



## From the CEO

To our Prairie Energy Member-Consumers:

The safety and well-being of our membership and employees is of the utmost importance at Prairie Energy Cooperative. We are committed to bringing safe and reliable electricity to our members who rely on it for their daily lives. As part of that commitment, I want to take a moment to share our current stance and practices as they relate to the coronavirus (COVID-19).

We are constantly evaluating the progression of the COVID-19 issue, reviewing our policies, procedures, emergency strategies, and adjusting our course based on what is transpiring every day. Even though our doors are locked to the public, we continue to operate business as best as we can. Some changes being implemented are having our crews drive in separate vehicles to job sites as well as staggering their hours weekly; linemen assigned to after-hour calls are taking a vehicle home at night; some employees are working from home; our employees, offices, equipment, vehicles, etc., have additional cleaning and sanitization measures in

place; and we are practicing the new phenomenon of social distancing.

We do encourage members to try to keep their accounts in good status; however, if you find yourself facing difficulties, we encourage you to contact the office to see what payment options are available to you. We ask that you continue to use the payment drop box and other payment options available to our members. In addition, Prairie Energy will temporarily suspend posting and disconnection of service for non-payment until May 31, 2020.

If you need to contact us, please do so as our office hours have not changed. Keep checking our website and Facebook page for updated information.

Respectfully,

Tim Marienau, CEO



## Annual meeting update

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the board of directors at Prairie Energy are closely monitoring the situation, while keeping the safety of the member-owners and employees first and foremost at hand. Please keep an eye on the Prairie Energy website, Facebook page, and any mailings you may receive, as the annual meeting of the members may need to be cancelled in the best interest of everyone's health.

The annual report for all members as well as ballots for District 2 and District 5 will be arriving in the mail this month as usual; however, if the meeting is cancelled it will be noted in the annual report.

# Four common culprits of electrical fires

May is National Electrical Safety Month, the perfect time to evaluate the safety of your home's electrical system. Outdated wiring and overloaded circuits are the most common causes of electrical fires. Check the following areas of your home to ensure your home's electrical safety is up to par.

- 1. Electrical outlets:** Faulty electrical outlets are a leading cause of home fires. As outlets age, so do the wires behind them that you can't see. Any loose, damaged, or warm-to-the-touch outlets should be repaired or replaced.
- 2. Electrical wiring:** Outdated wiring is another common cause of electrical fires. Frequently tripped breakers, flickering lights and burning smells are clear warning signs. If your home is more than 20 years old, it may not be able to handle today's increased power load. If you suspect your home's wiring is outdated, contact a qualified electrician.
- 3. Overloaded cords and outlets:** Extension cords are not permanent solutions. If your big-screen TV, home theater system, and other electronics are plugged into one extension cord or you have an outlet that looks like the one above, it's time to call an electrician and install additional outlets.
- 4. Old appliances:** Older appliances are more likely to have loose or damaged wiring, which means they're more likely to catch fire. Check older appliances for damage and determine if it's time to upgrade or replace. Also check to ensure you're using appliance-grade outlets. A qualified electrician can help with installation.



## Reflect and honor: May is Military Appreciation Month

On Memorial Day this year, be sure to reflect on the sacrifices of our country's veterans and their families. Your electric cooperative is especially thankful for those who gave the ultimate sacrifice so that we can enjoy the freedoms their service affords us in this great country of ours.

May is Military Appreciation Month, and in the words of John F. Kennedy, "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."

Your electric cooperative is grateful to have veterans serving our members, and we are proud to serve veterans and their families within our local communities.

We are pleased to be a part of the electric cooperative network that honors and supports veterans of all ages, ranks and branches of the military. Please join us in taking a moment to show your appreciation to a veteran.

**Our offices are closed on  
Memorial Day,  
Monday, May 25.**

**As always, our phones  
are answered 24/7 for  
outages and  
emergencies.**

## COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Effective May 22, 1991, the Iowa Utilities Board passed a ruling requiring all non-rate regulated utilities to post the following notice to its memberships: If a member-consumer has a question or concern regarding his/her electric service, please write or call your local electric cooperative at the following address or phone number:

### **Butler County REC**

521 N. Main Street, PO Box 98  
Allison, IA 50602-0098  
(319) 267-2726  
[www.butlerrec.coop](http://www.butlerrec.coop)

### **Franklin REC**

1560 Highway 65, PO Box 437  
Hampton, IA 50441-0437  
(641) 456-2557  
[www.franklinrec.coop](http://www.franklinrec.coop)

### **Prairie Energy Cooperative**

2099 Highway 3 West, PO Box 353  
Clarion, IA 50525-0353  
(515) 532-2805  
[www.prairieenergy.coop](http://www.prairieenergy.coop)

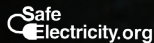
If your complaint is related to your cooperative's service rather than its rates, and your cooperative does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from the Iowa Utilities Board by calling 515-725-7321 or toll-free 1-877-565-4450; by writing to 1375 E. Court Avenue, Room 69, Des Moines, IA 50319-0069; or by email to [customer@iub.iowa.gov](mailto:customer@iub.iowa.gov).

