

Clay Electric News

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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

From the Manager

It's that time of year again. Farm equipment is on the move, and you have probably either found yourself behind some of it on our rural highways, or sitting in the cab of a tractor waving at people to go around you. Those of us here at Clay Electric want to encourage everyone to play it safe when passing slower moving farm equipment. Be sure you have plenty of room to get around, and keep in mind that often a tractor will have to move farther in the road to avoid a mailbox or other obstacle.

For those in the fields, we also want to ensure your safety. Many times, there are power lines running along the edge of your property. Try to leave at least ten feet between you and the pole. We call this the Ten Foot rule.

The Ten Foot rule refers to the distance extending 10 feet in every direction from any power line. It's the distance you should observe when you're working outdoors with equipment or machinery, such as a crane, forklift, backhoe, dump truck, drilling rig, or block loader.

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. Do not try to clear storm damage debris and limbs near or touching power lines or near fallen lines.

If you do accidentally come into contact with the pole, stop and immediately look to see if you have



caused the wire to fall onto or near your vehicle. If you see something, then stay in the vehicle! If there is anyone else around, warn them to stay well back. The only time you should risk leaving the vehicle is to avoid a 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.

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.

Keep in mind, the overhead electric wires aren't the only electrical contact that can result in a serious incident. Pole guy wires are grounded to neutral; but, when one of the guy wires is

broken, it can cause an electric current disruption. This can make those neutral wires anything but harmless. If you hit a guy wire and break it, call us at 618-662-2171 to fix it.

Don't do it yourself.

When dealing with electrical poles and wires, remember always call us. We are here to not only ensure you have reliable electric service, but also to ensure that service is delivered in a safe manner.

For more information on working near, or around, power lines safely you can visit <http://www.safeelectricity.org/>. The Energy Education Council has some really good resources on the site to help you.



Ed VanHoose
Manager

Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting

Regular meeting March 30, 2015

Trustees present were: Frank Czyzewski, Bill Croy, Neil Gould, Frank Herman, Kevin Logan, Bob Pierson, Richard Rudolphi, Danny Schnepfer and Greg Smith. Also present was Executive Vice President/General Manager Ed VanHoose. The invocation was given by Neil Gould.

Approved the agenda as amended by Gen. Mgr. VanHoose.

Approved the minutes and Affirmed all actions of the regular meeting held February 23, 2015 at the NRECA Annual Meeting.

Accepted 6 new members for service.

Canceled 9 members no longer receiving service.

Approved work orders in the amount of \$3,064.96 for the month of February 2015. Also updated that pole replacements are ahead of schedule.

Accepted the disbursement list for the month of February 2015.

Heard a report by Trustee Logan concerning the recent AIEC regular monthly meeting, including the Executive Summary.

Reviewed Director per diem survey and **Approved** an increase from the December 2013 rate.

Heard a report by Trustee Herman concerning the recent SIPC Board

meeting, including Administrative & Finance Department Summary. Informed of upcoming strategic planning meeting, and that CECI Directors Herman, Rudolphi, and Smith were reaffirmed in their SIPC Board positions.

Were Advised that Directors Herman, and Rudolphi, and Gen. Mgr. VanHoose recently attended AIEC Director Course 901.1 Rules and Procedures for Effective Board Meetings.

Discussed structuring billing statements to reflect various costs involved in supply of power, with the intention of educating the membership about the impact of regulatory factors; Gen. Mgr. VanHoose was Directed to investigate and present a plan to the Board on the issue.

Informed of upcoming National Lineman's Appreciation Day.

Informed that Gen. Mgr. VanHoose had recently completed and graduated the Manager Intern Program (MIP) with said certification the equivalent of a Master's Degree level from that business college. Gen. Mgr. VanHoose recounted the experience and valuable insight he learned throughout the program.

Heard a report by Gen. Mgr.

