

## A warm welcome to summer fun and safety

**A**fter a chilling winter, summertime is here! The school year is ending, the weather is warm, the grill is hot and the pools are cool. Time to make sure our children and family members remember to have fun and be safe at the same time. As part of the “Teach Learn Care” TLC campaign, Safe Electricity urges parents and other caregivers to make sure children know how to stay safe during outdoor play.

Children often do not understand the dangers of electricity. Take some time to get down and view the surroundings from a child’s vantage point to locate possible hazards.

For safety outdoors, Safe Electricity recommends that children and adults follow these rules:

- Stay away from electrical equipment on the ground and overhead. Never climb a utility pole or tower. Don’t play on or around pad-mounted electrical equipment. Electrical power poles and utility equipment should never be used as a playground.
- Never climb trees near power lines. Even if the power lines aren’t touching the tree, they could touch when more weight is added to the branch.
- Fly kites and model airplanes safely away from trees and overhead power lines. If a kite gets tangled in a tree that’s near power lines, don’t climb up to get it. Contact your electric utility for assistance.
- Never go into an electric substation. Electric substations contain high-voltage equipment, which

can kill you. Don’t retrieve a toy or rescue a pet that goes inside. Call your electric utility instead.

- Look up and around you. Always be aware of the location of power lines, particularly when using long metal tools like ladders and pool skimmers. Water and electricity never

mix! Keep electronics like radios away from pools and hot tubs, and watch for overhead power lines when cleaning pools, sailing or fishing. Never install pools underneath or near power lines.

- Never touch an electrical appliance if you are wet; always dry off completely.

Be careful using electrical appliances outdoors. Whether it is a bug zapper, an electric charcoal lighter, or a radio or CD player, caution must be exercised. Be sure you use outlets that have weatherproof covers and ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI) to prevent serious shock injuries. Use portable GFCIs for outdoor outlets that don’t have them.

Keep electrical appliances and tools at least ten feet away from pools, ponds and wet surfaces. “Electricity and water are a dangerous combination,” warns Molly Hall,



Safe Electricity Executive Director. “Caution children and family members about the danger of using electrical appliances in wet areas – even wet grass can create a hazard.”

Supervise the use of extension cords outside, check them carefully for exposed wires; make sure they are in good shape, and not frayed or cracked. Use only extension cords that are rated and marked for outdoor use, and are large enough to handle the current needed for the device you are using. Check that the prongs on the extension cord plugs are clean, not broken or bent. Make sure the ground prong is intact in a three-prong plug, and avoid use of adapters.

Summer can signal an increase in accidents and injuries. Keep utility and emergency numbers close at hand.

Do your part to prevent accidents by sharing important safety information with those you love.

# Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting

**March 26, 2012**

**T**rustees present were: Frank Czyzewski, Bill Croy, Neil Gould, Frank Herman, Kevin Logan, Bob Pierson, 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 Kevin Logan.

**Approved** the minutes of the regular meeting held February 27, 2012.

**Accepted** 11 new members for service.

**Canceled** 10 members no longer receiving service.

**Approved** work orders in the amount of \$33,623.56.

**Accepted** the disbursement list for the month of February, 2012, and discussed related costs of delinquency notices.

**Heard** a report by Trustee Logan regarding the recent AIEC Board Meeting along with the procedure for nominating a candidate for Federated Insurance directorship.

**Heard** a report by Trustee Herman concerning the recent SIPC Board meeting, including the financials, and the upcoming SIPC Annual Meeting.

**Approved** the financial and maintenance reports for the month of February, 2012 as presented by Gen. Mgr. Meng.

**Approved** Policy # 800-19 regarding cell phones in vehicles.

**Heard** a report by Gen. Mgr. Meng regarding recent AIEC Member survey.

**Informed** of upcoming Audit Report presentation.

**Reviewed and Approved** the replacement of a Cooperative pickup.

**Updated** on the status of the digital mapping project.

**Informed** of substation maintenance testing recently completed.

**Reviewed** liability insurance policy.

**Informed** of progress of updating Policy # 900-1 involving service to oil field equipment.

**Discussed** upcoming regular Board meeting times and dates.

**Informed** of a possible clean energy transmission line that may be built in or near Clay County.

**Heard** a report by Gen. Mgr.

Meng concerning the retirement of Capital Credits to the estate of one deceased member pursuant to Cooperative Policy.

**Informed** of upcoming financial forecast presentation.

**Adjournment.**

## Clay County Water Update

**C**lay County Water, Inc. has begun the Phase 3 construction Project. We continue to work on obtaining the necessary easements required for the project. Even if you do not intend to connect to the water, please be considerate of your neighbors that would like to connect.

The Phase 3 project includes

about 65 miles of water line located in Southeast Xenia, Stanford, Harter, South Clay City Townships, and a few other short line extensions in the area.

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, as fees will increase as the project proceeds.

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.



### Clay Electric Co-operative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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.

# Prepare your home to beat the summer heat

**D**uring the sweltering summer months people nationwide crank up their air conditioners in an effort to stay cool. In the struggling economy, the Energy Education Council wants everyone to get the most for their energy dollars. Be sure your house is ready to beat the heat this year by following a few guidelines.

Most of these suggestions require little effort or cost. The investment is well worth it with added comfort and savings.

