



PREMA

October 2015

PLUGGED IN WITH . . .

Panhandle Rural Electric Membership Association

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PREMA BOARD APPROVES CAPITAL CREDIT RETIREMENT

The PREMA Board of Directors approved a general distribution of patronage capital to our members at its August meeting amounting to \$472,749. This amount is made up of 1/25th of the total patronage capital account balance and the capital credit cash payment that was received from Tri-State G & T.

As an added bonus, PREMA offers estates a discounted lump sum payment based on the present dollar value of future payments owed to the estate. If you presently have an estate on file, and want to take advantage of this option, please contact the office at 308-762-1311.

October is Coop Month

October is National Cooperative Month and for the many different types of coops in the United States it's the time of year to celebrate what membership truly means.

More than 29,000 businesses in the U.S. are organized as cooperatives including PREMA, the utility that provides your home with electricity. Co-op businesses employ more than 850,000 people.

The 900 U.S. electric cooperatives are just one type of member-owner business. Some examples of others are farmer-owned cooperatives, food co-ops, housing cooperatives and credit unions. You could be a member of a lot of different places; a gym, a 4-H club, a food of the month club, the list goes on and on. So what makes being a member of a co-op different?

The simple answer to that question is Cooperatives are owned by their customers, and they call those customers members. Members of electric cooperatives are considered part-owners of the utility that brings electricity to their homes, so when you are a member of a co-op you are also an owner. You own a stake in the business, and just like any stakeholder, there are many benefits to your membership.

As a member of PREMA you have a say in the representatives who are elected to serve on the co-op's board of directors. In fact, any cooperative member can run for PREMA's board of directors and be part of its decision-

making process. You also have the opportunity to make your voice heard every year at the Annual Meeting. You get a say on policy issues your electric cooperative supports or opposes. You can even help determine how profits are redistributed.

PREMA's bottom line is about providing you with safe, reliable and affordable electricity. We have to think about expenses, overhead and other aspects of daily business, but when we have a little left over, its given back to the members. Whether we return it to you in the form of a bill credit or check, you have a say in where that money goes. And returning capital credits to you is a major part of why being a co-op member matters.

As your local electric co-op, we get to be a part of this community. When we think about our membership we think about all of the ways we can give back to you, and this matters to us.

Help us celebrate this month by committing to be a more active member. Attend meetings and participate in voting.

Co-op Month has been celebrated annually in October across the United States for more than half a century. Each October, cooperative members reflect on the many benefits of cooperation and take the opportunity to educate others about the value of cooperative businesses.

Cooperative Network's 2015 Co-op Month theme, "Take Ownership," celebrates how the cooperative business model gives consumers and workers a real stake in their economic destinies.

USDA REVOLVING LOAN FUND



RLF funds will be disbursed to successful applicants after all terms and conditions of the loan agreement have been met. This includes execution of all loan and security agreements, proof that supplemental financing has been received or committed, and submission of all other documents required by the RLF.

Panhandle Rural Electric Membership Association (PREMA) actively participates in the development of rural communities through leadership and financial commitment. In 2007 PREMA established a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) by contributing \$60,000 in addition to an initial investment provided by the USDA. This has allowed PREMA to further enhance the economic climate of the service area.

PREMA considers loan applications for projects that will significantly benefit rural areas by creating and retaining employment opportunities, which can provide necessary community facilities and services. Projects to be considered for loans include medical or other emergency facilities; training and educational facilities; community infrastructure; small business start-up projects; small business expansion projects; business incubators; and commercial or industrial development.

Loan guidelines require the money borrowed not be used to compete with local lending agencies, but rather the RLF is meant to work in partnership with other public and private lenders to compile the best financial package necessary for project completion. The minimum RLF loan is \$20,000 with the maximum amount being \$150,000. These amounts are contingent upon the available balance in the revolving loan fund account.

A Loan Review Committee (LRC) was needed to examine loan applications and supporting information, and to make recommendations to PREMA's board of directors. In the review process, the LRC would review applications for completeness and perform a credit analysis of the project.

