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Top management change at EnerStar

Mike Clark retires, former employee Brent Reyher new CEO

EnerStar Electric Cooperative has a change in leadership as current President/CEO Mike Clark retired from his post in April. In conjunction with Clark's retirement, the EnerStar board of directors appointed former EnerStar employee Brent Reyher as the next company's president and CEO.

Clark's affiliation with EnerStar began in July 1976 as a groundman/truckdriver. He became a journeyman lineman in July 1981 and was promoted to manager of operations in 2005. In December 2015, he rose to the top leadership spot at the cooperative as president and CEO.

"I feel fortunate to have spent my entire career doing something that I have enjoyed, from start to finish. There are dear lifelong friends that I have met through training, storms, and networking all-across Illinois and Indiana that I will miss tremendously," reflected Clark on his co-op tenure. "I've worked with some incredible people throughout my years at Enerstar, including the present staff, board and line crew. Everyone has been so supportive, especially in my most recent roll. I am looking forward to spending more time with my family and frequent travel with my lovely wife Cindy."

"We have enjoyed working with Mike over the years and wish him nothing but the best," said Dan Gard,



Mike Clark

chairman of the EnerStar Electric board of directors. "The board appreciates his service to the company, as well as the many accomplishments he has achieved during his tenure as CEO."

Gard added that he is confident that Reyher will do a fine job as the next EnerStar CEO. "Brent's experience with cooperatives, power supply and transmission make him an excellent choice for our co-op," said Gard. "We are confident we will see the tradition of exceptional leadership carried forward by Brent and we look forward to working with him."

A native of Brazil, Ind., Reyher holds a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology. Upon graduation, he was employed at Indiana Municipal Power Agency as a power supply coordinator prior to joining EnerStar Electric

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Paris, IL 61944
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Brent Reyher

Cooperative in 1997 as the vice president of energy resources. While he was employed at EnerStar, his responsibilities included power supply, distribution system analysis, development of construction work plans and cost of service studies.

Reyher was most recently employed at Wabash Valley Power Alliance in Indianapolis as a manager of delivery services. Wabash is a generation and transmission cooperative that supplies EnerStar's wholesale power. During his Wabash tenure, he continued to work closely with EnerStar staff on multiple transmission projects including remotely controlled line switches as well as the 69kV circuit serving EnerStar's Martinsville substation.

"Through Mike's years of leadership, the cooperative has made great strides in member service, reliability, safety and the utilization of technology, leaving us well positioned for the future," Reyher said. "I look forward to building on those accomplishments while leading such a talented team of employees."

COVID-19: Previously announced rate increase delayed

As reported in the February 2020 issue of this magazine, EnerStar Electric Cooperative was to have a small increase in its electric rates beginning April 2020. It was the first increase in seven years. Amid the COVID-19 situation, upon staff recommendation, the board of directors voted to delay the increase until a later date.

"Even though a rate increase is necessary for the financial stability of the cooperative, EnerStar's dedication to helping its members in the months ahead is our priority," said EnerStar CEO Mike Clark.

The rate increase delay is just one more step the cooperative is taking to support members during these uncertain times. "One of the principles that EnerStar was founded on is 'concern for community,'" Clark said. "EnerStar will continue to provide the quality service that our members expect, and we want to assure them that we continue to look for ways that we can support them at this time."

Other steps the cooperative is taking to assist the membership includes working with members during these difficult times. "If any of our members are facing a financial strain and paying the electric bill will create an additional hardship, call us. We can help with arrangements and other payment assistance. We are also waiving late fees so no need to worry about that," emphasized Clark. "These are uncertain times, but we will all get through it together."

When implemented later, the rate increase will be in the form of an additional \$5 to the "Grid Access Fee," formerly listed on the

billing statement as the "Facility Charge." This charge is common among electric utilities and it helps utilities recover the fixed costs of the substations, equipment, poles, wire, transformers and right-of-way maintenance necessary to get power to members' accounts. Small commercial accounts will also see the increase. It results in about a 3 percent increase on the average residential member.

