

InTouch

WITH MEMBERS OF PRAIRIE ENERGY COOPERATIVE

January 2022 Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Seeking candidates

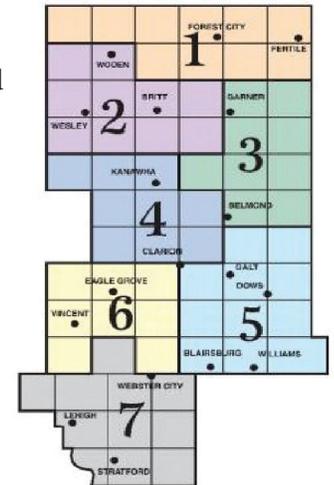
Prairie Energy Cooperative is a member-owned electric cooperative governed by a board of directors. As a member, one of your most important roles is to participate in the election of directors. You can become involved in your cooperative by serving on the board of directors.

Two positions on Prairie Energy Cooperative's seven-member board of directors will be open for election this June. The three-year terms of Allyn Waddingham, District 3, and Donald Christopherson, District 7, will expire.

If you are a member in either District 3 or District 7 and are interested in serving on the board of directors, contact one of the following nominating committee members:

District 3: Leroy Cooper Gary Steenblock
1575 130th St. 1465 130th St.
Goodell, IA 50439 Kanawha, IA 50447
641-762-3542 641-762-3238

District 7: Alice Scharf Dan Housken
2525 Swallow Ave. 2999 Taylor Ave.
Duncombe, IA 50532 Lehigh, IA 50557
515-359-2043 515-571-4110



Patronage returned to Prairie Energy Cooperative members

Prairie Energy Cooperative has always been not-for-profit. That means that when you became a member of the co-op, you share in the excess revenue and the return of that excess revenue to members, called patronage. As new funds continue to come in, the original funds can be paid back to members in the form of patronage retirement. This year, members who purchased electricity from the co-op in 2005 and a portion of 2006 are receiving a refund (patronage) for those years, totaling \$578,391.20. This retirement will be returned in the form of a check, which you should receive this month.



If you receive a check and notice that the name and/or address needs to be updated, or the check is in the name of a deceased member, please call the office immediately at 515-532-2805.



New employees join Prairie Energy

Four new employees have recently joined the team at your co-op. (Pictured left to right) Maggie Smith has filled the role of human resources and payroll manager. Maggie is originally from Clarion and a 2015 graduate of Buena Vista University. She and her husband DJ have a daughter, Brynlee (4). Zane Tinken joined the Clarion crew as an apprentice lineman. Zane is originally from Humboldt and a 2021 graduate of Northwest Iowa Community College. Trey Swaney joined the Garner crew as an apprentice lineman. Trey is originally from Hampton and a 2020 graduate of Northwest Iowa Community College. Jade Prignitz also joined the Garner crew as an apprentice lineman. Jade is originally from Garner and graduated from Northwest Iowa Community College. Congratulations all, and welcome to Prairie Energy Cooperative!

MEMBERS vs REC: what is YOUR responsibility?

With the flip of a switch, electricity illuminates our lives. While it's important to understand how you receive electricity, it's equally important to know the parts of your electrical service that you own and are responsible for when damage occurs or maintenance is needed.

Your electric cooperative provides electricity to numerous points of service at homes, businesses, and organizations. We build and maintain overhead and underground power lines and manage the equipment needed to provide you with safe, reliable power – but we don't own or maintain the power lines that run from your meter pole to your home or building. Those lines belong to the property owner and are the owner's responsibility to have repairs or improvements made when needed.



The power line running from the meter pole to serve a building is owned by the property owner, not the cooperative. That means co-op members also own any service disconnect and breakers that extend from the meter to their property. Your electric cooperative does not provide service or maintenance on this equipment.

What do members own?

