

Seeking candidates for three positions on the board of directors

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.

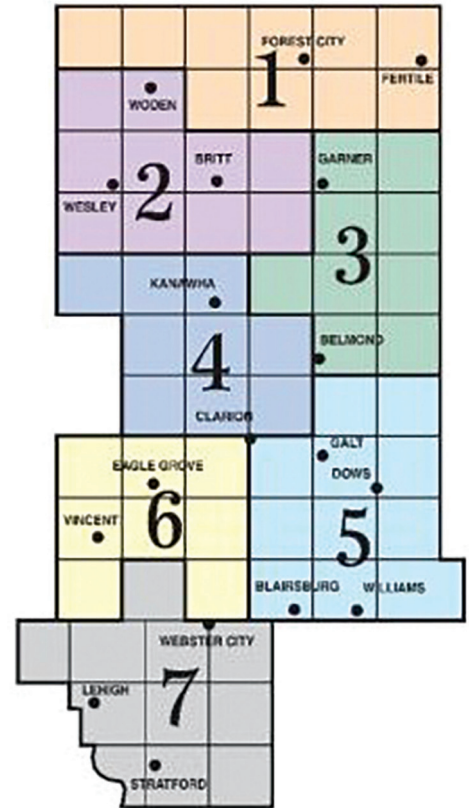
Three positions on Prairie Energy Cooperative's seven-member board of directors will be open for election at the June 2, 2021, annual meeting. The terms of Ted Hall, District 1; Scott Hasty, District 4; and Josh Amonson, District 6 will expire.

District 1: German, Grant 150, Linden, Forest, Mt. Valley, Fertile, Crustal, Madison, Ellington and Grant 174 townships

District 4: La Verne, Magor, Amsterdam Boon 250, Norway, Belmont, Liberty 270, Lake and Grant 272 townships

District 6: Norway 289, Eagle Grove, Dayton, Newark, Troy Woolstock, Colfax and Cass townships

If you are a member in either District 1, District 4, or District 6 and are interested in serving on the board of directors, call the cooperative office at 515-532-2805 or 800-728-0013 or e-mail solson@prairieenergy.coop by March 1, 2021.



Save the Date: Annual Meeting to be held Wednesday, June 2

Asche retires

Melia Asche started with Prairie Energy Cooperative on Nov. 4, 2002, as the record-billing clerk in the billing department, eventually transitioning to accounts payable.

When asked what she enjoyed and will miss the most from her time here at Prairie Energy, Asche responded: "I enjoyed my job working with our staff, members, and vendors. I will miss the staff that assisted me in making my job easier."

Retirement plans include enjoying more time with family and traveling in their new camper.

Prairie Energy thanks Melia for her years of service and wishes her all the best in her retirement. Congratulations Melia!



Photo contest thank you

Thank you to the members who submitted photos the last few months during Prairie Energy's photo contest! Winners of the three \$25 bill credits will be announced in next month's issue of *InTouch* magazine.

Be prepared for winter storms

When winter temperatures drop and storms hit, it can be challenging to stay safe and warm, especially during a power outage. Your Touchstone Energy cooperative cares about your safety, and we want you to be prepared:

- **Stay warm** – Plan to use a safe alternate heating source during a power outage. If you are using gasoline-, propane-, or natural gas-burning devices to stay warm, never use them indoors, and make sure they are properly ventilated.
- **Stay fed** – Have on hand several days' supply of food that does not need to be cooked. Five gallons of water per person should also be available.
- **Stay safe** – If you must travel during a winter storm, take a survival kit and do not travel alone. Stay away from downed lines, and report them immediately.



When winter winds howl, power lines can gallop

Severe weather with strong winds can cause damage to trees, buildings, and electrical equipment. While power lines can sway in high winds, add freezing rain or icy conditions and the result can be galloping power lines—the bouncing or bucking movement of overhead lines.

Galloping often results from ice buildup on one side of the power line due to strong winds. This creates an airfoil, which changes the flow of air around the line.

Unfortunately there isn't much utility workers can do until the wind subsides. Many power lines have objects, like twisted wire or round or angular pieces of metal attached to the line to help reduce galloping and prevent potential danger.

If you see galloping power lines:

- Stay away - ice can break off or power lines can break loose.
- Contact your utility as soon as possible to make them aware of the potential damage.

If you see a downed line:

- Stay far away and warn others to stay away, too. A downed line can remain energized even if it is not sparking or arcing.
- Always report the location of a downed power line and damaged electrical equipment.



Five ways to stay cozy this winter

By Abby Berry, NRECA

Baby, it's cold outside! When you're feeling chilly at home, there are several budget-friendly ways you can keep comfortable without turning up the thermostat. Here are five easy ways to stay cozy this winter:

1. Whether you're experiencing extremely cold winter temps or you simply "run cold," **an electric blanket or throw** can deliver quick warmth that a regular blanket or throw cannot.
2. One of the easiest ways to stay cozy at home is to **keep your feet warm**. Our feet play a critical role in regulating body temperature. Try a pair of comfortable wool socks or house slippers to stay toasty.
3. On winter days when the sun is shining, take advantage and harness natural warmth from sunlight. **Open all curtains**, drapes, and blinds to let in the sunshine.
4. Another way to make your home cozier is to **use a humidifier**. Cold air doesn't hold water vapor like warm air, so by adding humidity inside your home, you can feel a little warmer.
5. Beyond adding visual appeal to your home, **area rugs** can also provide extra insulation and a warm surface for your feet on cold winter days. Use large area rugs in rooms where you spend the most time.