- VanHoose as to the following;
- Reviewed SIPC Power Bill.
 - Reviewed Form 7/Operations Report with attention to line loss.
 - Heard a report as to the tree trimming plan.
 - Heard a report on pole replacement schedule, which is ahead of schedule.
 - Heard a report as to the cash flow, advising the status is stable.
 - Heard a report as to the status of the Noble sub bypass.
 - Heard a report that Power Factor is continuing to stay good.
 - Recent safety meeting topic was NEW Fire Retardant / Arc Rated Clothing standard with further advisement of expense.
 - Reviewed Federated Insurance Policy advising that he is seeking clarification from Federated as to whether policy covers non Director Officers.
 - Informed that CECI had received a capital credit allocation from

Federated Insurance in the amount of \$2,236.00.

- Informed that CECI is second worse for Worker's Compensation Claims advising that safety topics should help remedy.
- Heard a report as to the status of filling Tree trimming positions.
- Informed that CECI has received a capital credit allocation from SEDC in the amount of \$1,261.72
- Heard a report concerning scam attempts reported by the Membership, with the scammers attempting to procure credit card information by misinforming targets of imminent shut off of services. Gen. Mgr. VanHoose urged Directors to advise the membership that CECI does not operate in that way and that any member so approached should hang up and contact CECI headquarters immediately.

Thereafter **Approved** Managers report.

Reminded that the CECI Annual Meeting of Members will be held on August 27, 2015 with Districts II, VI, and VIII terms expiring. Discussed accessing additional tables and chairs for said meeting being held at Oil Belt Christian Service Camp.

Approved 1 Purchase Power Agreement in the form as presented.

Approved the return of Capital Credits to the estate of 1 deceased Member pursuant to Cooperative Policy.

Informed CECI received 1 Bankruptcy notice on a non-member.

Heard a report on several charitable donation requests, after Review of Budget Approved with 7 ayes, 1 nay, and 1 abstention dividing unused allocation for local schools upon their requests.

Reviewed Certificate of Liability Insurance of Kincaid Oil.

Informed that Gen. Mgr. VanHoose will send out a list of optional dates for various Board Committees to meet.

Disbursed AIEC 2015 Legislative Roster.

Disbursed Spring 2015 Touchstone Extra In Brief, # 1 "The Roadmap to Member Engagement".

Adjournment.

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Beat the heat with cool products

By April Lollar, APR, CCC

When temperatures soar in the summer, utility bills can do the same. There are several small ways to manage your energy use this summer, and Clay Electric Co-operative is always happy to help you with those simple, no- or low-cost ways to save – but for those who are considering remodeling or making larger purchases, here are a few ideas that may help keep your energy use in check and keep your wallet cool.

Remodeling?

If you are making esthetic changes to your home, consider products that will also make it work more efficiently. The biggest energy users in our homes are heating and cooling systems, so if you are making upgrades to your floors and cabinets, consider making some energy efficient upgrades to your HVAC system, too.

If you're making additions to your home or converting attics or basements into living spaces, a ductless heating and cooling system is a great option. A ductless system does not require adding pipes or ductwork to a home's existing system, making it a more affordable upgrade for many. Ductless systems tend to be more efficient, meaning homeowners will use less energy and save on their electric bills. Contact your local HVAC contractor for more information.

If making changes to your heating and cooling system doesn't seem like the right upgrade for now, consider installing a smart thermostat. These "cool" devices learn your behavior and adjust heating and air conditioning settings with a goal to save energy. Smart thermostats also have the capability to connect to the Internet, allowing homeowners to manage energy use via a smart phone app. There are several smart thermostat options available on the market, and they typically cost between \$200 and \$400.

Purchasing new appliances?

If you are considering purchasing new appliances that will use less energy, but may not have the budget for a complete appliance overhaul, your clothes dryer is a great place to start as dryers are big consumers of electricity. For example, dryers typically use around 900 kWh each year as compared to a refrigerator, which uses around 455 kWh each year.

