



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.

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**Kirk Girard**

Chief Executive Officer

#### 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

## Prairie Land Begins Planned Rate Study

Have you ever wondered how the rates for electric service are established?

All operations of an electric cooperative are funded through the rates paid by the members. As a not-for-profit member-owned business serving your local communities, Prairie Land has two primary obligations. First is to provide safe, reliable and affordable service to the members. Second is to maintain sound financial operations that satisfy the requirements of our lenders. Our member-elected board of trustees and the cooperative's management must examine rates periodically to ensure they continue to fulfill these obligations while keeping rates fair and reasonable for the members.

For this reason, Prairie Land is currently undergoing a rate study process to fulfill this responsibility. Cooperatives use independent rate consultants to ensure the process is completed without bias. We have retained the services of Power System Engineering, Inc. to conduct our rate analysis using industry-accepted standards.

- The rate study has several stages:
- ▶ First, the process must calculate how much revenue is needed to continue to operate the business successfully in the upcoming years.
  - ▶ Next, there is an analysis that identifies how much each type of service (rate

class) is responsible for in the identified revenue requirement.

- ▶ Finally, rates are designed to ensure fair revenue collection between and within the rate classes while also meeting any other goals identified by the board.



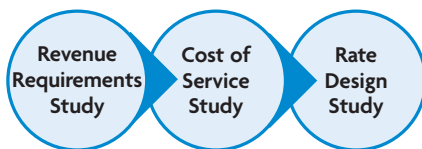
Kirk Girard

When the rate study is completed, it will be reviewed by the board in detail. The board takes its responsibility to set fair rates very seriously. After all, they are members of the cooperative and pay the same rates.

The board will review, determine if there needs to be a discussion and vote on any potential rate

changes. Kansas law requires that we provide the membership with notice of the time and place of any meeting of the board of trustees where rate changes will be discussed and voted on.

Rate change meeting notices will include as many details as possible about any proposed changes. Members will have the opportunity to attend the board meeting to hear the discussion and vote of the board, and even express opinions on the changes. Members can find the notices for these meetings inserted in your monthly bill, in the *Kansas Country Living* centerspread, or on our website.



# 10 Tips for Using Rental Equipment Safely

Are you planning to rent a scissor or boom lift? Scaffolding? A backhoe?

When you rent, borrow or use equipment that will either elevate you or break ground, be sure to use it safely. Whether you are a novice do-it-yourselfer eager to embark on a lofty project or you have used several types of outdoor equipment or machinery before, keep these safety tips in mind:

**1** Before using equipment, obtain proper training; in some cases, certification is required.

**2** Prior to each use, follow the manufacturer's checklist to verify it is in good working order.

**3** Always evaluate and assess your location before using a scissor lift, a bucket truck, a boom lift or scaffolding (or anything that elevates you). Look up and look out for power line locations, and do not use equipment underneath or near a power line or utility pole. Keep in mind your equipment's reach (height and width) when fully extended, and make sure it will not get too close to a power line. Always follow the 10-foot rule: Keep 10 feet between yourself or an object you are holding and a power line or pole.

**4** If you rent a backhoe, a post hole digger or other digging equipment, be sure to call 811 two to three days prior to starting your project. The locating service is free and marks all public underground lines. You are responsible for having all private underground lines and

pipes marked, such as those that service a garage or outbuilding, sprinkler system, invisible fence or private water system. If you or a previous homeowner had the lines installed, they are most likely private.

**5** When using rental equipment that lifts you off the ground, always wear your safety harness. It's a simple step that helps keep you safe if you lose your footing.

**6** Do not use a scissor or boom lift (or any other piece of equipment) for a job it was not designed for.

**7** Before starting a job, account for external conditions, such as wind. High winds could push you too close to or into a power line, and you could be seriously injured or electrocuted.

**8** Starting a project can be exciting, but don't just jump in. Instead, read and review the operating instructions first and take the time to familiarize yourself with the equipment. For example, learn how to use the controls close to the ground before using them at a higher elevation.

**9** Don't ignore the specifications for each piece of equipment, such as maximum platform capacity.

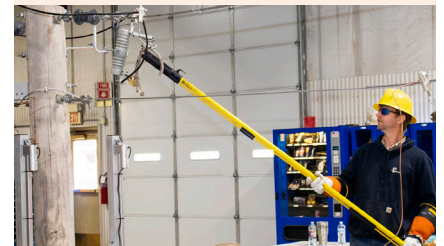
**10** When you are elevated, keep both feet on the platform at all times and use appropriate footwear with slip-resistant soles. Make sure your shoes or boots are not oily, muddy or greasy.

We would be happy to answer any questions or discuss the details of any

outdoor projects that could potentially take you close to a power line, whether overhead or underground. Your safety is our top priority. Contact John Atkins at 785-877-3323 for more information.

