

InTouch

WITH MEMBERS OF PRAIRIE ENERGY COOPERATIVE

May 2021

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Annual meeting reminder – meeting cancelled



Prairie Energy's Board of Directors made the decision earlier this year to cancel the annual in-person meeting of the 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.

The bylaws of the Cooperative require a meeting of the membership in June and an election of the Board of

Directors. For purposes of the election, a limited meeting will be held on June 2, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. Board elections will take place by mail-in ballot only. Ballots will be sent to the membership on May 18, 2021. Ballots must be returned by 2:00 pm on June 2 to be counted.

This year, there are elections for three of the seven districts. Ted Hall, District 1, is running unopposed; incumbent Scott Hasty, District 4, will be challenged by Barb Moore of Clarion and Jeremy Brogaard of Kanawha; and in District 6, Josh Amonson is running unopposed.

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. However, the business meeting will be recorded and shared on Prairie Energy's website and Facebook page for members to view at their convenience.



Scholarship awarded

Natalie Kirstein, daughter of Kent and Kelly Kirstein of Clarion, was chosen as Prairie Energy's winner of the \$1,000 Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship.

Natalie is a senior at Clarion-Goldfield-Dows High School and is involved in dance team, cheer, cross country, track, chorus, National

Honor Society, Youth Group and Youth Group leader, Travel Club, Spanish Club, Clarion Dance & Tumbling Academy, and will be her class's valedictorian. Natalie plans on attending Iowa State University in the fall to approach a degree in elementary education. Congratulations, Natalie!

Members have opportunities to win

Did you know that every month members have the opportunity to win a \$25 bill credit, as well as a give-away contest?

Living with Energy in Iowa magazine sponsors a monthly

recipe contest where members can send in their recipes for the



chosen category that month, and if selected, will be awarded with a \$25 bill credit. For the current month's category, flip to the recipe section of the magazine or go to www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com/recipes/recipe-submissions for further instructions. Don't forget to browse the recipe archive while you're there for some new inspiration!

The magazine also hosts an Editor's Choice Contest every month, when a lucky member has the chance to win a give-away. Past examples include a \$100 gift card, air fryer, a smart home energy package, a Breville juice fountain, and a Nest thermostat, to name a few. Members simply go to www.livingwithenergyiniowa.com before the end of the month and click on the Editor's Choice Contest in the lower right-hand corner. If you need assistance in doing so, please contact the office and we'll be glad to help.

Improving your yard? Know what's above and below

When the temperature warms to signal the arrival of spring, many of us begin planning improvements to our outdoor spaces. This could include building a deck, adding a patio, or assembling play equipment. Remember to plan for safety prior to adding an outdoor structure or improving your yard.

Being aware of power line locations near your home is important for you and your family's safety. Always look up and around for power lines, recognizing too that electricity can jump or transfer even without direct contact. Also know what's below before starting any digging job.

Your Touchstone Energy cooperative and Safe Electricity offer these tips to keep in mind while working in your yard:

- Assume that all power lines are always energized and keep at least 10 feet between a power line and you or any item you are holding.
- Perform a hazard assessment of the work area, noting all power line locations.
- Call 8-1-1 to mark underground utilities before digging. The service is free.
- Utility locators do not mark private lines, however. Private lines need to be marked by an independent locating service.
- Once underground utilities are marked, the 8-1-1 "Call Before You Dig" service recommends that the area within 18 to 24 inches of either side of the marked lines be dug by hand with a fiberglass-handled shovel, not by machine.
- Do not install structures within 25 feet of a power line. Consider the height and reach of all structures in relation to the lines.
- Educate your children about power line safety and how electricity can jump. Teach them to never touch a power line or get too close to one — either directly or with a toy or object.
- Use extreme caution when moving ladders and operating long-handled tools, such as pool skimmers, around trees and power lines.
- Also use extreme caution and look up and around for power lines when you are elevated, whether it be on a ladder, a boom lift, scaffolding, or your roof.
- Keep in mind that specialized tree trimming experts certified by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in utility clearance are the only persons legally allowed to trim within 10 feet of power lines.

Please contact us with questions about specific power line clearance recommendations concerning decks, pools and play structures in your yard. For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.



Memorial Day Monday, May 31

**Our offices are closed
on Monday, May 31, in
observance of Memorial
Day.**

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

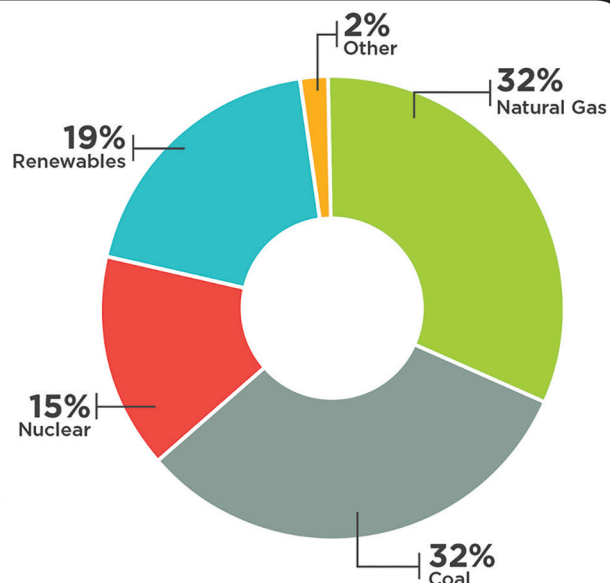


Co-op Energy Sources

Nationally, electric cooperatives use a variety of fuels to power consumer-members' homes and businesses.