- Check the insulation. According to EnergyStar insulation is usually measured using the R-Value. R-Value is a measure of insulation's ability to resist heat traveling through it. The higher the R-Value the more effective it will be to beat the heat. The level of insulation recommended for your area can be found at [www.EnergyStar.gov](http://www.EnergyStar.gov). If you are lacking the recommended insulation, you can add more right on top of the old insulation. However, don't put a vapor barrier between the layers. Be sure the insulation doesn't block vents or cover exhaust fans.
- Ventilate the attic. When the outside temperature is in the 90s, your attic can easily reach 140 degrees. Adequately-sized vents and/or an attic fan can help keep hot air from building up.
- Get the air conditioner ready. Shut off power to the unit before cleaning it. On the inside, wash or vacuum cleanable filters; replace disposable ones. Outside, clear leaves and other debris away from the condensing unit. Hose off any accumulated dirt.
- Put a timer or programmable thermostat on your air conditioner. Leave it on a higher temperature while you're away, and set it to cool the house half an hour before you return home.
- Install awnings over windows exposed to direct sunlight.
- Consider installing ceiling fans. On moderately warm days, fans can circulate enough air to keep you comfortable without air conditioning. Even on hotter days when you use the air conditioner, you can set your thermostat higher and save.

Even in summer, you don't have to sacrifice comfort to stay within your budget. Here are a few easily achieved cost saving tips:

- Open windows and doors and let outside air cool your house on moderate days, and be sure to keep them closed when you're operating the air conditioner.
  - Avoid unnecessary trips in and out of the house, especially on the most sultry days. Heat and humidity come in each time you open the door.
  - Keep the sun out of your house. Close blinds, shades or draperies during the hottest part of the day. Consider planting fast-growing trees and shrubs near your home but away from power line, to provide shade.
  - Set lamps, TV sets, and other heat-producing devices away from the air conditioner thermostat. Heat from the lamp could cause the thermostat to read higher temperature and keep the air conditioner running more than necessary.
- One secret to getting the best efficiency from your air conditioner is to be sure the maximum amount of air moves across the coils. Make sure air can flow freely over the inside and outside coils.
- Shut off power to the unit before cleaning it. Outside, clear away leaves and debris. Inside, clean or replace filters.

If you can reach the fan blades, be sure the power is turned off and then dust them - if they're filled with lint they can't push as much air. If your air conditioner doesn't give you as much cooling as it has in the past, call a cooling professional to inspect and tune it up.

If you're shopping for a new unit, check the efficiency rating, or SEER. The higher the SEER number, the more efficient the air conditioner. Consider buying an Energy Star approved unit, which uses around 14 percent less energy than traditional air conditioning units for central air and at least 10 percent less for room units. Energy Star and local utilities are offering many incentives to upgrade appliances and insulation this year. Be sure to visit [www.EnergyStar.gov/taxcredits](http://www.EnergyStar.gov/taxcredits) and contact your local utility for more information.

Like a car that gives you more miles per gallon, an air conditioner with a higher SEER gives you more cooling comfort for each energy dollar.

**Every Degree=Dollars**

**SAVE!** Don't let summer heat burn your budget. When home, set your thermostat to 78°.

Going out for the day? By turning your thermostat up 10°-15° when you're out of the house, you can cut your electric bill by up to 15 percent. That's a savings of up to 1 percent for every degree you raise your thermostat (based on eight hours).

**78°**

Source: [EnergySavers.gov](http://EnergySavers.gov)

# Watch for signs of heat illnesses

**W**ith the onset of summer comes lots of fun outdoor activities — whether you're lying by the pool or playing on a baseball field. Keep heat stress at bay — no matter your sun-soaked activity of choice — by knowing how to prevent heat-related illnesses and recognize the symptoms in yourself and others.

## Heat Stroke

The most serious of heat illnesses, heat stroke, can be deadly and swift. Your body temperature could rise to 106 degrees Fahrenheit or more in as little as 10 to 15 minutes. Heat stroke happens when your body temperature rises rapidly but cannot sweat quickly enough to cool itself. Symptoms include hot, dry skin or the opposite — profuse sweating, hallucinations, chills, throbbing headache, confusion or dizziness, and slurred speech.

If you see someone with the symptoms of heat stroke, immediately call 911 and move the person to a shady area. Try misting the person with cold water, soaking his or her clothes, or fanning the body.

## Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is the result of heavy sweating — extreme loss of salt and water. People prone to heat exhaustion include the elderly, those with high blood pressure, or people who work in hot conditions. Besides excessive sweating, symptoms include extreme weakness or fatigue, dizziness and confusion, nausea, clammy skin, muscle cramps, and shallow, rapid breathing.

If a person suffers from heat



exhaustion, move him or her to a shaded or air-conditioned area. The victim should drink cool — non-alcoholic — beverages and take a cool shower or bath.

## Heat Syncope

Sun-bathers may be prone to heat syncope, which is dizziness or fainting after lying (or standing) for long periods of time. Dehydration can contribute to an episode of heat syncope, so keep that water bottle handy when you head to the pool or beach.

If you feel dizzy after lying for a long time, sit or lie back down in a cool place and sip on a cool beverage — water, sports drinks, or clear juice.

## Heat Cramps

Folks who work or play sports outside in the heat may suffer from heat cramps, which result from low salt levels after heavy sweating. Stay alert if you feel cramping because it could be a symptom of heat exhaustion. Heat cramps usually are felt in

the arms, legs, or abdomen.

If you feel them, stop what you're doing, sit in a cool place, and drink clear juice or a sports beverage. Take it easy for a few hours after you no longer feel the cramps — if you return to your activity, the condition could transition to heat exhaustion or heat stroke. If you have heart problems, are on a low-sodium diet, or the cramps do not go away in an hour, call a doctor.

## Heat Rash

Heavy sweating can cause a heat rash during hot, humid weather. It looks like a red cluster of pimples or small blisters that usually pop up on the neck or chest, groin, and in the crook of your elbow. You can't do much to treat heat rash besides keep the area dry and use baby powder to alleviate discomfort.

*Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control*