

# Clay Electric News

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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

## From the Manager

**Y**our cooperative changes and adapts to the times. Technology is constantly improving, practices are always evolving, and the people we work with change over time. Clay Electric Co-operative would like to thank Luke Johnson for his many years working for our members. From his time as an apprentice lineman, to foreman of the construction crew, to operations manager, and to CEO of the company, Luke has always worked hard to keep the lights on for our membership. Luke is taking a step in a new direction with his life, and we wish him all the best in the new challenges before him.

His departure means changes at Clay Electric, but not drastic ones. One of those changes is that I have been appointed as interim CEO and that means introductions are in order.

My name is Matt Conklin and I've been working for the membership for 20 years. I was born and raised in Flora and have worked my way up from apprentice lineman to construction line foreman, to operations manager, and now I get to serve you as your interim CEO.

Clay Electric Co-operative continues to be in a good position and the day-to-day operations will not see any significant changes. We still have construction plans for the spring to modernize the backbone of our system with new three-phase. In addition to the three-phase rebuild, our crews will be changing out poles and performing the infrastructure maintenance that has drastically cut down on outages over the last several years. The biggest immediate change is the picture at the bottom right of this letter. I

look forward to doing my part to help guide the cooperative forward into a safe and secure energy future for all our members.

One thing that hasn't changed is that you should keep a lookout for your member number in the center section of this magazine. There are three member numbers hidden in Clay Electric News. If you find your number and give us a call you win \$5 off your next bill!



**Matt Conklin**  
*Interim CEO*

## Shut the Door on Energy Waste.



Did you know **25% to 40%** of energy used to heat and cool your home is wasted through air leaks? Seal all exterior doors with weatherstripping to minimize energy waste.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

About 30% of a home's heating energy is lost through inefficient windows. Caulk and weatherstrip all windows to seal air leaks.

When running your home heating system, lock all operable windows to ensure the tightest seal possible.

Source: Dept. of Energy



# Five safety tips for your home workshop

**W**ithout taking proper precautions, the enjoyment of a do-it-yourself project can quickly turn into disaster. You may have all the latest power tools, hand tools, hardware and materials, but if you do not put safety first, you may end up with a trip to the hospital instead of a new set of shelves, upgraded lighting in the

for a belt sander or scroll saw, however, take the gloves off to minimize the risk of them getting caught and so you get tactile feedback in case anything goes wrong.

## Observe electrical safety

Before you start any DIY project, inspect all your power tools and their

while using a power tool. Anything cluttering up your worktable introduces obstacles that can get caught in a saw or drill mechanism or block your ability to move your project safely as you work on it. The byproducts of do-it-yourself work, such as sawdust, cast-off nails and screws, and rags or brushes with potentially combustible or hazardous fluids on them, increase the risk of fires and projectiles.

## Keep tools in good condition

Besides inspecting the cords and plugs for electrical safety, everything works better in the workshop if you have clean, sharp and well-lubricated tools. A dull saw blade brings a much higher chance of injury than a sharp one. It is less likely to cut smoothly through the wood or other material and more likely to kick back and cut you. Dull saws, routers or drill bits also run the risk of breaking during use. Use appropriate lubrication, such as WD-40 or others specifically created for



kitchen or a trendy shiplap accent wall in the bedroom. **14001-001** Here are some fundamental workshop and electrical safety tips to help keep things running smoothly.

## Wear safety gear, glasses and gloves

The first rule of workshop safety is to dress appropriately. Avoid loose clothing that can get caught in power tools. Never wear dangling jewelry or scarves. Roll up your sleeves or choose ones that are tight against your skin. Closed-toe shoes are a must, and steel-toed boots are recommended.

Safety glasses are necessary 100 percent of the time. Gloves are fine for handling materials. Before you reach

cords for loose plugs, exposed wires or worn insulation. Fires are one of the top dangers when working with electric gear, especially if you have combustible materials around, such as sawdust.

If you must use an extension cord, choose one long, heavy-duty (appropriately rated) cord and keep it untangled and out of the way to prevent tripping and yanking your tools off the workbench. When you are done working, unplug everything from the extension cord and put it away.

## Keep your workshop clean

Anything left on the floor is a tripping hazard, and you do not want to imagine what could happen if you trip

power tools.

## Know your limits

If you have a lot of experience as a do-it-yourselfer, there are projects you can tackle from memory. However, approach anything new as if you are a beginner for maximum workshop safety. Read instructions. Look up reputable guide videos to refresh your skills or learn something new. Most importantly, recognize when you are in over your head and leave those non-DIY projects to the professionals.

For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



# Five reasons we love serving our members

**F**ebruary may be the shortest month, but it's packed with special observances like Presidents Day, Black History Month and Valentine's Day, in addition to a host of unofficial "national" days you've probably never heard of like "National Pizza Day (Feb. 9)." But they all have something in common. They were created to draw attention to a particular issue or theme.

Valentine's Day may seem like an observance originally created by a greeting card company, but over time, it's become a widely celebrated day generating millions of dollars spent on flowers, candy and of course, greeting cards professing our love. But Valentine's Day isn't just for lovebirds. It's also the perfect time to let friends, family, co-workers and other special people in our lives know we care about them—with or without a store-bought greeting card.

So, in that vein, we've created our list of top five reasons why we love serving you, the members of Clay Electric Co-operative.

**1. WE LOVE SERVING OUR MEMBERS BECAUSE WITHOUT YOU, THE CO-OP WOULDN'T EXIST.**

Our purpose is to provide safe, reliable, and exceptional service to the membership. Simply put, Clay Electric Co-operative exists to serve you. That's why we were formed in 1946 – to bring power to our local area when for-profit utilities would not.