This diverse fuel mix supplies co-op members with the safe, reliable and affordable power they depend on.

Source: National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (2019 data)



Shining the Light on community volunteers in June

Guided by our cooperative commitment to community, Iowa's electric co-ops are launching a new contest in June to celebrate local volunteers. The Shine the Light contest, sponsored by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa, will accept nominations and select three winners who will each receive a \$1,500 donation to their local charity or nonprofit.

Member-consumers and employees of Iowa's electric cooperatives are eligible to nominate local volunteers during the month of June. We encourage you to nominate someone who is making a positive impact in the community. The volunteer being nominated does not need to be a co-op member-consumer. Minors may be nominated with consent from their parents or legal guardians.

The three winners will be announced during the Iowa State Fair in August. In addition to the \$1,500 donation, each winner will be featured in the September issue of Living with Energy in Iowa magazine.

Go to www.IowaShineTheLight.com to review the contest rules. Contest entries will be accepted at this website starting on June 1. Help us shine the light on community volunteers this summer and consider making a nomination.

Your Touchstone Energy cooperative encourages you to MOVE OVER AND SLOW DOWN when you approach a vehicle with flashers on.

Let's make sure everyone arrives safely!



Nominate a local volunteer and they could win \$1,500 for their charity!

Contest entries accepted during June at IowaShineTheLight.com



**MOVE OVER
SLOW DOWN**



Too much screen time? Try blue-light glasses

If you're spending too much time watching TV, scrolling through social media posts, or playing video games, your eyes may be paying the price.

Computer, TV, and phone screens emit blue light, part of the visible light spectrum with the shortest wavelengths and the highest energy. We sit so close to our screens, that blue light can penetrate our eyes.

Too much exposure to blue light can increase the risk of macular degeneration, an eye disease that can lead to permanent vision loss. The more screen time you log, the greater your risk.

One remedy: blue-light canceling glasses. The lenses filter out blue light.

Computer glasses, on the other hand, reduce eye strain while using digital devices.

Both models are sold with prescription or non-prescription lenses.

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

Franklin REC
1560 Highway 65, PO Box 437
Hampton, IA 50441-0437
(641) 456-2557
www.franklinrec.coop

Prairie Energy Cooperative
2099 Highway 3 West, PO Box 353
Clarion, IA 50525-0353
(515) 532-2805
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.

Unclaimed patronage checks

Prairie Energy Cooperative (PECO), located at 2099 Hwy 3 W Clarion IA 50525, is holding unclaimed property resulting from patronage dividends due to the persons listed below. They would have been a member in our service territory at one time and moved off. Their last known town and state is listed below.

Please take a moment to look at the list. Those listed have had checks mailed out that were not cashed, or their checks were returned to the PECO office. If you are in possession of an uncashed check or see your name or the name of a family member or friend, please contact us:

- In person at the address above
- By mail: PO Box 353 Clarion IA 50525
- Email: csr@prairieenergy.coop
- Phone: 1-800-728-0013

If the cooperative is not contacted by the owner, the cooperative is allowed to retain this property in accordance with Iowa law or deliver this property to the State Treasurer's Office for disposition as abandoned property.

Donald or Irma Alphs	Britt, IA	Peter Holly	Rockwall, TX
Becky Balsley	Webster City, IA	Roger or Stacy Krein	Mason City, IA
Lester A. Burrier	Blakesburg, IA	Chad or Heather McCarthy	Frankford, IN
Dan or Jeanne DeWaard	Sartell, MN	Kenny or Robin Moriarity	Leland, IA
Rex or Lesli Hale	Cornelius, OR	Larry Nolte	Belmond, IA
Tim Hanna	Lake Mills, IA		

Springtime electrical checklist

It's time to throw open the windows and welcome warm spring weather. It's also time to invest in a few springtime upgrades that will keep your house more comfortable and help you do your part to use energy wisely. Check off the following chores before it gets hot outside:

- 1. Inspect and maintain:** Have a licensed HVAC tech come to your home to inspect and maintain your air conditioning system. Paying a little bit now could prevent a huge expense this summer if your system breaks down on a hot day and you have to have it repaired or replaced in a hurry. Maintenance goes a long way toward preventing emergencies and can prolong the life of your equipment.
- 2. Clear and trim:** While you're outdoors planting and pruning, trim all of the bushes and pull all of the weeds near your air conditioner's outside condenser unit. Remove any fallen tree limbs that landed on it, brush off leaves that have collected on or around it, and pick up trash that found its way there as it sat unused all winter. Anything that touches the unit and prevents air from circulating around it will make it perform inefficiently.
- 3. Plant and shade:** While you've got your shovel and spade out, consider planting some shade trees on the sunny side of your house. As they grow, they will filter the sunrays that can beat so fiercely on your windows in the summer and make your air conditioner work harder. Don't forget to dial 811 before digging!
- 4. Replace and upgrade:** Speaking of windows, if your house still has single-pane versions, this is a good time to replace them with double-pane models. Single-pane windows are energy inefficient and can drive your air conditioning bills through the roof. You could save several hundred dollars on cooling and heating bills every year if you replace your drafty, old windows.
- 5. Clean and shine:** Clean your windows, inside and out. Newer models are simple to clean because you can tilt them toward the inside of the house so you can reach both sides. Clean windows let more sunlight into your house, which means you won't have to turn on as many lights.



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Tim Marienau, CEO



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