

Buy into Energy Star appliance savings

The State of Illinois is offering the ENERGY STAR® Appliance Rebate Program, funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO). The program provides incentives for Illinois consumers to replace older appliances with specific residential ENERGY STAR qualified appliances, water heaters, and HVAC equipment.

The new appliances must be purchased in Illinois through participating retail stores or contractors. Illinois' program will be rolled out in two phases:

- The first phase started Jan. 31, 2010 - consumers can get rebates for ENERGY STAR heating and cooling equipment and water heaters.
- From April 16 - 25, 2010, consumers can get Rebates on ENERGY STAR qualified appliances (clothes washers, dishwashers, refrigerators, freezers, room air conditioners.) There will be a 15 percent markdown at time of sale. In addition, residents are eligible for a rebate when the old appliance is picked up and recycled. A \$50 rebate for washers and dishwashers and \$100 rebates for refrigerators and freezers will be granted. Required forms are proof of haul-away, mail in recycling rebate form and copy of receipt from purchase of new unit.



The mail-in recycling rebate form will be available at www.illinoisenergy.org/appliances.

Heating/cooling rebates

Rebates began Jan. 31, 2010, and will continue until funds are depleted.

- Central Air-Conditioners (\$500 discount at time of purchase)
- Air-Source Heat Pumps (\$1,000 discount at time of purchase)
- Propane Furnaces (\$350 discount at time of purchase)
- Gas Furnaces (\$350 discount at time of purchase)
- Gas Boilers (\$1,200 discount at time of purchase) *Participating network contractors must install.

Water heater rebates

- Rebates began Jan. 31, 2010 and will continue until funds are depleted.
- Water Heaters (25% markdown at point of sale), including: gas-condensing water heaters, electric heat pump water heaters, gas storage water heaters and gas tankless water heaters. All purchases must be made from participating dealers or retailers. Some restrictions apply.

Listings and additional information can be found at www.illinoisenergy.org/appliances or by calling 877-782-7005. Rebates are not retroactive. Minimum equipment efficiencies will be required. Program will be available for residential-scale equipment, installed in Illinois. Installations in commercial spaces will not be applicable.



Board meeting report

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting
November 23, 2009

Trustees present were: Frank Czyzewski, Bill Croy, Frank Herman, Kevin Logan, Bob Pierson, Howard Poehler, Richard Rudolphi, Danny Schnepfer and Greg Smith. Also present were Executive Vice President/General Manager John Meng, and Cooperative Attorney Melanie Pearce. The invocation was given by Trustee Logan.

Heard a presentation by Nancy Nixon, Marketing Administrator at AIEC concerning the national Co-op brand Touchstone Energy including handouts.

Approved the minutes of the regular meeting held December 21, 2009.

Accepted 8 new members for service.

Canceled 17 members no longer receiving service.

Approved work orders in the amount of \$49,311.49.

Accepted the disbursement list for the month of December, 2009.

Approved the financial and maintenance reports for the month of December, 2009 as presented

by Gen. Mgr. Meng. also discussed Transmission and MISO Costs for 2009 and compared to 2008.

Heard a report by Trustee Logan concerning the recent AIEC Board meeting.

Heard a report by Trustee Herman concerning the recent SIPC Strategic Planning meeting.

Discussed upcoming NRECA Annual Meeting.

Reviewed and Approved bids taken on the sale of a Cooperative Pickup to Andy Myers.

Reviewed, Discussed, and Approved the 2010 Proposed Budget as presented.

Approved recommendation by Gen. Mgr. Meng to delay effective date of rate adjustment until March 1, 2010.

Discussed Insurance renewal with Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange.

Appointed Gen. Mgr. Meng as Delegate and Doug Hockman as alternate to the Illinois Workers Comp and Rochdale Services Annual Meeting.

Approved September 2, 2010 as the date of the 66th Annual Meeting of Members of Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc. to be held at Charley Brown Park.

Heard and Approved a report by Gen. Mgr. Meng regarding the retirement of Capital Credits to the estate of 1 deceased member pursuant to Cooperative Policy.

Reviewed and Discussed past fuel usage and obtaining price quotes from potential providers.

Disbursed "New Comments from NRECA on Climate Legislation and Other Issues".

Informed of application to Canadian National Railroad for a rail crossing permit.

Disbursed JULIE Excavator Handbook and were informed to share with known Excavators.

Heard a report by Gen. Mgr. Meng regarding the status of the 2-way radios.

Approved Clay Electric Cooperative joining Touchstone Energy.
Adjournment.

Clay Electric Co-operative, Inc.

7784 Old Hwy. 50, P.O. Box
517, Flora, Illinois 62839
618-662-2171
800-582-9012

Office hours:
7:30 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.

