



Prairie Energy Cooperative cancels in-person June 2, 2021, annual meeting

Clarion, Iowa: The Board of Directors of Prairie Energy Cooperative (PECO) has changed how it will hold the Annual Meeting of its membership. In order to protect the members, communities, special guests, and staff to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, there will be no in-person meeting of the membership. The meeting had been scheduled for June 2, 2021.

PECO's bylaws require a meeting of the membership in June and an election of the Board of Directors. For purposes of the election, PECO will hold a limited meeting on June 2, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. Board elections will take place by mailed-in ballot only.

Ballots will be sent to the membership on May 18, 2021. Ballots must be returned by 2:00 pm on June 2nd to be counted.

Each year, two or three of PECO's seven board seats are up for election. In 2021, there are elections in District 1, 4 and 6. In District 1, Ted Hall is running unopposed; District 4 election has two choices, the incumbent, Scott Hasty will be challenged by Barb Moore; and in District 6, Josh Amonson is running unopposed. This is subject to change, as more challengers may come forward.

In lieu of the traditional in-person gathering of the membership, a business meeting of limited scope will be held. The order of business will be limited to the election of Directors.

Since March 17, 2020, PECO has

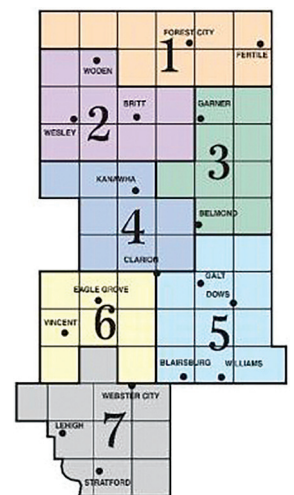
been implementing COVID-19 safety protocols to protect its workforce from the virus so that the cooperative is able to provide safe and reliable power at affordable rates. PECO's office is closed to the general public. Services and staff remain available by phone and e-mail.

Prairie Energy Cooperative is a private, non-profit, independent electric utility, owned by the members it serves. Located in Clarion, Iowa, the cooperative serves over 3,150 member-consumers in parts of 11 counties and maintains over 2,000 miles of electrical distribution line in north central Iowa. PECO is an equal opportunity provider and employer. For more information visit <https://www.prairieenergy.coop>, find us on Facebook, or call 800-728-0013.

Seeking candidates

At the June 2, 2021, annual meeting of the members, director terms in Districts 1, 4, and 6 will expire. To be considered eligible for election, members must receive electric service from Prairie Energy at a location within the district in which they are seeking election. If you are interested in serving on the board of directors, contact one of the following nominating committee members:

- | | | |
|--------------------|---|--|
| District 1: | Gary Ludwig
20306 340th St
Forest City IA 50436
(641) 590-1802 | Bernal Hanna
2125 300th St
Forest City IA 50436
(641) 590-1006 |
| District 4: | Austin Charlson
2531 190th St
Belmond, IA 50421
(515) 290-7437 | Rodney Legleiter
1767 130th St
Kanawha IA 50447
(515) 320-1678 |
| District 6: | Zachary Klaver
3213 Franklin Ave
Woolstock IA 50599
(515) 689-1026 | Kelby Ryerson
2876 Baxter Ave
Eagle Grove IA 50533
(515) 293-0856 |



Handle irrigation equipment with care

Many farmers rely on irrigation systems to water crops. Just like with moving all other farm equipment, moving irrigation pipes can be extremely dangerous around power lines—especially if the pipes are made of aluminum, a great conductor of electricity.

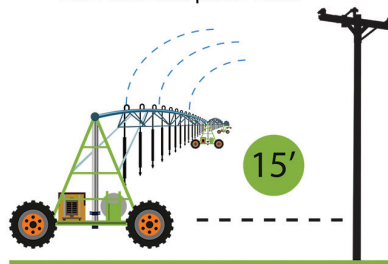
Remember these tips:

- Have a qualified electrician, who knows irrigation systems, install and maintain your irrigation's electricals, which must meet National Electrical Code.
- Inspect the pump and wiring before the start of each irrigation season and consult your electrician with any concerns.
- Shut off and lock the master control switch before servicing.
- Always consider your location and the length of the pipe you are holding. Make sure the pipe's reach will not come near or into contact with power lines.
- Do not store, handle, or assemble irrigation pipes under or near overhead power lines.
- If lightning strikes your irrigation equipment, it could mean that the system is no longer grounded.
- Talk to your family and workers about irrigation safety. Tell them to ALWAYS look up before moving any equipment and do not use an electrical system that is damaged or not properly grounded.

