



# CLARKE REC Headlines

The official publication of Clarke Electric Cooperative



**SAFETY DRIVEN | ENERGY SMART | COMMUNITY INVESTED** **Volume No. 80 No.12 | December 2020**

## Merry Christmas AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

The Clarke Electric offices will be closed Thursday and Friday, Dec. 24-25 for Christmas and Friday, Jan. 1 for New Years so our employees may enjoy the holidays with their families. We wish all our members a safe, happy and healthy holiday season!



### Energy Efficiency



#### Tip of the Month

Energy bills can increase during winter for a variety of reasons, like houseguests, more time spent at home, and shorter days and longer nights. Small actions, like turning down your thermostat, replacing old bulbs with LEDs, and washing clothes in cold water can help you save.



### Looking Out for You: October Outages

- Equipment failure – 5
- Switching error/construction - 3
- Unknown - 3
- Lightning - 2
- Motor Vehicle – 2
- Animal/bird - 1
- Trees - 1



**CLARKE**  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.  
Safety Driven • Energy Smart • Community Invested

Your Touchstone Energy Cooperative

P.O. Box 161 1103 N. Main  
Osceola, IA 50213-0161  
www.cecnet.net



*Your electric cooperative family wishes you a safe and blessed holiday season. Thank you for your continued support during this unprecedented year of the pandemic and our facility remodel project. We wish you and your loved ones all the best in 2021!*

## New (Temporary) Location, Same Great Service!

**W**ELCOME TO OUR TEMPORARY office at 131 W. Washington. We have been in our temp office for almost two weeks and just about have all of the “bugs” worked out.

We appreciate your patience as we establish a new routine along with acclimating to new service providers for our internet and utilities. Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO), our IT provider, worked diligently to make sure the transition went smoothly and made sure both locations could function until we made the move to the uptown location.



**CLARKE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**  
**131 W. Washington**  
**Osceola, IA**

*Reading pays! We have hidden two of our members' account numbers in this issue. If you find your member location number, call during December to have \$10 deducted from your monthly energy account.*

# Support of Our Communities is Vital

**W**ITH THE HOLIDAY SEASON upon us and the new year just around the corner, I can't help but reflect on the gratitude I feel for our communities. I think most of us agree this has been a year like no other—certainly in my lifetime. And while we've seen our share of challenges, I am heartened by the ways in which we have all pulled together to make our communities stronger.

Each year, Clarke Electric donates pop can money to the local Toys for Christmas program. Sometimes employees will adopt a family and purchase gifts for them, including a food voucher to help them with their holiday meal. Sometimes it is helping wrap and sort gifts.

This year, Clarke Electric participated in the Osceola Chamber Main Street's First Annual Christmas Giving Trees exhibit at the Lakeside Hotel Casino. Office staff decorated a 6-foot tree that will be placed on display and voted on by the

public through Dec. 16. After the winner is determined, all trees will be donated to local families who do not have a Christmas tree. 60-33-02-08

Some of our employees volunteer their time as representatives on the boards of local organizations to enhance and strengthen the community they live in.

Although the holidays are the time when our guiding principle, "Concern for Community" really shines, the truth is, we do these things all year around. We offer our employees flexibility in their schedules to accommodate volunteer opportunities. We look at co-op volunteerism as an investment in our communities by enabling our employees to donate their time and expertise to help groups that are doing so much for our communities.

I look at volunteerism as the gift that keeps on giving. While it's difficult to quantify the impact that volunteers have, I know full well how they make a tremendous difference in

our communities and make our corner of the world a better place. Many organizations depend on volunteers to fulfill their mission. Volunteers fill in gaps and spread joy and compassion through their efforts. Even assisting with the smallest tasks can make a big impact in the lives of people, animals or an organization in need. Often a big commitment or special skills are not needed, just someone who cares.

I hope you'll consider volunteering. Give an organization or cause that you care about the gift of your compassion, time and talent. At the end of the day, the gift of volunteerism is a gift that will continue giving all year long. So, this holiday season, consider starting a new tradition by giving the gift of your time.



**DAVE OPIE**  
General Manager



*New parking pad*



*Interior demolition*



*Constructing walkway between two buildings*

## Facility Upgrade Progress Report

**T**HE FACILITY UPGRADE AND BUILDING remodel continues moving forward.

- ✓ The new sewer system and water lines are installed.
- ✓ The new customer parking pad is poured and curing.

