

WITH MEMBERS OF PRAIRIE ENERGY COOPERATIVE

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Prairie Energy linemen assist with derecho power restoration

The derecho that tore through Iowa in August left thousands of people without power and caused hundreds of millions of dollars in damage. More than 2,000 cooperative power poles were broken statewide. At the height of the outage event, more than 60,000 cooperative member accounts were without power. Within 72 hours, two-thirds of those accounts were restored.

More than 20 co-ops from across the region assisted with restoration efforts in a demonstration of the sixth cooperative principle: cooperation among cooperatives, with Prairie Energy being no exception.

Nine of our linemen assisted in restoration calls for help from other cooperatives, as well as Alliant Energy: Austin Codner, Nick Dennler, Jared Hannasch, Wes Held, Matt McDermott, Scott Muhlenbruch, Dylan Ptacek, Kevin Rotschafer, and Andrew Stupka.

**Thank you for your hard work and dedication to helping others!**



*Andrew Stupka, fourth from right, and Jared Hannasch, third from right, assisted with restoration at T.I.P. REC.*



*(L to R) Matt McDermott, Scott Muhlenbruch, and Kevin Rotschafer (not pictured: Austin Codner) aided Grundy County REC with power restoration.*



*(L to R) Dylan Ptacek, Nick Dennler, and Wes Held answered a call for help from Alliant Energy to restore power around the Marshalltown area.*

## Prairie Energy welcomes two new employees to line crew



*Tyler Hennigar, apprentice lineman, began his career with Prairie Energy on July 20. Originally from Greenfield, Iowa, Tyler dedicated five years to the United States Marine Corps as an Infantry Platoon Sergeant. This past May he graduated from Northwest Iowa Community College*

*(NCC) with his powerline tech degree. He has been familiar with the cooperative world since his father, Dave Hennigar, has been a lineman for the last 30 years and is a foreman at Farmers Electric Cooperative. In his spare time, Tyler enjoys boating, snowmobiling, hunting, and watching movies.*



*Chase Messerly, apprentice lineman, started on July 27. Chase was born and raised in Fort Dodge, Iowa, and graduated from NCC's powerline program. When asked why he wanted to be employed at Prairie Energy, he replied "To give back to members, people, and communities. All my life, people gave me their time*

*and there is nothing better than giving back your time by doing the job you love. I look forward to being a part of a great electric cooperative, building friendships, learning, and working hard." Chase enjoys camping, country music concerts, and spending time with family and friends. He hopes to join as a volunteer on a fire department.*

# Power On: October is National Co-op Month

October is National Co-op Month, and electric cooperatives across the country are highlighting the many ways we “Power On.”

As an electric cooperative, our top priority is always to provide safe, reliable energy to you, our members. Because we are a co-op, our mission is to enrich the lives of our members and serve the long-term interests of our local communities—and this mission has never been more critical than during the pandemic.

Over the past several months, we’ve all been challenged to operate differently, and your electric cooperative has stepped up to help our members and strengthen the safety net for our more vulnerable neighbors.

As an essential service, and to

ensure reliability of your power supply, we modified our operations to safeguard business continuity. We limited and modified meetings and gatherings to allow for safe separation. We adjusted

our in-person service calls to ensure the health and safety of our employees and our valued members.

For our members impacted by COVID-19 who needed help with their electric bills, we waived late fees and worked with those members needing special payment arrangements.

While we miss visiting with you

Then. Now. Always.  
We’re proud to power your life.  
**October is National Co-op Month.**



## #PowerOn

in person, we explain all of these efforts to show how much we care about this community—because we live here, too.

Your electric cooperative was built by the community to serve the community, and that’s what we’ll continue to do—Power On.