There have been big developments with dryers in recent years, and Energy Star awarded two standouts – the LG EcoHybrid Heat Pump Dryer and the Whirlpool Hybrid-Care™ Heat Pump Dryer – the 2014 Emerging Technology Award.

Using heat pump technology, these dryers offer 40 percent in energy savings if operated on their most efficient settings and can save more than \$400 over the life of the dryer. If you are interested in purchasing other appliances or products, remember to visit energy-star.gov and check out their "Most Efficient 2015" list to help you determine which products – from windows and HVAC systems to televisions and washers – are the most efficient for your home.

And don't forget that Clay Electric Co-operative is your partner in

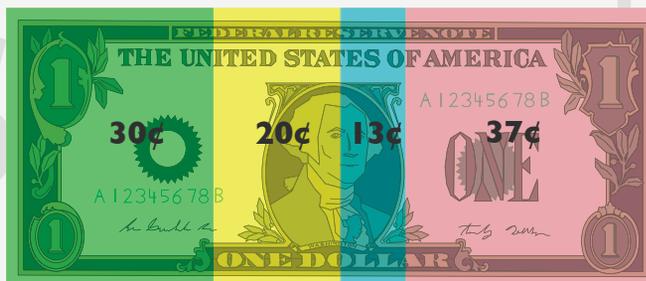


energy savings. If you do upgrade your HVAC system to an energy efficient ground source or air source heat pump ask about our rebates and our special electric rates.

April Lollar writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

EVER WONDER WHERE YOUR MONEY GOES?

Getting electricity from the power plant to your home so that you have power day or night takes money. And because electric co-ops are not-for-profit, we are committed to providing you electric power at-cost. Here's a quick breakdown.



*This is a breakdown of typical utility costs. Source: NRECA

Keeping you safe during and after summer storms

By Laura Cook

No one knows electrical safety better than the experts who practice it every single day. Clay Electric Co-operative encourages you to practice safety with these reminders – for during and after a summer storm:

Avoid wires and water — When lightning strikes a home during a storm, the electrical charge can surge through pipes and utility wires. That means you can get zapped if you're touching water or any device that's plugged in, whether it's a landline phone or toaster.

Skip the makeshift shelter — During a storm, it's tempting to

take cover under a picnic gazebo or golf cart, but in open-sided structures with no conductors to channel strikes, a bolt's path of least resistance to the ground could be you. On top of that, these structures raise your risk of a lightning strike because of their height. Keep moving toward suitable shelter.

Portable generators — Take special care with portable generators, which can provide a good source of power, but if improperly installed or operated, can become deadly. Do not connect generators directly to household wiring. Power from generators can back-feed along power lines and

electrocute anyone coming in contact with them, including co-op line workers making repairs. It's best to hire a qualified, licensed electrician to install your generator and ensure that it meets local electrical codes.

Flooded areas — Stay away from downed power lines and avoid walking through flooded areas. Power lines could be submerged and still live with electricity. Report any downed lines you see to Clay Electric by calling 662-2171 or toll free 1-800-582-9012 or call emergency response at 911 immediately.

Electrical equipment — Never use electrical equipment that is wet – especially outdoor electrical equipment, which could be a potential danger after a summer storm. Water can damage electrical equipment and parts, posing a shock or fire hazard.

Clay Electric Co-operative, Inc. is a proud member of Touchstone Energy Cooperatives. Along with 750 electric cooperatives nationwide, we have partnered with Touchstone Energy to put safety as our number one concern. For a checklist to assess safety hazards around your home or to take a quick safety quiz, go to <http://www.togetherwesave.com/power-of-community/safety>.



Summer Storm Safety Tip

Strong summer storms can create dangerous situations. Always avoid downed power lines - the wire could be live, which could be deadly for those nearby. Quickly report downed power lines to your local electric cooperative.

 America's Electric Cooperatives