We care about your safety. Please contact us with any concerns about electrical issues, power lines, irrigation equipment, or any other electrical safety concerns.

Keep IRRIGATION EQUIPMENT

and **water streams** 15 feet away from overhead power lines.



Safe Electricity.org

research collected from National Agriculture Safety Database



Image by Rita E from Pixabay




Support local farmers

You and the farmers in your community each have something the other one needs during this pandemic. Families are cooking at home more often, so they need fresh produce and meat. And farmers—and anyone who is trying to stay in business while everyone is limiting trips to the store—need your support to keep their heads above water.

To stay safe while visiting a local farmer's market, keep a few common-sense precautions in mind:

1. Call and ask the organizers what measures they are taking to keep their customers and vendors safe. Ask about social distancing and masks.
2. Shop at an open-air market rather than at an enclosed one.
3. Avoid the rush. Schedule your visit during off-peak hours. If you arrive and find that the market is overly crowded, abandon the trip.
4. Shop alone so you don't contribute to overcrowding.
5. Don't touch anything that you don't intend to buy.
6. Do not taste any free samples.
7. Wear a mask and stay six feet away from people.
8. Look for pre-bagged items.
9. Sanitize your hands as soon as you're finished shopping.
10. Thoroughly wash your produce as soon as you get home.

What's Your Appliance Safety IQ?

 <p>Clothes Dryer</p>	 <p>Refrigerator</p>	 <p>Hot Water Heater</p>
<p>Children have been electrocuted when hiding behind dryers; some pets also like to nap there.</p> <p>Install a childproof lock on the laundry room door, as well as on your washer and dryer—especially front-loading models.</p> <p>Clean lint screen between loads, and thoroughly clean the vents and duct system at least twice a year.</p> <p>Make sure hoses, seals and connections do not leak and are secure.</p>	<p>Follow the manufacturer's instructions for maintenance.</p> <p>Clean the coils every six months to a year.</p> <p>Keep an eye out for dust or lint under or behind your fridge and remove it to let your refrigerator breathe.</p> <p>If you have young children in your home, make sure your refrigerator is not a tipping hazard. Consider using an appliance anchor that secures your tall appliance to the wall.</p>	<p>Make sure your hot water heater is well-maintained.</p> <p>Make sure it does not have excessive pressure buildup by testing the relief valve (or have it tested) at least once a year.</p> <p>Ensure vents are connected securely and that the correct parts are used to avoid carbon monoxide production.</p> <p>Have all components of the appliance inspected regularly (at least once a year) by a technician.</p>

Safe Electricity.org

What is beneficial electrification? By Anne Prince, NRECA

If you're like most Americans, you're interested in saving money on energy costs and in doing your part to help the environment.

Wouldn't it be great if you could do both? You can—through a concept called “beneficial electrification.” This utility industry term represents the innovations in energy technologies creating new ways to use electricity instead of on-site fossil fuels, such as propane, natural gas, and fuel oil, in a way that reduces overall emissions and energy costs.

Electricity is becoming cleaner

As your electric cooperative is able to tap into more renewable options in the future, your electric appliance has the potential to become greener and more energy efficient.

Large appliances have a typical lifespan of about 10 years. Therefore,

you are able to benefit from the flexibility of the grid in addition to the increased efficiency of the appliance. In other words, the high-efficiency electric oven you have today could be powered by renewable sources in the near future. This is not the case with gas appliances where you are essentially locked into the technology of that gas appliance for the 10-year lifespan.

For consumers looking for more environmentally friendly options, choosing electric appliances, tools, and cars over those powered by fossil fuels is an easy solution.

How we're doing our part

Your cooperative is striving to take advantage of the advances in technology and the opportunities of the market as they become available. This means we can leverage the flexibility of the grid to offer a wider range of renewable energy selections as we continue to bring safe



and reliable power to our community.

