



Clinton County Connection

Your Touchstone Energy Cooperative

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Putting safety first – on the job and at home

Celebrating Farm Safety Month with Foreman Craig Benhoff and his two young farmers Warren and Drew

In September, we recognize Farm Safety Month, a time to raise awareness about the unique hazards faced by those who live and work on farms. From operating heavy machinery to working near electrical infrastructure, agriculture remains one of the most dangerous industries in the United States. That's why education, preparation and daily safe practices are key — especially for families raising the next generation of farmers.

At Clinton County Electric Cooperative, safety is at the heart of everything we do. And, for Foreman Craig Benhoff, that commitment goes far beyond the job site.

Craig has been a dedicated part of the CCEC team for years,



working in all kinds of conditions to maintain and restore power for our members. As a foreman, he leads by example — stressing proper safety procedures, double-checking work zones, and reinforcing the importance of teamwork and communication during every job.

But perhaps where his safety mindset matters most is at home, where he and his wife Casey are raising two young boys, Warren and Drew, with deep roots in rural life.

“They’re still little, but they’re always watching,” Craig says. “I want

them to understand from an early age that safety isn’t something you think about only when something goes wrong. It’s something you live by — every single day.”

While his sons aren’t quite old enough to be doing all the farm work yet, Craig makes a point to teach them the basics of staying safe around farm equipment and electricity. They know to never go near electrical boxes, stay far away from grain bins and machinery, and always ask before entering any area of the farm. The hope is that by planting

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Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Energy used for cooling and heating your home makes up the largest portion of your monthly energy bills.

By combining regular equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing and thermostat settings, you can save about 30% on your energy bills while helping our environment.

Source: energy.gov



the seeds of caution now, the habits will grow along with them.

Farm Safety Month is also an important reminder for farm families to review safety protocols — from checking the location of overhead power lines before moving tall equipment to ensuring all workers, young or old, understand emergency procedures. Even things like marking buried utility lines before digging or checking for damaged cords on tools can prevent life-threatening accidents.

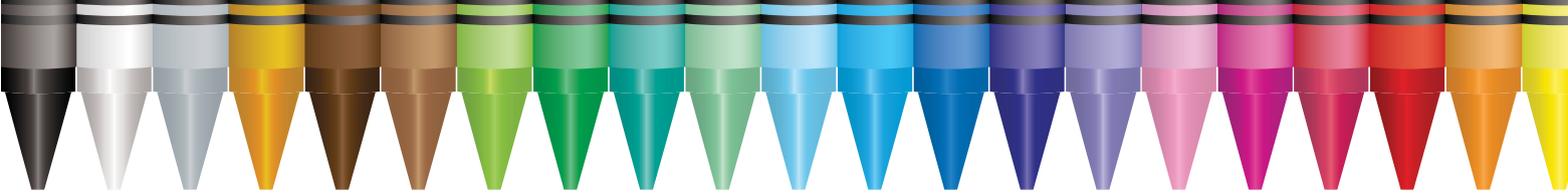
"Farming is a proud way of life, but it also comes with risks," Craig says. "I want my kids to love it like I do — but I also want them to understand how to respect the dangers that come with it."

We're proud to highlight Craig and his family during Farm Safety Month. His dedication to protecting

not just his crew, but also his family and community, is a reflection of what makes rural life so strong — care, responsibility and looking out for one another.

At Clinton County Electric, we salute all our members who live and work on the land. As we celebrate Farm Safety Month, we encourage everyone to take a moment to review your own safety practices and make sure your farm or home is as safe as it can be for the people you love most.





Attention Educators and Administrators!

Have an educational project you'd like funded?

\$4,000 available through Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants

Enter Touchstone Energy's Classroom Empowerment Grant Competition and your submission could win a \$500 grant for classroom and education enhancement projects!

Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants totaling \$4,000 are being funded by Clinton County Electric Cooperative (CCEC) for the 2025-2026 school year. For more information about the grant program, or to get an application, please contact your school superintendent or Katy Singler at singler@cceci.com.

Grant applications will need to include the following information:

1. A description of the project and what it will accomplish
2. The estimated cost of the project
3. An explanation of why outside funds are necessary to complete the project
4. Whether other funding options have been pursued, and if so, how
5. When project will be completed
6. The number of people affected by the project
7. If the project's goals are measurable, and how
8. How the project ties in Touchstone Energy's four core values of Integrity, Accountability, Innovation, and Commitment to Community

Photos and supporting data are optional. Grant applications must be received at CCEC by Nov. 7, 2025. Entries will be evaluated by an impartial panel of judges. Awards will be announced on Dec. 8, 2025.



Touchstone Energy®
The power of human connections

Last year's winners:

\$1,000 – Germantown Elementary School

Submitting educators: Teacher Rose Wilken & Superintendent Robin Becker

\$500 – Mater Dei Catholic High School

Submitting educator: Teacher Helen Essenpreis

\$500 – Wesclin Middle School

Submitting educator: Teacher Angie Schlimme

\$500 – New Baden Elementary School

Submitting educator: Teacher Meg Billhartz

\$500 – Breese District 12

Submitting educator: Teacher Amy Niemeyer

\$500 – Bartelso Elementary School

Submitting educator: Superintendent Tom Siegler



Our office will be closed Monday, Sept. 1 in honor of Labor Day. Although the office will be closed, obtain your account information and pay your bill 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by visiting our website at www.cceci.com or by calling 800-526-7282.



FARM SAFETY

POWER SOURCES

Make sure EVERYONE is trained on safe practices around power transmission. This includes you, your employees, seasonal workers, family members, and anyone else accessing your farm. Keep in mind:

- Bigger equipment allows farmers to cover more ground in less time; however, this can be a hazard when electrical infrastructures are nearby.
- Inexperienced, fatigued or distracted operators are more likely to come in contact with a power line or pole.
- Sources of electricity include power lines, electrical boxes, and damaged (non-grounded) guy wires.

If your equipment does hit a power line, pole, or guy wire, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 9-1-1, warn others to stay away, and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.



 Safe
Electricity.org