Don't forget the hot chocolate to help keep you cozy!

Invest in home gym equipment

If you don't feel comfortable fulfilling your New Year's resolutions at a gym during the pandemic, consider adding a few pieces of exercise equipment to your home.

It may sound expensive, but if a treadmill, stepper, or rower are out of your price range, consider some low-tech workout aids. Start with a weight bench, and buy just the basics: dumbbells or hand weights in just a few different sizes; resistance bands, a mat, and a big exercise ball. You could also purchase a manual stationary bike.

If your budget permits and your electrical system can tolerate it, add one electrically powered piece of equipment, such as a treadmill. Some stationary bikes are electric, as well. But make that investment only if you're sure you'll use the equipment once your New Year's resolve wears off.

Add a mirror, some music, and a TV to keep you company during your workout, and you'll have everything you need to keep in shape while staying safely at home.



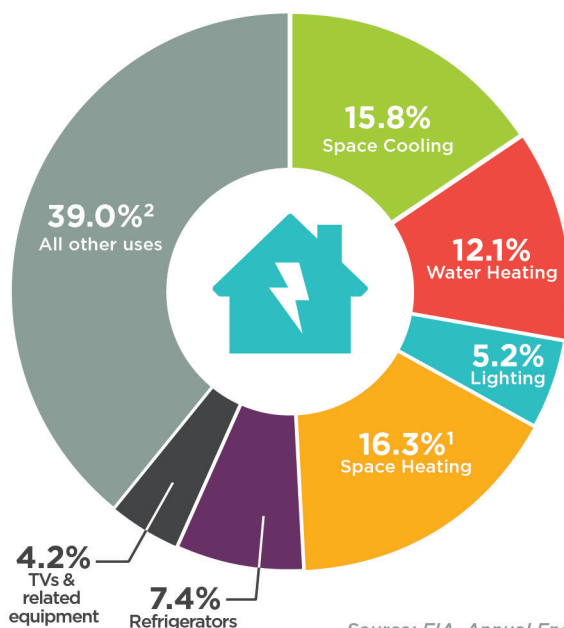
Scholarships available

- 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.
- Corn Belt Power Cooperative partners with **Northwest Iowa Community College** (NCC) in Sheldon, Iowa, to offer four \$500 scholarships.
- Corn Belt Power also partners with **Iowa Lakes Community College** to offer one \$500 scholarship for students enrolled in the Wind Energy and Turbine Technology program.

Visit our website for more information on scholarship opportunities.

How Americans Use Electricity

The latest data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration shows the combined use of clothes washers and dryers, computers, dishwashers, small appliances and other electrical equipment (noted as "all other uses" below) accounts for nearly 40% of electricity consumption in American homes.



Source: EIA, Annual Energy Outlook 2020

¹Includes consumption for heat and operating furnace fans and boiler pumps.
²Includes miscellaneous appliances, clothes washers and dryers, computers and related equipment, stoves, dishwashers, heating elements, and motors.

\$2 per strand LED holiday lighting rebate

See our website for a rebate form.

Summary of procedures for annual meeting

ARTICLE VII, Section 2 states.....

Candidates for election to the Board of Directors shall be nominated by a Nominating Committee, which Committee shall be elected by the Board of Directors. Said Nominating Committee members so elected shall nominate candidates for election to the Board of Directors at the Annual Meeting of Members following the meeting at which said Nominating Committee members are elected.

Any twenty (20) or more members may make other nominations in writing over their signatures not less than fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting at which directors are to be elected, and the Secretary shall post the same at the same place where the list of nominations by the Committee is posted; such nominations so made by such members to be subject to the same service requirements as nominations by the Nominating Committee heretofore prescribed.

Members voting at the annual meeting of members shall vote only for candidates from the district in which said member resides or receives service. The election of the directors shall be by ballot, and each voting member shall be entitled to cast one vote for each director to be elected from that member's district. Members may vote by mail-in ballot, to the extent that the same is consistent with the Bylaws of the Cooperative and if the Board of Directors has authorized such voting prior to the meeting at which the election is to occur. The election of directors shall be subject to ratification by a majority of all members present at the Annual Meeting of Members, and directors elected shall qualify and take office immediately following the Annual Meeting of Members.

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 prairieenergy.coop/content/2021-scholarship-opportunity. Applications are due by Feb. 19, 2021.



Youth tour cancelled

Due to the ongoing uncertainties associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives made the decision not to participate in the 2021 Youth Tour scheduled for June.

Iowa's electric cooperatives are planning to resume offering the all-expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C. in 2022.

Appliances: Repair or replace?



When an older appliance is on the fritz, it usually makes sense to replace it rather than to sink money into repair after repair. Consider a few things:

- *The appliance's age.* Use the 50 percent rule: If your appliance is more than halfway through its useful life, and if the repair will cost more than 50 percent of the price of a new one, head for the store.
- *Check the warranty.* Appliances usually come with a warranty of at least a year or two, covering labor and parts. If the broken device is still covered, call for service.
- *Your budget.* If the repair bill is through the roof and you can afford to buy a new appliance, you could save money in the long run.

New models of appliances are much more energy- and water-efficient than older versions; remember to always look for EnergyStar-rated appliances, and visit our website to apply for a rebate. Call member services at 515-532-2805 for help with all your rebate needs.

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