Clark stated that staff is closely monitoring all financial aspects of the cooperative which includes updating the 2020 budget. "There is a lot going on with our economy right now that influences our budget. Even something as simple as more members being home during

"EnerStar will continue to provide the quality service that our members expect, and we want to assure them that we continue to look for ways that we can support them at this time."

the day can change the anticipated sales. There is just a lot up in the air right now." He added that the co-op's dedicated and capable team of employees continually focus on improving operations and finding efficiencies to be good stewards of the members' investment in the co-op, and those efforts have been a big reason rates have remained stable for many years.

"As a member-owned, not for profit cooperative, EnerStar puts our members first," Clark said. "That focus will not change."

EnerStar director election results announced

EnerStar Electric Cooperative has announced the director election results on voting which concluded on March 28. The cooperative is a democratically controlled, not-for-profit electric co-op that is governed by nine directors elected by and from the members of their respective voting districts to serve a three-year term in office.



*Jeff Zimmerman
Voting District A.*

Jeff Zimmerman of Oakland ran unopposed and was re-elected in Voting District A.



*Jonathon "Thad" Martin
Voting District B*

The newly elected director for Voting District B is Jonathon "Thad" Martin of Paris, who received 240 votes to fill the vacancy created by Robert Staley II, who did not seek reelection. Bob Abernathy of Paris received 130 votes.

Dan Gard, Jr. of West Union was re-elected for Voting District C receiving 240 votes. Adam Meehling of Marshall received 131.



*Dan Gard, Jr.
Voting District C*

EnerStar CEO Mike Clark stated, "Thank you to all the director candidates for their interest in serving the cooperative by pursuing a seat on the board of directors. We had a record 26 percent of members vote this year and I want to thank the members who took time to vote and participate in this democratic process."

At this time, Clark stated the cooperative is currently reviewing options for rescheduling the annual meeting that was postponed. "We will continue to monitor the situation to determine if the meeting can be rescheduled and held at a later date."

Clark emphasized that in these uncertain times, EnerStar Electric Cooperative remains committed to two key priorities: Keeping the lights on and the safety of its membership and employees. The lobby at the Paris office remains temporarily closed. In addition, the co-op has instituted several measures to safeguard employees against any potential illness. This includes some employees working off-site and cancelling all non-essential business travel.

"If any of our members are facing a financial strain and paying the electric bill will create an additional hardship, call us. We can help with arrangements and other payment assistance. We are also waiving late fees so no need to worry about that," said EnerStar CEO Mike Clark. "These are uncertain times, but we will all get through it together."

"One of the principles that EnerStar was founded on is 'concern for community.' We are taking these measures to help those that might be financially impacted due to the COVID-19 situation," Clark said. "EnerStar will continue to provide the quality service that our members expect, and we want to assure them that we continue to look for ways that we can support them at this time."

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**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

BUDGET

Now is a great time to sign up for budget billing

Members wanting to eliminate the fluctuations of their monthly electric bills are encouraged to sign up for EnerStar's Budget Billing program!

Accounts with at least 12 months of consumption history and with account balances paid in full are eligible.

- Monthly budget bills are reevaluated in April, August and December based on the account's consumption history. If necessary, the monthly amount will be adjusted accordingly.
- There is no "catch up" month. When reevaluating the account, any under-collected amounts and overpaid amounts are "rolled over" into the next 12 months.

- Monthly budget bills must be paid before the disconnect date. If payment is not received, the account will be removed from the budget plan.
- If an account is removed from budget billing for any reason, any balance on the account is due immediately.
- Budget Billing is automatically renewed, unless terminated by either the member or the cooperative.

*Think you might be interested in
EnerStar's Budget Billing program?
If so contact a Member Accounts
Representative at
1-800-635-4145 or via email at
billing@enerstar.com.*

**Our office
will be closed
Monday,
May 25, for
Memorial Day.**

**As of press time, we do not know when
the co-op office will re-open.**