The Board of Directors appointed Box Butte Development Corporation (BBDC) to serve as the Loan Review Committee. BBDC consists of local men and women with business and financial backgrounds, and is operated by an Executive Director and an assistant. BBDC promotes rural economic development in the service area.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. Requests for RLF loans must be made on the RLF application form and must include the required information, so that a proper evaluation of loan requests can be made.
2. Applications will be accepted at BBDC's office, Attention: Chelsie Herian, during normal business hours M-F 8-5 at 305 Box Butte Avenue, Alliance, NE. BBDC staff will review applications for eligibility and completeness, and will inform applicants if a project is not eligible for an RLF loan, or if more information is needed to complete the application.
3. The LRC will analyze each project and submit a written recommendation to PREMA's Board of Directors.
4. PREMA's board will review the RLF loan application and LRC recommendation at its regularly scheduled board meeting and applicant will be notified of the decision.
5. For approved loans, a loan agreement that addresses all of the terms and conditions of the loan will be prepared and a time for the Closing will be arranged.

CLEAN UP THE AIR INSIDE YOUR HOME



Some days, the air inside your house is just about as polluted as the air outdoors.

You can change that, and you should. After all, most of us spend 90 percent of our time indoors.

Clean up the air inside your home, especially if family members have headaches or suffer from allergies. Here's how to start:

* If your house is pretty new, chances are, your builder made it air-tight so your air conditioning and heating systems would work more efficiently. If that's the case, the house needs proper ventilation to keep the air circulating, which will help prevent indoor air pollution. If your indoor air smells "stale" or if you or your family suddenly feels uncomfortable be-



cause of it, have your ventilation system checked.

* Furnaces and stoves should be directly vented to remove moisture and combustion by-products from your home. Bathrooms should have exhaust fans to pull moisture outside. Clothes dryers should be vented to the outdoors.



* Seal cracks and insulate walls in the basement to prevent pollutants from soil, like radon, from entering the house. Use cement grout or caulk to seal visible cracks in foundation walls or floors.

* Check and clean your furnace every year to prevent damaged heat exchangers or blocked flues from spewing pollutants into indoor air.

* Change furnace filters frequently. The filters not only protect the furnace equipment, but high-quality filters can also

trap pollutants.



* Install a carbon monoxide detector in your home. Unlike other pollutants, you won't know when carbon monoxide is in the air until it's too late because it is colorless and odorless.

* Paints, solvents, household cleaners and air fresheners can contain pollutants. Use them with windows open and exhaust fans on.

* If you need to remove lead paint from your home's



walls and ceilings, call a professional. The removal process can cause serious health risks if not done properly.

The Best Device for a Safe Halloween: Your Front Porch Light



One of the best ways to make sure your kids and everyone in the neighborhood has a fun and safe Halloween is to turn on your porch light.

You know how to keep your kids safe on October 31: Dress them in bright costumes, keep them in your sight as they visit the neighbors' homes and check their candy before they eat it.

But you also need to make your yard and home safe for the little goblins and angels who will be ringing your doorbell on Fright Night. Here's how to prep your house for their arrival. Start a week before the big night:

1. Replace your porch light so there's no chance it will burn out in the middle of the fun.
2. Keep the light turned on until you run out of candy. The light lets trick-or-treaters know they are welcome and keeps your porch or steps illuminated to prevent falls.
3. Use the holiday as a good excuse to place some security lighting or outdoor lighting around the house. Proper lighting will scare off pranksters and keep visitors safe.
4. If you decorate for Halloween, choose lighted decorations that are certified by a product safety organization like UL, which has standards for safety and performance.
5. Connect no more than three strands of decorative lights together. Inspect them first for damaged cords and always unplug them before replacing bulbs.
6. Use outdoor, heavy-duty extension cords for outdoor lighting jobs, and don't overload them.
7. Move cords out of the way of the home's entrance so your scary little friends won't trip over them as they rush to your front door in the dark.



Notes From Load Management

Load Management has come to an end for the 2015 season. Control hours were at a minimum due to rains earlier in the season. Discount for participating in Load Management will be credited on your September bill. Irrigators will receive a letter in January outlining the new 2016 Load Management program.



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