and Washington.



KILOWATT TIPS

Replacing Your Air Conditioner Filters

When purchasing a new filter for your air conditioner, there are some things to keep in mind. Filter efficiency refers to how much dust and particulate matter a filter cleans from the air, not how energy efficient the filter is. This rating is called the Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value, or MERV. The higher the MERV value, the more efficiently the filter will remove dust and particles from the air.

There are a variety of filter types from which to choose. The best way to find out which one is right for your air conditioner is to follow the manufacturer's recommendations. Here is an overview of some of the more popular filter types:

- ▶ **PANEL FILTERS** – They are often made out of woven fiberglass. They stop only the largest particulate matter and should be changed once a month.
- ▶ **ELECTROSTATIC FILTERS** – These can be washed and reused and they stop more particulate matter. However, they clog up easily. Regular maintenance is important.
- ▶ **PLEATED-MEDIA FILTERS** – These will last about three months. While they do stop more dust, they also restrict more of the air flow.
- ▶ **ELECTRONIC FILTERS** – They are quite effective at stopping dust but require frequent maintenance.
- ▶ **HEPA FILTERS** – These filters are very good at stopping particulate matter but require special air handlers and duct work. No matter what filter your system uses, it is important to keep an eye on it to make sure it is either replaced or cleaned when it clogs with dust and dirt.

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



Kilowatt

SUMMER ENERGY SAVINGS WORD SEARCH

When you save energy at home, you're helping your family save money and protecting our environment.

READ THE ENERGY-SAVING TIPS BELOW, THEN FIND AND CIRCLE THE **BOLDED WORDS** IN THE PUZZLE.



- ▶ Close blinds and **curtains** on hot, sunny days to block additional heat from entering your home.
- ▶ Turn off lights and **electronics**, like TVs and stereos, when you leave a room.
- ▶ Only clean full loads of dishes when you run the **dishwasher**.
- ▶ Turn off the **water** while you brush your teeth.
- ▶ Cooking with smaller appliances like **slow cookers** and toaster ovens uses less energy than larger appliances.
- ▶ Unplug **phone chargers** when they're not in use — they consume energy even when they aren't charging devices.