

From the CEO

By the time you receive our June newsletter, most of you will have known that we had to cancel our 83rd Annual Meeting of the membership due to the COVID-19 pandemic and how that has impacted our world over the past several months. Although Prairie Energy is no stranger to extreme situations, we are in unprecedented times.

On March 17, we had to close our doors to the membership and to the general public for the health and safety of everyone. As of May 15, the doors were still closed. Keeping everyone healthy is so important in these crazy times we are living in. Here at Prairie Energy, we strive every day to keep healthy and safe so that we can keep the lights on for you at affordable rates and take your calls as if nothing has happened.

Prairie Energy likewise decided in March and continuing thru May, to stop any postings and disconnections of electric service. We depend on you, the member-consumer to pay your bill in a timely manner so we can operate to ensure safe, reliable service when you need it the most. We are willing to work with our member-consumers



who may have trouble paying their bills. If you are experiencing financial hardship, please contact us to discuss payment options. In addition, Prairie Energy staff can also suggest ways to reduce your energy use to lower your bills.

We hope that by the time you read this article, our doors will have been, to some extent, open for business. Maybe some normalcy will have come to you and to our communities. No matter how long it will take, we are always serving you as best as we can. Our top priority is serving our member-consumers, especially in these challenging times.

Tim Marienau, CEO



Patronage returned to members

When you began receiving power from Prairie Energy Cooperative, you became a member of the co-op. This means that you share in the co-op's excess revenue. While other businesses return their profits to investors/stockholders, we return that excess revenue, called patronage, to you.

Prairie Energy's board of directors approved a \$924,360 capital credit retirement for its members due to our wholesale power supplier, Corn Belt Power Cooperative, retiring a portion of the capital credits that Prairie Energy was allocated in 2019.

This retirement was returned in the form of a bill credit for those who were members of the co-op and purchased electricity in 2019 and is the largest retirement to date. Your May bill will show this as "Patronage Dividend Refund." Those who were members that have moved off our lines will receive this retirement in the form of a check.

Call the office with any questions you may have about your patronage.



Join us for an
Open House
at our new Garner service center
910 1st State Street
June 2nd, 2020 • 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.
Tour the building & enjoy refreshments
Free car washes for members • Enter a drawing
for a chance to win a bill credit!

POSTPONED



Open house postponed; Customer Appreciation Day planned

Due to ongoing safety concerns, the Garner service center open house has been postponed

until further notice. However, you can still mark your calendars! Prairie Energy is planning a Customer Appreciation Day at the Clarion warehouse on Friday, August 7. Watch our Facebook page, website, and future newsletters for updates.

Stuck at home? Conserve electricity

With the kids studying at home and parents teleworking over the past couple of months, you may have seen an increase in your energy bills.

Like any period of higher-than-usual indoor activity it's normal for electricity use to spike.

And if students have stay-at-home summer school, your family might continue to increase its use of computers, lights, TVs, game consoles, and other electrical devices that can run up electricity use.

The antidote: Follow smart, common-sense conservation practices to keep energy use in check:

As the weather warms up, delay turning on the air conditioning as long as your home is comfortable with open windows and running ceiling fans.

When you do switch on the a/c, keep it at the highest comfortable temperature. For every degree higher you set the thermostat, you can cut your energy use by up to 4 percent.

Insist that everyone turn off the overhead lights when leaving a

room, power down the TV when nobody's watching, disconnect the computer and printer at the end of the day, and switch off exhaust fans once the steam clears from the bathroom after a shower.

Unplug cell phone chargers when not in use. Whenever you leave an unused device plugged into the wall, it continues to draw electricity.

Hold off on running the clothes dryer and dishwasher until after dark. When many people are home during the day, electricity is often used at the same time. It places less of a burden on the overall electrical system when we spread out our energy use.

Clean the a/c filter every month. With more-than-usual activity in the house, filters can clog sooner. A clean filter lets air flow easily, placing less of a burden on the air conditioning system as it keeps everyone comfortable indoors.

Contact us for more energy-saving ideas.

Summer Energy-Saving Tips

Costs associated with cooling your home can make up a large portion of your summer electric bills. Stay cool and save money with these energy efficiency tips!