Clay County Water Update

Clay County Water has been notified by USDA Rural Development (RD) to go out for bids for Phase 2.

The construction includes parts of the following townships; S.E. Songer, North Harter, South Louisville and North Stanford. We will be opening bids on the Phase 2 project on March 9, 2010. Construction is anticipated to start mid May to mid June. Please contact us if you are at all interested in the water because the tap fees will be increasing.

We have also been invited for a funding application for the Phase 3 project which includes Southeast Xenia, South Stanford, South Harter, and South Clay City Townships.

We will now start the process of finalizing the map of where exactly the line will go. If you have not been contacted, or would like to sign up for water service to your location, please call. Do not put this off any longer.

Doug Hockman 662-6666, Sue Pettit 662-4305,
Bob Pierson 662-7471, Kye Hemphill 662-4590,
Bill Seelman 662-8479, Dwight Edgington 678-2782
Kevin Henry 618-838-6123, or Hank Hilmes 662-2388.

Think 'safety first' after storms

Electrical hazards associated with summer storms could cause serious injuries

The spring and summer brings with it hurricane season and other severe storms, all carrying the risk of downed power lines and floods. Safe Electricity cautions everyone to be mindful of the electrical hazards that storms and flooding can leave in their wake, and offers vital safety tips to avoid electrocution and serious injury when dealing with the aftermath of a major storm or disaster. As part of the "Teach Learn Care" TLC campaign, the program urges everyone to be aware of safety precautions and to educate others as well.

"The danger does not end when the storm does," said Molly Hall, Executive Director of Safe Electricity. "People can be hurt or killed by hazards left behind. It's wise to be cautious in any cleanup effort."

Stay away from downed power lines and be alert to the possibility that tree limbs or debris may hide an electrical hazard. Keep in mind a downed power line that's energized can cause other things around it to become potentially hazardous. Treat all downed or hanging power lines as if they are energized. Lines do not have to be arcing or sparking to be live. If you see a downed power line stay away, warn others to stay away and contact the electric utility company immediately.

"Cleaning up and using water-damaged appliances also carry safety risks," said Jay Solomon, University of Illinois Extension Engineering Educator. "Electric motors in appliances that have been drenched or submerged should be thoroughly cleaned and reconditioned before they are put back into service. It may be necessary to repair or replace electrical appliances or tools that have been in contact with water. Do not use any water-damaged appliance until a professional has checked it out."

If using electric yard tools in clean-up efforts, do not operate

them if it is raining, the ground is wet or while you are wet or standing in water. Keep all electric tools and equipment at least ten feet away from wet surfaces.

"Before re-entering storm-damaged buildings or rooms, be sure all electric and gas services are turned off," said Solomon. "Never attempt to turn off power at the breaker box if you must stand in water to do so. If you can't reach your breaker box safely, call your electric utility to shut off power at the meter."

Never step in to a flooded room or other area if water is covering electrical outlets, appliances or cords. Be alert to any electrical equipment that could be energized and in contact with water. Never touch electrical appliances, cords or wires while you are wet or standing in water.

Safe Electricity recommends purchasing portable Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs) for use in outlets to avoid electric shock injuries during and after the storm. If time permits before a storm, Safe Electricity recommends hiring a professional to install stationary GFCIs in homes as a safety precaution if they have not been installed already. GFCIs are recommended for outdoor outlets, and outlets near wet areas of the home such as kitchen, bath and laundry room.

"GFCIs stop the flow of electricity instantly if there is a problem," Hall said. "When properly used, they save lives."

"You never know when a storm may hit, creating potential electrical hazards for your family," Hall said. "The best solution is to be prepared ahead of time. These devices will help keep your family safe year round."

If after a storm or disaster, the power to your home is out for a prolonged period, know important safety rules, such as never using a charcoal or gas grill to cook inside! If you use a portable generator,

be sure a transfer safety switch has been installed or connect the appliance(s) directly to the generator. This prevents electricity from traveling back through the power lines, what is known as "back feed." Back feed creates danger for anyone near lines, particularly crews working to restore power.

If you are driving and come upon a downed power line, stay in your vehicle, warn others to stay away and contact emergency personnel or the electric utility company. Never drive over a downed line.

If you are in a car which has come in contact with a downed power line, stay in your vehicle. If you must leave your car as in the case of fire, jump free keeping both feet together and hop to safety. A live wire touching the ground causes electricity to fan out in a pool and the action of running or striding allows one foot to move from one voltage zone to another. Your body then becomes the path for the electricity and electrocution is the tragic result.

For more information on electrical safety, visit the www.SafeElectricity.org.