**2. YOU ENABLE US TO COMPLETE OUR MISSION BY SUPPORTING OUR EFFORTS TO GIVE BACK.**

A major part of our mission is to serve our community. With your assistance, we're able to support community programs like Clay County CEO.

**3. MEMBERS OF OUR CO-OP ALSO SERVE ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.**

They provide guidance for setting co-op priorities and helping make big decisions. Because our board

members live in the area, they're able to serve as the pulse of the larger community and identify immediate and long-term needs. The broader co-op membership provides helpful input through their vote on director elections and by weighing in on co-op and community issues.

**4. YOU HELP US GET IT RIGHT. CLAY ELECTRIC CO-OPERATIVE MEMBERS ARE GREAT ABOUT KEEPING US IN THE KNOW.**

We do our best to avoid power outages, but Mother Nature can occasionally throw us a curveball; our members are quick to report any power disruptions and are patient as our crews work to safely restore power. We know outages are frustrating, and your support as we work through storms means so much to our employees.

**5. YOU AND OTHER CLAY ELECTRIC CO-OPERATIVE MEMBERS MAKE UP THE COMMUNITY WE SERVE – AND FOR US, IT'S ALL ABOUT COMMUNITY.**

Our employees live and work here too and care about our community the same way you do. We're invested and work to help it thrive. That's why Clay Electric Co-operative donates to local schools and scholarship funds.

As a co-op, our mission is to enhance the quality of life in our community and look after its long-term interests. **13051-001** We love serving our members and our local community, and just like you, want to see it continue to thrive.



# Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting

## December 27, 2021

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Clay Electric Co-operative, Inc. (CECI) was held at the Clay Electric Co-operative Headquarters, Flora, Illinois beginning at 5:00 o'clock p.m. on Monday, December 27, 2021

Trustees present were: Kevin Logan, Bob Pierson, Bill Croy, Richard Rudolphi, Frank Czyzewski, Frank Herman, Josh Schnepfer, Evan Smith and Neil Gould attended by phone. Also present were: Luke Johnson, CEO and Matt Conklin, Operations Manager. The meeting was opened by Bob Pierson, who presided and Bill Croy, acted as secretary thereof.

The invocation was given by Luke Johnson and was followed by the pledge of allegiance.

The following proceedings were had [all action being first duly moved and seconded and all action taken being upon the unanimous vote of the Board or without dissenting vote of abstention unless otherwise stated]:

**APPROVED**, the Suggested Agenda.

**APPROVED**, the Consent Agenda including the following:

- **APPROVED**, the prior meeting minutes;
- **APPROVED**, the Special Board meeting minutes;
- **APPROVED**, (a) to admit to membership those 9 applicants connected for service since the last such review by the board, and (b) cancel those 11 former members shown on the Manager's Report since the last such review by the Board, said members no longer taking service.

**REVIEWED**, the Consent Agenda including the following:

- **REVIEWED**, the Work Orders;
- **REVIEWED**, the Disbursements;
- **REVIEWED**, the Credit Card Statements;
- **REVIEWED**, the Attorney Retainer;
- **REVIEWED**, the Account Summary Report;
- **REVIEWED**, the Federated Report from the Board

- **REVIEWED**, the CRC Report from the Board
- **REVIEWED**, IRS Mileage for 2022
- **REVIEWED**, NCSC Report from the Board.
- **APPROVED**, December write-offs.
- **APPROVED**, Delegates and Alternates for 2022
- **APPROVED**, SIPC Resolution
- **APPROVED**, Deceased Estates
- **APPROVED**, Clay Director Per Diem update

**HEARD**, 12839-001 a report on NRECA Annual Meeting

**HEARD**, a report on Supply Chain Issues

- Ransomware attacks

**HEARD**, a report by Frank Herman regarding the SIPC Financials and Prairie State update.

- SIPC Capital Credit Allocation

**HEARD**, a report by Kevin Logan regarding AIEC Meeting.

**APPROVED** the 2022 Budget including:

- SIPC Power Costs
- Capital Credits;
- Advertising and Donations;
- Capital Items;
- Final Draft of the Budget.

**HEARD** and **APPROVED**, a financial report by Luke Johnson as to the following:

- Monthly Reconciliation;
- SIPC Power Delivered in October 2021;
- October 2021 Cash Flow;
- Line Loss;
- October 2021 Form 7;
- October 2021 Balance Sheet;
- Current Equity.

**REVIEWED** the Safety Committee Report.

**REVIEWED**, the Monday morning Safety meeting held December 27, 2021.

**HEARD** and **APPROVED**, the Manager's report by Luke Johnson on the following topics.

- Clay Strategic Planning Update;
- Year End Operations Report;
- Communications Report;

- Upcoming meetings.

**WERE UPDATED**, on the Strategic Plan

**REVIEWED**, the Year End Operations Report

**REVIEWED**, the Communications Report

**WERE REMINDED**, of upcoming meetings on Jan. 24, 2022, Feb. 28, 2022 and March 28, 2022 at 5 p.m. in the Clay Board Room.


**REVIEWED**, thank you cards.

There being no further business to come before the Board, said meeting was declared adjourned at 7:02 p.m.



Every month we will have three member numbers hidden throughout Clay Electric News. If you find your member number that corresponds to the one found on the upper right corner of your bill, call our office and identify your number and the page it's on. If correct, you will win a \$5 credit on your next electric bill.

## Clay Electric Co-operative, Inc.

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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.  
[www.ceci.coop](http://www.ceci.coop)  
[facebook.com/ceci.coop](https://facebook.com/ceci.coop)