These recommended safety tips are not exhaustive. Always read and follow the safety guidelines and operating instructions provided by the manufacturer.

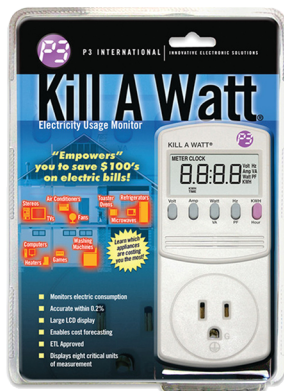
## Safety Demo Trailer Prepares to Hit the Road



Keath Christy tests conductivity during a safety presentation.

We've built a bigger and better demonstration model for safety presentations. The model is constructed with genuine equipment used for our lines; the poles are just a little shorter. Everything for the demonstration fits into a trailer so that it can be hauled around the state for presentations and assembled quickly on site.

Is your school or civic group interested in hosting an electrical safety demonstration? Give Kenzie a call at 800-577-3323.



## KILL A WATT OR TWO ON US

Prairie Land has a few electricity usage monitors available to check out for free to our members. These handy units can help you determine if an individual appliance is pulling power in the way you are expecting it to. It's great for identifying phantom load—electricity that is consumed by a device when it is not being used. Plug the monitor into an outlet, then plug the device or appliance you are testing into the monitor. Press Reset, and enter your rate if you'd like to calculate how much you are spending on the device. Call **1-800-577-3323** or your closest Prairie Land office to reserve a time to use one of the monitors.



## USING A GENERATOR? 8 DANGEROUS MISTAKES PEOPLE MAKE



### 1 IN ENCLOSED SPACES

Always use a generator in a well-ventilated area.



### 2 NEAR WINDOWS OR DOORS

Place it at least 20 feet away from windows and doors.



### 3 IN A GARAGE

Even if the door is up, never use a generator in a garage.



### 4 IN THE ELEMENTS

Run on a dry surface under a canopy-like structure (but not in a carport).



### 5 PLUGGED INTO A WALL OUTLET

This can be deadly to you, family members, neighbors and utility workers.



### 6 WITH THE WRONG EXTENSION CORD

Use a properly rated cord to plug appliances into a generator.



### 7 WITHOUT CO TESTERS

Carbon Monoxide detectors should be on every level of your home and tested monthly.



### 8 IN DISREPAIR

Make sure your generator is well-maintained and in good working order.

LEARN MORE FROM YOUR LOCAL ELECTRIC CO-OP



## Urban Completes 15 Years of Service

**DOMINIC URBAN** began his career with Prairie Land Electric on Sept. 18, 2006, as an apprentice lineman in Norton. In 2011, he advanced to journeyman lineman, and he just accepted the position of metering and apparatus assistant in July 2021. Urban and his wife, JaLynn, have four children: Mason, 18; Garrett, 16; Michael, 12; and Serenity, 11. In his spare time, he enjoys taking his kids hunting and fishing.

Prairie Land extends congratulations and appreciation to Dominic for completing this milestone as well as taking on his new responsibilities.



**Dominic Urban**  
15 years

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

Energy used for cooling and heating your home makes up the largest portion of your monthly energy bills. By combining regular equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing and thermostat settings, you can save about 30% on your energy bills while helping our environment. **SOURCE: ENERGY.GOV**



## KILOWATT'S TIPS

### Aging Electrical Systems

An electrical system's insulation can eventually wear out from a variety of factors including age, animal gnawing, and overloaded circuits. Increased demand can also have an impact on the household wiring in older homes. You may find that you need an upgraded electric service.

Be aware of the signs of electrical wiring problems, which include dim or flickering lights as well as a burning smell, smoke, shocks, or discoloration when using an electrical outlet or switch. Be on the look out for frayed wires, breakers that trip or blow, and signs of potential rodent damage that may affect insulation.

To check on the status of your home's electrical system, contact a qualified electrician to perform an electrical inspection of your home. The U.S. Consumer Product and Safety Commission (CPSC) suggests the following timeframes for inspections:

- ▶ If the last electrical inspection of your home was 40 or more years ago — an inspection is overdue.
- ▶ If the last inspection was 10 to 40 years ago — an inspection is recommended, especially if your electrical demands have increased significantly or you have noticed any of the warning signs above.
- ▶ If the last inspection was less than 10 years ago — an inspection should not be needed unless you have noticed any of the warning signs of an electrical problem or any temporary wiring has been added.

There may be a label or tag with the date of the last inspection on your electrical panel door or cover. If not, then use the age of the house as a guide to the probable need for an inspection.

For more information about safety around electricity, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

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



**Kilowatt**



# FARM SAFETY COLORING SHEET

Farm Health and Safety Week is Sept. 19-25!  
Whether you live on a farm or in the city, always remember  
to avoid playing near power lines and other electrical equipment.