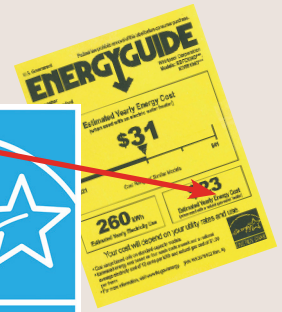


## WHAT SHIMMERS And Shines

Use **SUMMER OUTDOOR LIGHTING** Safely

- Only use lighting approved for outdoor use.
- Make sure lighting has a reputable seal of approval, such as UL.
- Use outdoor-rated bulbs.
- Use recommended bulb wattage.
- Inspect all cords and lights for damage or wear before using them.
- Only use outdoor-rated extension cords and do not overload them.
- Do not use nails or metal tacks to hang light strands.
- Make sure your outlets are GFCI-protected.

For more information:  Safe Electricity.org



## Appliance rebates

Contact us for appliance rebates! To qualify for a rebate, the appliance must be Energy Star rated. Look for this logo on the Energy Guide before you purchase.

## Selecting an AC and using it more efficiently

In our climate, using an air conditioner (AC) is necessary to staying comfortable in the summer months. High temperatures can be stressful to people and the electrical system. With a few quick tips from the Energy Education Council and knowledge of home cooling systems, you can help ease some of that stress.

If you are updating your air conditioning system, make sure to pick the one that is right for you. Here are some tips to keep in mind to help you select an air conditioning system that best fits your needs and how to use your air conditioner more efficiently:

- Central air conditioners can cool an entire home more efficiently than window air conditioners. However, if you just need to cool a single, small space, a window air conditioner can do the job.
- Energy Efficiency Ratio (EER) compares the cooling capacity of an air conditioner with electrical requirements. The higher the EER, the more efficient the air conditioner.
- Look for the Energy Star label for a high-efficiency air conditioner.
- Make sure your home has the insulation it needs. EnergySavers.gov has information about the best insulation to use in different geographic areas.
- Prepare your air conditioner for the hard work it will do over the summer months. Turn off power to the air conditioner before you work on it. Clean or replace filters. Outside, clear leaves and other debris away from the condensing unit. Hose off any accumulated dirt.
- A programmable thermostat allows you to change your home's temperature based on your daily patterns. The thermostat can allow temperatures to go higher while you are away, then cool off when you are back in the home.

And don't forget your Touchstone Energy cooperative has central air rebates. Contact us to learn more about central air units and our incentives!



## Kammrad retires

Don Kammrad began his employment with Hancock County REC in September of 1993 and has worn many hats since the beginning of his career in the co-op world, including building maintenance, selling and delivering appliances, and working with the line crew. Kammrad transitioned to the member service department in 2003, where he eventually became manager.

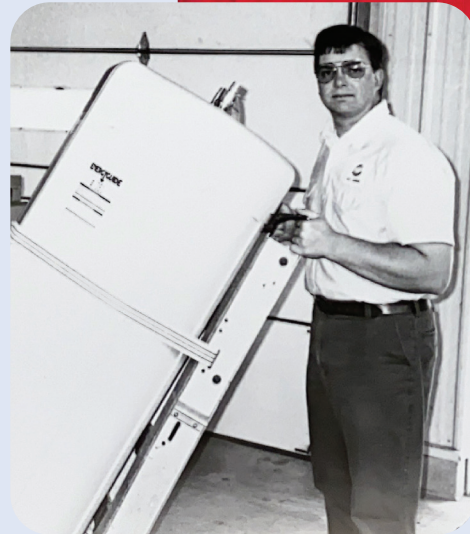
When asked what his favorite thing was over his past 27 years here, Kammrad replied, "The main thing is working with the members...if there were concerns, getting them answered and helping them out."

Don and his wife Kathy have three children, CJ (Erin), Dan (Sydney), and Brandon (Abra), as well as four grandchildren.

Retirement plans include spending more time with the family, especially the grandkids; working in the yard; working on cars; camping; and traveling.

Prairie Energy Cooperative thanks Don for his years of dedication and service and wishes him all the best in his retirement!

*After 27 years in the co-op world, Don Kammrad is saying good-bye.*



## New member service advisor

Chad Chapman recently accepted a position as the new member services advisor. Chapman began his employment with Prairie Energy in 2002, most recently working as the co-op's warehouse and safety coordinator.

When asked what he looks forward to most in this new role, Chapman answered "I'm a customer support person by nature, but I also understand the cost of business operation. Our members are the most essential part of our cooperative and I want to be involved in that aspect. I am looking forward to helping Prairie Energy's members get the most value out of their electric utility."

Congratulations Chad!



## Amonson earns BLC

Josh Amonson, director representative for District 6, has earned his Board Leadership Certificate

(BLC). The BLC is the second of three levels in advancing the knowledge and experience directors need to govern their board effectively. This credential is attained by earning the first-level Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate (CCD), and then completing a total of 10 additional class credits.

Congratulations Josh!



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Tim Marienau, CEO



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**smart choices**

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