

## Winter Weather Preparedness

Heavy accumulations of ice and snow coupled with fluctuating winter temperatures can bring down utility poles, trees and limbs with the ability to disrupt power for days on end. With this comes a threat to property and also to life itself.

In a winter storm emergency, restoring power and heat to consumers is the highest priority, and electric utility crews work around the clock to restore service, says John Meng Executive Vice President/General Manager of Clay Electric Cooperative. Severe damage to power lines and distribution systems may take days to repair, especially if the icing conditions are ongoing.

Avoid going outside if possible. Downed power lines could be submerged in snow and ice and difficult to identify. When outside, treat all downed and hanging lines as if they are energized electric lines: Stay away, warn others to stay away and immediately contact your utility company. Remember that downed power lines do NOT have to be arcing, sparking or moving to be live and deadly.

Safe Electricity stresses the importance of being prepared for dangerous winter storms and the power outages they may cause. Preparing ahead of time in order to have the right supplies and the knowledge to stay warm safely are keys to weathering a winter storm emergency. Safe Electricity offers the following tips to winterize your home:

- Insulate walls, attics and pipes
- Caulk and install weather-strips on windows and doors



- Install storm windows or plastic sheeting to cover windows
- Repair roof leaks
- Call the utility company to cut branches away from your home and power lines

Safe Electricity emphasizes that everyone, particularly families with special needs, must be prepared in case of a winter emergency and long-term power outages.

- Always keep a battery-powered radio or TV, flashlights and a supply of fresh batteries in case of an emergency. Test these ahead of time to make sure they are operational.
- Know where to find extra blankets.

- Fill spare containers with water for washing, and keep a supply of bottled drinking water on hand.
- Keep a supply of non-perishable food items, along with a hand opener for canned food.
- Switch off lights and appliances to prevent damaging appliances and overloading circuits when power is restored. Leave one lamp or light switch on as a signal for when your power returns.
- To prevent water pipes from freezing, keep faucets turned on slightly so that water drips from the tap. Know how to shut off water valves just in case a pipe bursts.
- Check on elderly or disabled friends and neighbors.

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# 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 Croy.

**Approved** the minutes of the regular meeting held October 26, 2009.

**Accepted** 17 new members for service.

**Canceled** 16 members no longer receiving service.

**Approved** work orders in the amount of \$69,111.79.

**Accepted** the disbursement list for the month of October, 2009.

**Approved** the financial and maintenance reports for the month of October, 2009 as presented by Gen. Mgr. Meng.

**Heard** a report by Trustee

Logan concerning the recent AIEC Board meeting.

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

**Approved** a resolution submitting Trustees Rudolphi, Herman, and Smith and V.P. / Gen. Mgr. Meng as Directors to represent Clay Electric Cooperative on the Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC) Board beginning January 1, 2010.

**Discussed** the upcoming NRECA Annual Meeting.

**Discussed** CFC Loan Repricing and **Approved** authorization given to V.P. / Gen. Mgr. Meng to commit to an interest rate until the next regular monthly Board meeting.

**Heard** an operations report by Gen. Mgr. Meng regarding Cooperative passing a recent Safety Accreditation Audit, Wellness program to qualify for a reduction in insurance premiums, the safety program,

building repairs, MISO withdrawal, bean harvest on Cooperative property, line of credit with Co-Bank, employee medical condition post surgery, updates from Don Wood AIEC Vice President of Government Relations, B-Speedy Internet services, acquisition of replacement pickup truck and bidding process on the old unit.

**Heard** a report by Gen. Mgr. Meng regarding the 2010 construction unit costs and Policy No. 900-1 and **Approved** no change in said policy.

**Heard** a report by Gen. Mgr. Meng regarding the retirement of Capital Credits to the estates of three deceased members.

**Disbursed** RUS "Lien Accommodation Approval" in regard to the lien accommodation in order for SIPC to secure financing for its share of the Prairie States Energy Campus.

**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 informed that a construction application to USDA Rural Development (RD) for Phase 2 has been funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The construction includes parts of the following townships; S.E. Songer, North Harter, and Stanford. We have also been invited for a funding application for the Phase 3 project which includes 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 or  
Kevin Henry 618-838-6123.

## Is There a Crystal Ball in Washington D.C.?

*Youth to Washington trip may provide answers for your future*



**O**K. So you aren't really into politics. As a junior in high school, you're thinking about college and where you're going to come up with more than \$100,000 to pay for higher education. You're also trying to decide what you want to work at the rest of your life to make that college experience pay off.

Oddly enough, the very people who may have answers to those questions are wearing the title of state legislator or seated in chambers of the U.S. Congress in Washington D.C.

Before you know it, you will be voting in your first election and the weight of the country's decisions will partially belong to you. Will you support a Congressman who wants to pass Cap & Trade? Will you be in favor of farm subsidies? As you approach what was once "draft-age," do you think we should send more troops to Iraq and Afghanistan or should the military be strengthening our borders? Oh, and when you get the opportunity to meet your Congressman, in addition to these questions will you ask: What has Congress done to make higher education more affordable and will I be able to find a job when I graduate?