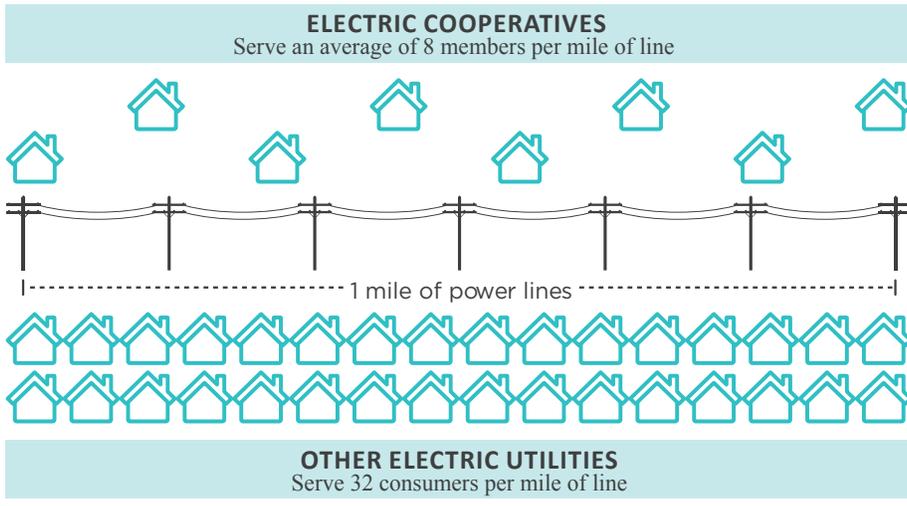
- Service lines from meter pole to property
- Service disconnect breakers on meter pole
- Double throw switch on meter pole (used for a standby generator)
- Breaker boxes or switches inside the property

What does your electric cooperative own?

- Distribution power lines and poles
- Transformers, switches, and all equipment in the distribution service
- Meters and meter sockets (metal housing) on service poles

GOING THE EXTRA MILE

Electric co-ops maintain more miles of power lines per consumer than other electric utilities. Even though we power fewer consumers on our lines compared to other utilities, we'll always go the extra mile for you, the consumer-members we proudly serve.



Are you wasting your money on

DIRT?

Dirty air filters cause a heating and cooling system to work harder and break down faster. That's because unfiltered dust and grime works into critical parts, creating friction that causes unnecessary wear and, eventually, failure.



How does a dirty air filter cost you?

- Reduces air flow in the home, leading to up to 15 percent higher operating costs
- Leads to costly duct cleaning or replacement
- Lowers system efficiency

To avoid these expenses, change filters monthly when your heating and cooling system's in regular use. Discuss cleaning the unit and ductwork with your heating and cooling service professional.

Learn more ways to save at www.energysavers.gov.

Source: High Performance HVAC, U.S. Department of Energy



- Dependents of cooperative members are eligible to apply for a \$1,000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship for tuition at a two-year or four-year college. Contact your electric cooperative for information.
- Corn Belt Power Cooperative partners with Northwest Iowa Community College (NWICC) in Sheldon, Iowa, to offer four \$500 scholarships. Recipients must be students at NWICC studying Industrial and Commercial Wiring, Powerline, or Powerline Technology. Contact Sheila Van Engen, 800-352-4907 ext. 246, or svanengen@nwicc.edu. Application deadline is March 1, 2022.
- Corn Belt Power also partners with Iowa Lakes Community College in Estherville, Iowa, to offer one \$500 scholarship for students enrolled in the Wind Energy and Turbine Technology program. For more information, contact Institutional Advancement, 712-362-0450 ext. 0491, or institutionaladvancement@iowalakes.edu. Application deadline is March 1, 2022.

Visit our website for additional information on scholarship opportunities.

Need a new electric water heater for the new year?

Contact us for information on the Marathon--offering durability, lightweight design, and a limited lifetime tank warranty for original purchaser.

Generous rebate available!



Are portable space heaters efficient for my home? By Abby Berry

Small space heaters are meant to do just that: heat a small space. But many people use portable space heaters to heat their entire home, which can take a toll on energy bills.