NO-COST TIPS

Close blinds and drapes during the day to keep heat out.



Set your thermostat to 78 degrees when you are home. Set it to a higher temperature when you're away.



Turn off lights and ceiling fans when you leave a room.



LOW-COST TIPS

Plant trees and shrubs to shade the exterior of your home.



Replace disposable air filters (or clean permanent filters) once a month to maximize efficiency.



Use solar lighting to brighten up your outdoor space. Solar lights are easy to install, low maintenance and provide free electricity.

IS OWNING A HOME YOUR DREAM?

Contact Homeward, Inc.

515-532-6477

homeward@mchsi.com

homewardiowa.com

Save with rebates!

Your electric cooperative offers members a variety of incentives for new electric heating and cooling systems, including air source and geothermal heat pumps. Rebates are also available for insulating and weatherizing your home.



Contact us for details and rebate forms

Let's talk about phone scams

While the rapidly changing energy market has created more options for consumers, it has also resulted in more utility scams.



Source: 123rf.com

These scams are common because of the vast number of utilities that exist, and consumers are understandably anxious with the threat of disruption to their utility service.

Avoid phone scams

A common phone scam typically begins with a phone number that appears to be from a valid utility company. The scammer will claim you have a past due account and threaten to disconnect service or take legal action. This person will typically demand that you use a prepaid debit card or money order, often within a very short, urgent time frame to pay the "past due" amount.

You can combat this scam by being aware of the status of your account. Never give your banking or personal information over the phone to someone you did not call. If you have a question or concern about your energy bill, call us directly.

Use trusted sources

In this ever-changing environment, it's important to remember you have a trusted energy advisor – your local electric cooperative. We are a community-focused organization that works to efficiently deliver reliable and safe energy to our members.

Remember, we're just one call or click away, so please reach out with any questions about your electric service or bills – we're here to help.

Don't Let Tragedy Strike

30 Around 30 people are killed each year from lightning strikes.



$\frac{2}{3}$ of lightning fatalities are associated with outdoor recreational activities.



SEEK SHELTER

in a four-sided building or an enclosed hardtop vehicle at the first sight of lightning.

Never swim when lightning is in the area.



WAIT 30 minutes

...after the last rumble of thunder before heading back outside.

TOP 3 sports-related lightning fatalities

1) Soccer 2) Golf 3) Running

Safe Electricity.org

Source National Weather Service, NOAA

Know the signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke

Heat is a major weather-related killer in the United States, killing hundreds of people each year.

- If you or someone else experiences heavy sweating and weakness, immediately seek a cool environment, drink water, and apply a cold compress.
- If these symptoms progress to high temperature, vomiting, and unconsciousness, seek emergency medical attention.

Try to prevent heat-related illnesses by seeking out cool environments, drinking lots of water, and wearing light clothes. Source: EnergyEdCouncil.org





Heather Evje (l) delivers a check to Sara Middleton on behalf of the Eagle Grove Food Pantry.



Erin Baker (r) delivers a check to Alisa Schlief of Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc.



Bill Friedow accepts a donation on behalf of the Britt area food pantry.



Campbell is newest employee

John Campbell joined the Prairie Energy team on April 27, taking on the position of warehouse and safety coordinator.

Originally from Belmond, Iowa, he and his wife Trudy still live in the area. Campbell previously worked for Bayer (formerly Monsanto) in Clarion. His experience in warehouse and safety programs at Bayer will be of great value to the co-op.

“I’m excited to bring my safety background to the team to help promote a fun and safe working environment. I love working with customers and the community and am eager to meet our customer base and learn more about how the co-op supports them,” John commented.

When he’s not working, John enjoys spending time in the great outdoors and racing stock cars.

Welcome to the team, John!

Commitment to community

Last month, Prairie Energy employees worked together to reach out to various food pantries and charities located across our 11-county territory. Several checks were donated and distributed to help during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Prairie Energy will be closed on Friday, July 3rd in observance of Independence Day.
To report an outage call 1-800-728-1300
Have a safe & fun holiday!



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


 Pay your bill online
 with SmartHub