The logo for Safe Electricity features the words "Safe" and "Electricity" in a bold, sans-serif font. A stylized electrical plug icon is positioned to the left of the word "Electricity".

Safe Electricity is a program of the Energy Education Council, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting electrical safety and energy efficiency. Safe Electricity is supported by a coalition of hundreds of organizations, including electric utilities, educators and other entities committed to promoting safe use of electricity

Consider electrical hazards during spring planting season

Planting season will soon be underway, bringing with it long hours for farm workers in the fields. Before planting gets underway, Safe Electricity urges farm workers to evaluate their farm activities and work practices that take place around power lines. As part of the new “Teach Learn Care” TLC campaign, the program urges parents and others to make sure young farm workers are aware of safety precautions as well.

Many workers are killed each year when their farm equipment makes contact with overhead power lines. By following a few safety rules, these tragic accidents can be prevented. Start by making sure everyone knows to maintain a minimum 10-foot clearance from the lines.

“Many farm electrical accidents that involve power line contact happen when loading or preparing to transport equipment to fields, or while performing maintenance or repairs on farm machinery near power lines,” says Molly Hall, Executive Director of Safe Electricity.

“It can be difficult to estimate distance and sometimes a power line is closer than it looks. A spotter or someone with a broader view can help, and keep in mind the minimum 10-foot distance is a 360-degree rule – below, to the side and above lines. It may take a little more time, but ensuring proper clearance can save lives.”

Today’s larger farms require transporting tractors and equipment to fields several miles away. Before transit, avoid raising the arms of planters, cultivators or truck beds near power lines. Utility lines typically are not insulated, meaning that the lines are bare; this makes it easier to create a channel for electricity and electrocution to occur. So, it is very important to be aware of increased height when loading and transporting larger modern tractors. Also, many tractors are now equipped with radios and communications systems that have antennas extending from the cab to 15 feet above the ground.

When near power lines, these antennas are hazardous. Some other equipment safety considerations:

- Always lower portable augers or elevators to their lowest possible level – under 14 feet – before moving or transporting; use care when raising them.
- When moving large equipment or high loads near a power line, always use a spotter to help make certain that contact is not made with a line.
- Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path!
- Assume every power line is energized, even if it is a downed power line.
- Always use the transfer switch whenever using your standby generator for emergency power.
- Make sure there is ample clearance (at least 10 feet) for farm equipment to be moved.
- When moving irrigation equipment, be extremely cautious. Long metal irrigation pipes are excellent conductors of electricity. As in any outdoor work, be careful not to raise any equipment such as ladders, poles or rods into power lines. Remember, non-metallic materials such as lumber, tree limbs, tires, ropes and hay will conduct electricity depending on dampness, and dust and dirt contamination. Also, do not try to clear storm-damage debris and limbs that are near or touching overhead or fallen power lines. The overhead electric wires aren’t the only electrical contact that can result in a serious incident. Pole guy wires are grounded to the neutral; however, when one of the guy wires is broken, it can cause an electric current disruption and become very hazardous.

It is important to be alert at all times. If you hit a guy wire and break it, call the utility to fix it. Don’t do it yourself. When dealing with electrical poles and wires, always call the electric utility.

“It’s also important for operators of farm equipment or vehicles to know what to do if the vehicle

comes in contact with a power line,” Hall says. “It’s almost always best to stay in the cab and call for help. Warn others who may be nearby to stay away and wait until the electric utility arrives to make sure power to the line is cut off.

“If the power line is energized and you step outside, your body becomes the path to the ground and electrocution is the result,” says Hall. “Even if a power line has landed on the ground, there is still the potential for the area nearby to be energized. Stay inside the vehicle unless there’s fire or imminent risk of fire.”

In that case, the proper action is to jump – not step – with both feet hitting the ground at the same time. Do not allow any part of your body to touch the equipment and the ground at the same time. Continue to shuffle or hop to safety, keeping both feet together as you leave the area. A large difference in voltage between both feet could kill you. Once you get away from the equipment, never attempt to get back on or even touch the equipment. Many electrocutions occur when the operator dismounts and, realizing nothing has happened, tries to get back on the equipment. Farmers may want to consider moving or burying power lines around buildings or busy pathways where many farm activities take place. If planning a new out building or farm structure, contact your power supplier for information on minimum safe clearances from overhead and underground power lines.

For more information on farm/home electrical safety, visit www.SafeElectricity.org. Spanish versions of farm electric safety information are also available on this web site, along with materials and games to help children learn about electrical safety. “Teach Learn Care” TLC is a public service campaign of Safe Electricity, a safety public awareness program created and supported by a coalition of several dozen organizations, including electric utilities, educators and others committed to promoting electrical safety.