## Increasing your brain power: Fun energy facts

Although Americans account for 4.25 percent of the world’s population, we use at least 17 percent of the world’s energy. Here are some other energy facts:

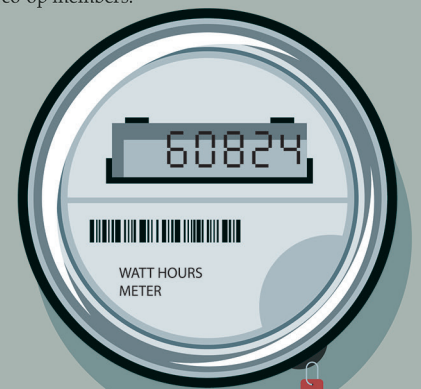
- Heating and cooling accounts for about half of the average utility bill.
- Find (and fix) sources of air leaks in your home and replace inefficient windows, especially single-paned windows.
- Lighting accounts for approximately 10 percent of home utility bills. Like your parents always said, don’t light an empty room. Also, put high-efficiency (LED) light bulbs to work for you.
- The typical U.S. family spends \$2,200 or more on home utility bills each year.
- If you have an electric or gas furnace, using a smart or programmable thermostat to adjust your thermostat 10 degrees for 8 hours a day could lower your heating and cooling costs by 10 percent per year. (Don’t heat and cool an empty house.)
- Despite previously being touted as energy saving, closing vents in unused rooms can put a strain on your HVAC system, which typically uses more energy, not less.

For more information on ways to save energy in your home, contact us today.



## DO NOT TAMPER WITH YOUR ELECTRIC METER

Meter tampering can result in electric shock, is illegal and increases electricity rates for other co-op members.



- ⊘ Never break a meter seal.
- ⊘ Never open a meter base.
- ⊘ Never remove a meter or alter an entrance cable in any manner.

If you know or suspect that someone has tampered with their meter, please contact us immediately.





# Make your decorations the only scary thing this Halloween

Halloween has become a time to light up electric-powered decorations and create a yard that is scare-worthy to any trick-or-treater that may stop by. But beware of the hidden electrical dangers that could spoil your holiday.

Follow these tips to make your Halloween safe and fun:

- Carefully check your decorations for cracking, fraying, or bare wires.
- Replace any damaged decorations.
- Make sure all electrical outdoor products are Underwriters Laboratory (UL) approved and marked for outdoor use.
- Follow the care and instructions that accompany your decorations.
- Don't overload extension cords or allow them to run through water.
- Plug outdoor electric lights and decorations into outlets protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). If your outlets don't have them, either contact a qualified electrician to install them or use portable GFCIs.
- Keep electrical cords out of walkways to avoid tripping hazards.
- Turn off all electrical decorations and lights before leaving home or going to sleep. Consider using a timer.
- When decorating outside, always look up and check that you and any equipment, such as ladders, are at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines.

Avoid any tricks this Halloween by safely enjoying the holiday.



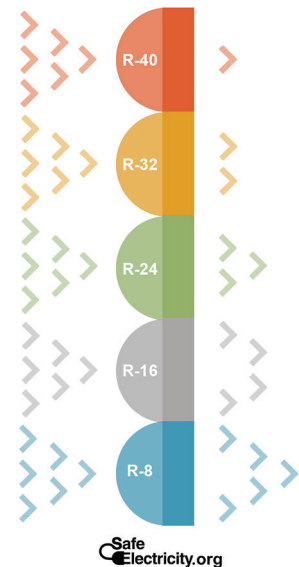
## Insulation rebates available

As winter approaches, consider insulating and weatherizing your home to keep in the heat and help lower your power bills.

We have generous rebates available to add to your savings.

Call us today for information!

**the higher the R-value, the more efficient the insulation**



## Helping members in need this winter

Your Touchstone Energy Cooperative has always extended a helping hand to those needing it. In response to actions by the Iowa General Assembly, your REC has established RECare, a program of members helping members.

RECare will provide funds to be distributed by local community action agencies to help pay winter heating bills and to assist in weatherization of homes of low-income consumers.