Electric and telephone cooperatives in more than 40 states believe that young people deserve a first-class opportunity to educate themselves in the government process. Each year, the cooperatives across the nation sponsor more than 1,500 high school students to make the trek to Washington to get that personal initiation, and they have a lot of fun in the process.

It all begins in Springfield on April 21, 2010 during the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperative Youth Day where nearly 300 students will visit the State Capitol and spend much of the morning meeting with legislators. You will tour the Supreme Court and spend the afternoon touring local sites.

To be considered for this trip, see your guidance counselor for details as participation rules vary from co-op to co-op.

This year marks the 51st trip to the nation's capital and promises to be as exciting as ever. Students learn the principles required to keep cooperative members working together for the cooperative's success by establishing their own "chip and pop" cooperative while on the bus trip.

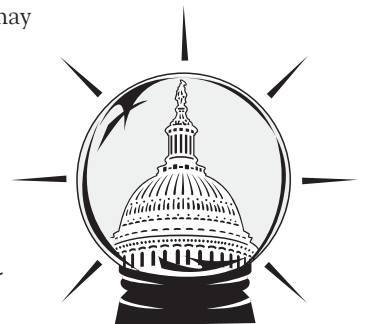
While in Washington during

the week of June 11-18, in addition to meeting with Congressman from Illinois, students are treated to tours of historic sites, given the opportunity to make life-long friends and receive information to help determine career paths.

Hopefully, at the conclusion of the tour, you will understand the only crystal ball in Washington is the one you help develop through your participation in government and public service. The future of the country depends on the youth of today getting involved.

You must be a junior in high school, and the child of a Clay Electric Cooperative member to be eligible.

To learn about this opportunity, contact your Guidance Counselor or Doug Hockman at Clay Electric Cooperative 618-662-2171. You may also check out the Youth Tour through the Association Of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) at [www.aiec.coop](http://www.aiec.coop) for additional details.



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- Do not use charcoal grills or gas ovens to heat your home; this could lead to carbon monoxide poisoning.
- It's a good idea to assemble a disaster supply kit that includes needed items ahead of time. Don't forget to include a first aid kit, prescription medications, and any special items needed for infant, elderly or disabled family members.

Maintaining warmth is a priority during a winter emergency. Loss of body heat or hypothermia can be life threatening. In order to avoid cold weather fatalities:

- Stay inside and dress in warm, layered clothing.
- Close off unneeded rooms.
- When using an alternative heat source, follow operating instructions, use fire safeguards and be sure to properly ventilate. Always keep a multipurpose, dry-chemical fire extinguisher nearby and know how to use it.

- Stuff towels and rags underneath doors to keep the heat in.
- Cover windows at night.
- Maintain a regular diet. Food provides the body with energy for creating its own energy.
- Drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated.
- Move around to keep warm, but not enough to perspire. Perspiring causes the body to lose fluids which could potentially lead to dehydration.
- Keep a close eye on the temperature in your home. Infants or persons over age 65 are more susceptible to the cold. You may want to stay with friends, relatives or in a shelter if you can't keep your home warm.
- Consider installing ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI) for electrical outlets in areas that might be affected by melting snow or ice. This will help prevent electrocutions and electrical shock injuries. Portable GFCIs that do not require tools for installation can also be purchased for winter emergency supply kits.

If you use a standby generator, make sure it has a transfer safety switch or that your power is cut off at the breaker box before you operate it. This prevents electricity from traveling back through the power lines, or what is also known as back feed. Back feed creates danger for anyone near power lines, particularly crews working to restore power. Be sure to let your electric utility know that you have a generator.

Safe Electricity is committed to educating everyone on how to have a safe winter. For more information and electrical safety tips, visit the [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org) website. Safe Electricity is an electrical safety public awareness program created and supported by a coalition of hundreds of organizations, including electric utilities, educators and other entities committed to promoting electrical safety.

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## Report Elder Abuse

Were you the victim of a home repair scam?

*Don't let it happen again!*

- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Get estimates before doing home renovations.
- Do not pay for work in advance.
- Never do business without checking references.
- Don't be afraid to call the police and have them check out the credentials of someone who is working in your area.

Were you the victim of a telemarketing scam?

*Don't let it happen again!*

- Don't pay for any prize or send money to improve your chances of winning. It's illegal to ask you to pay to enter a contest.
- Don't be bullied into buying something “right now.” If the caller persists, end the call.
- Don't give your credit card number to anyone over the phone unless you made the call.
- Don't give any caller your bank account number.

If you or someone you know has been the victim of a scam, **Break the Silence. Call the Department on Aging to talk confidentially with someone who will help you to alleviate the situation.**

Illinois Department on Aging  
Elder Abuse Hotline:  
1-866-800-1409 (Voice)  
1-888-206-1327 (TTY)