Reach out to us, your trusted energy partner, to discuss renewable energy options and to learn about more ways to reduce your energy use. When you participate in the energy-efficiency programs and incentives we offer, you're doing your part to save energy and better our environment.

Together, our usage reductions can lead to significant savings of money and emissions. And that means a brighter future for all of us.

Are you ready for a new electric water heater?

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

Generous rebate available!



Three electrifying kitchen appliances to save time and energy By Abby Berry, NRECA

In addition to efficiency, smaller kitchen appliances can provide faster cooking times and less hassle with cleanup than your oven or stove.

If you're looking for convenient cooking methods with the added bonus of energy efficiency, here are three electrifying options:

1. **Air fryers** use convection to circulate hot air and cook the food—this means little to no oil is required, resulting in healthier meals than those from traditional fryers. They are fairly small, so they won't take up much of your counter space, and with everything cooked in the fryer, cleanup will be a breeze. Air fryers are available in a variety of sizes, and prices range from \$40 to \$200+.
2. **Electric griddles** are convenient because you can cook everything at once—like a “one-pan” meal, and the possibilities are endless. They consume small amounts of energy and provide quick cooking times, so your energy bill will thank you. Prices and sizes vary, but you can typically find one for about \$30.
3. **Pizza makers** are compact, countertop machines using less energy than your traditional oven. Plus, most pizza makers are multifunctional and can be used to cook flatbreads, frittatas, quesadillas, and more. You can purchase a pizza maker for about \$30 to \$150+.



*Photo Credit:
Hamilton Beach*

To learn about additional ways to save energy at home, visit our website.

Members to receive electric rebate

Prairie Energy Cooperative (PECO) is issuing a one-time electric rebate to every member for the first time since it was established in 2000 after Hancock County REC and Wright County REC consolidated. After a review of PECO's financials and reviewing what the year-end margins were going to be, the board of directors made the unprecedented decision to allow this electric rebate which will come from the cooperatives' 2020 year-end margins.

"Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our expenses were reduced in many ways and because of that, we are able to provide this electric rebate to our members that may be struggling financially for a variety of reasons," states CEO Tim Marienau. "The directors wanted to provide another form of credit to the membership in this particular time of crisis."

Everyone who was a PECO member in 2020 will be eligible for this rebate. Members will soon be receiving a credit on their electric bill.

This one-time rebate differs from previous member credits, like retirement and patronage. Below is a summary of previous 2020 member credits:

- In May 2020, the 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 their 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 was the largest retirement to date from Corn Belt.
- At the end of every year, Prairie Energy returns excess revenue after a review of the year-end financials. That means when you became a member of the co-op, you share in the excess revenue which we call patronage. The original funds are paid back to members in the form of patronage retirement. In December 2020, members who purchased electricity from the co-op in 2001 and a portion of 2002 received a refund (patronage) for those years, totaling \$431,153. This retirement was returned in the form of a check.

If you have any questions regarding this or any other member credit, please don't hesitate to call us at 515-532-2805.

Prairie Energy Cooperative
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

DATE _____

PAY TO _____

MEMO _____

1234 5678 9876 543210



Let the sunshine in

One of the easiest ways to warm up your home during the late winter and early spring: Open the window drapes.

Energy savings isn't the only benefit of adding natural daylight to your rooms. Daylight is a natural stimulant that makes people feel better.

Here are five ways the sun can help you save energy on heating bills:

1. Open the curtains or blinds during the day and close them once the sun goes down. The heat from the sun's rays could warm up the room enough to remain comfortable even if you lower the thermostat. South-facing windows are the best for letting sunlight in during the winter. A side benefit: You won't have to turn any lamps on in sunlit rooms.
2. Clean your windows. Nobody likes that chore, but dirty windows can block natural light from finding its way into the home. Wipe down the indoor glass panes once a month year-round and the outdoor panes once a year.
3. Install a skylight in an otherwise shaded room. The rooftop windows aren't cheap, but they let the sun into the room and give you a view of the sky.
4. Replace any single-pane windows with energy-efficient, double-pane models. They not only let in the light; they keep your home's heated air from leaking outside.
5. As spring arrives and the weather starts warming up, an abundance of natural light in your rooms could allow you to turn the thermostat off a bit sooner.

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Tim Marienau, CEO



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