You may make a monthly pledge that will be automatically added onto your electric bill—even just a dollar a month—or a one-time contribution to help others.



### RECare Consumer Authorization Form

- I will contribute \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month. I understand this amount will be automatically added to my monthly electric bill.
- I will make a one-time contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to RECare. My check is enclosed.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Account Number \_\_\_\_\_



Return to your local Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

# Prairie Energy recognized with Impact Award

Annually, the Iowa Area Development Group (IADG) presents Impact Awards to utility partners who have been involved in significant economic development initiatives.

Prairie Energy was recently presented with an IADG Impact Award for business and community development during the August board meeting. Recent examples of project support include securing funding through the USDA to support the \$7.4 million renovation project allowing Hancock County Health Systems to relocate and expand their surgical services, expand the emergency department, and update their main entry.

The co-op was also involved in talks with ReNewTrient 1 for three years, leading up to the decision to locate the new \$25 million organic

fertilizer plant in Wright County.

"We commend Prairie Energy Cooperative for being an active supporter of business and community development in the territory they serve," said IADG President Rand Fisher. "They provide essential financial and technical assistance that many times is a critical component in successfully securing projects that create jobs and support community vitality."

IADG was established in 1985 to promote and strengthen rural Iowa development opportunities. The IADG is the marketing and business development office for Iowa's member-



(L to R) Tim Marienau, Prairie Energy CEO; Todd Foss, Prairie Energy manager of business/community development; Rand Fisher, IADG president

owned rural electric cooperatives, select municipal electric utilities, and independent telecommunication companies. IADG has assisted with over 2,100 successful business expansions and start-up projects. This growth represents capital investment of more than \$12 billion and 53,000 jobs for Iowa.

## Member wins \$25 bill credit

Congratulations go out to Carole Ristau of Eagle Grove, Iowa. Carole's recipe was featured in the September issue of *Living with Energy in Iowa*, featuring "Favorite Apple Recipes for Fall." See Carole's recipe below in case you missed it, and submit your recipes to *Living with Energy in Iowa* by following the directions found in the magazine.



### Fresh Apple Bundt Cake

- |                             |                     |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 4 cups apples, finely diced | 2 teaspoons soda    |
| 2 cups sugar                | 1 cup vegetable oil |
| 1 cup nuts, chopped         | 1 teaspoon vanilla  |
| 3 cups flour                | 2 eggs, well beaten |
| ½ teaspoon salt             |                     |

Mix apples and sugar, then let stand 1 hour to make its own juice. After 1 hour, add nuts and dry ingredients to apples. Add oil, vanilla, and eggs. Stir by hand, do not use a mixer. Pour batter into floured Bundt pan. It will be thick like fruit-cake batter. Bake at 325 degrees F for 1 hour and 15 minutes. Serves 15.

## Share your photo and win!

Enter Prairie Energy's photo contest now through November for a chance to win one of three \$25 electric bill credits and your photo featured in an issue of *InTouch* magazine! Read your September issue of *InTouch* for the rules.

The deadline to submit photos is Friday, November 27, 2020. Email your high-resolution photos to [solson@prairieenergy.coop](mailto:solson@prairieenergy.coop) with subject line "Photo contest."

By submitting photos to this contest, you give PECO the right to use those photos in the *InTouch* magazine and its affiliates, on the Prairie Energy Cooperative website, and on social media.

**iNtouch**® is the official publication of Prairie Energy Cooperative  
2099 Highway 3W • Clarion, Iowa 50525-0353  
Phones answered 24/7: (515) 532-2805 • Pay-by-Phone: 844-241-0265  
Offices hours: Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Tim Marienau, CEO



Follow us on Facebook at  
<https://www.facebook.com/PrairieEnergyCooperative>

**smart choices**

See the latest issue of our e-newsletter at [www.prairieenergy.coop](http://www.prairieenergy.coop)



Pay your bill online  
with SmartHub

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.