If you're using a space heater to compensate for problems in your home, like inadequate insulation, drafty windows and exterior doors, or an inefficient heating system, space heaters are not a practical solution. Your best bet is to improve the overall efficiency of your home with insulation, caulking, and weather stripping.

Maybe your home is energy efficient but you're cold-natured and want a specific room to be cozier. In this case, a space heater may work for your needs. A good comparison is ceiling fans; we use ceiling fans in the summer to cool people, not rooms. A space heater can be used in a similar way during winter months. Only use a

space heater in small spaces that you're occupying and make sure the heater is properly sized for the space.

A word about safety: the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates more than 25,000 residential fires are associated with the use of space heaters every year, resulting in more than 300 deaths. If you use a space heater, purchase a newer model that includes the most current safety features and carries the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) label. Choose a thermostatically controlled heater to avoid energy waste and overheating, and place the heater on a level surface

away from foot traffic when in use. Always keep children and pets away from space heaters.

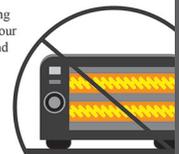
If you're looking for alternative ways to save energy and increase comfort in your home, be sure to contact us.



TIPS TO DITCH THE SPACE HEATER

Space heaters are energy hogs, and older models can be extremely dangerous. This winter, ditch the space heater and try these alternative solutions to stay cozy.

- Use an electric blanket to keep warm during the night.
- Caulk and weatherstrip around all windows and doors to prevent heat loss.
- Consider adding insulation to your attic and around duct work.



Sign up for auto pay and win

Sign up for auto payment between now and Mar. 31, 2022, and your name will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 bill credit! All you need to do is complete and sign the form below and attach a blank voided check. Return the completed form to: **Prairie Energy, 2099 Hwy 3 West, PO Box 353, Clarion IA 50525**

PRAIRIE ENERGY COOPERATIVE AUTOMATIC BILL PAYMENT AUTHORIZATION

To sign up for Automatic Bill Payments:

- Complete the following information
- Sign the authorization form
- Attach a blank check with the word VOID written across the face of the Check and return it with the form.

Mail to:

Prairie Energy
PO Box 353
Clarion, Iowa 50525
515-532-2805
1-800-728-0013

You will receive your statement marked ****BANK DRAFT – DO NOT PAY****. 10 working days before the due date of each month (or next banking day), we notify your bank or financial institution of the amount to be transferred from your account to pay your electric bill. Your bank deducts that amount from your account no sooner than the due date (or next banking day).

I (we) hereby authorize Prairie Energy Cooperative, to initiate debit entries to my (our) CHECKING _____ SAVINGS _____ account (select one) in the financial institution (BANK) named below. I (we) further authorize the BANK to debit such entries to my (our) account.

ACCOUNT NUMBER _____

DEPOSITORY (BANK)

NAME _____ BRANCH _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

BANK TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

It is understood that this agreement may be terminated by me (either of us) at any time up to 11 business days before the due date of the current month billing by oral or written notice to Prairie Energy Cooperative. Any such notification to Prairie Energy Cooperative shall be effective only with respect to entries initiated after receipt of such notification.

It is also understood that I (we) agree to be bound by the Operating Rules and guidelines of the National Automated Clearing House Association and shall have the rights set forth here with respect to all entries initiated by Prairie Energy Cooperative pursuant to this agreement.

Depositors Signature

Date

Depositors Signature (if 2 are required)

Date

Prairie Energy Cooperative use only

Transit / ABA No. _____

Account No. _____

Account No. _____

Scholarship applications now accepted

Dependents of co-op members are eligible to apply for a \$1,000 scholarship. Contact Sarah Olson-McLaughlin (solson@prairieenergy.coop) at Prairie Energy for an application or go online at www.prairieenergy.coop/content/2021-scholarship-opportunity. Applications are due by Feb. 18, 2022.



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Tim Marienau, CEO



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smart choices

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This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.