- ✓ Grading of the driveways will begin soon. The inside demolition is underway with the asbestos abatement work almost complete.
- ✓ A new loading dock has been poured at the existing warehouse. Footings for the new warehouse have been poured.

*Footings for warehouse >*







# The Cooperative Difference: Look for Your Capital Credits in December

**CAPITAL CREDITS, "PATRONAGE dividends," "patronage refunds" –** these are all terms we use when we talk about allocating operating margins and retiring them to Clarke Electric Cooperative member-consumers. It's one of the most important things we do as an electric cooperative and it's what makes our business model unique.

**This year, the CEC Board of Directors allocated \$647,525 to CEC member-consumers from the 2019 margins patronage dividends.** The board also voted to retire the patronage capital allocated in 2002 and a portion of 2003 not to exceed \$300,000. If you were a member of CEC in 2002 and 2003, you should receive patronage dividends. Active (current) member-consumers will receive a credit to their primary electric account in December for the amount of their capital credit. This method results in significant savings of postage and labor costs for CEC and its member-consumers. Also, by applying capital credits to the December bill, the cooperative hopes to help offset the higher utility bills that many of our member-consumers see at this time of year.

Checks are mailed in December to inactive (former) member-consumers due a patronage dividend whose distribution amount is above the \$5 minimum. Inactive account distributions of less than \$5 will

roll over to future years and a check will be issued when the minimum amount of \$5 is reached.

### How Do Capital Credits Work?

The CEC Board of Directors is responsible for authorizing the distribution of capital credits upon an annual review of the financial condition of the cooperative.

If you are wondering how patronage dividends work, here's a quick overview. First, cooperative member-consumers share in the ownership of Clarke Electric Cooperative. When financial conditions allow, member-consumers receive patronage dividends. Here's how Clarke Electric membership pays you back:

- 01 When you move into a home or establish a business in our service territory, you complete an application to become a member-consumer of the cooperative.
- 02 A patronage dividend account is set up in your name and we carefully track your investment in the cooperative (how much electricity you pay the cooperative for) in this account.
- 03 At the end of our fiscal year, any funds remaining after expenses have been paid are allocated\* to your patronage dividend account based on the amount of electricity you used the previous year.

04 Patronage dividends are based on the amount of electricity you use, so the amount you are allocated varies from year to year. Currently, we are on a less than 20-year payout rotation. This means, it will take 18 to 20 years to receive a patronage dividend credit or check.

05 In the spring, the board of directors evaluates the financial condition of the cooperative to determine if we can pay patronage dividends. Dividends may not be paid every year.

06 When patronage is not paid, it is used as operating capital for system improvements and maintenance. This operating capital reduces the need for loans, which helps keep costs down.

07 When the board decides to pay patronage dividends, we calculate the amount we need to pay each member.

08 Anyone who was a member in the years that are retired, will receive a credit on their December bill or former members will receive a check if the amount is above the \$5 minimum. Inactive account distributions of less than \$5 will roll over to future years and a check will be issued when the minimum is reached.

### \*Allocation vs. retirement

An allocation is made annually for each member-consumer, based on the amount

*continued on pg. 4*

## HOW CAPITAL CREDITS WORK

Unlike investor-owned utilities, Clarke Electric Cooperative is a not-for-profit organization that returns its profits, or "margins," back to its member-consumers! As a member-consumer, you are part owner of the co-op and are entitled to receiving money back through capital credit retirements. **Here's how they work:**





**FOR SALE:** 2001 F-350 4X4; 7.3 liter diesel; 107,000 miles; failed DOT inspection (frame)



**FOR SALE:** 2004 F-150 4x4 XLT 6 1/2 ft box; 170,000 miles; 5.0 liter gas

## Trucks for Sale

**T**HE COOPERATIVE HAS TWO trucks for sale by sealed bid. Clarke Electric Cooperative member-consumers and co-op employees are eligible to bid on the trucks. Sealed bids with a minimum bid of \$500 will be accepted by the cooperative until **December 31, 2020**. Both trucks are sold as is with no warranty.

There are two ways to submit your bid:

1. Mail the sealed bid to:  
Attn: Clarke Electric Accountant  
1103 N. Main St  
Osceola, IA 50213
2. Place your sealed bid in the payment dropbox at either co-op office location with "Attn: Clarke Electric Co-op Accountant" printed on the envelope.

The bid must include your name and address to be accepted. Call (641) 342-2173 to make an appointment to see the trucks.

## Capital Credits...from pg. 3

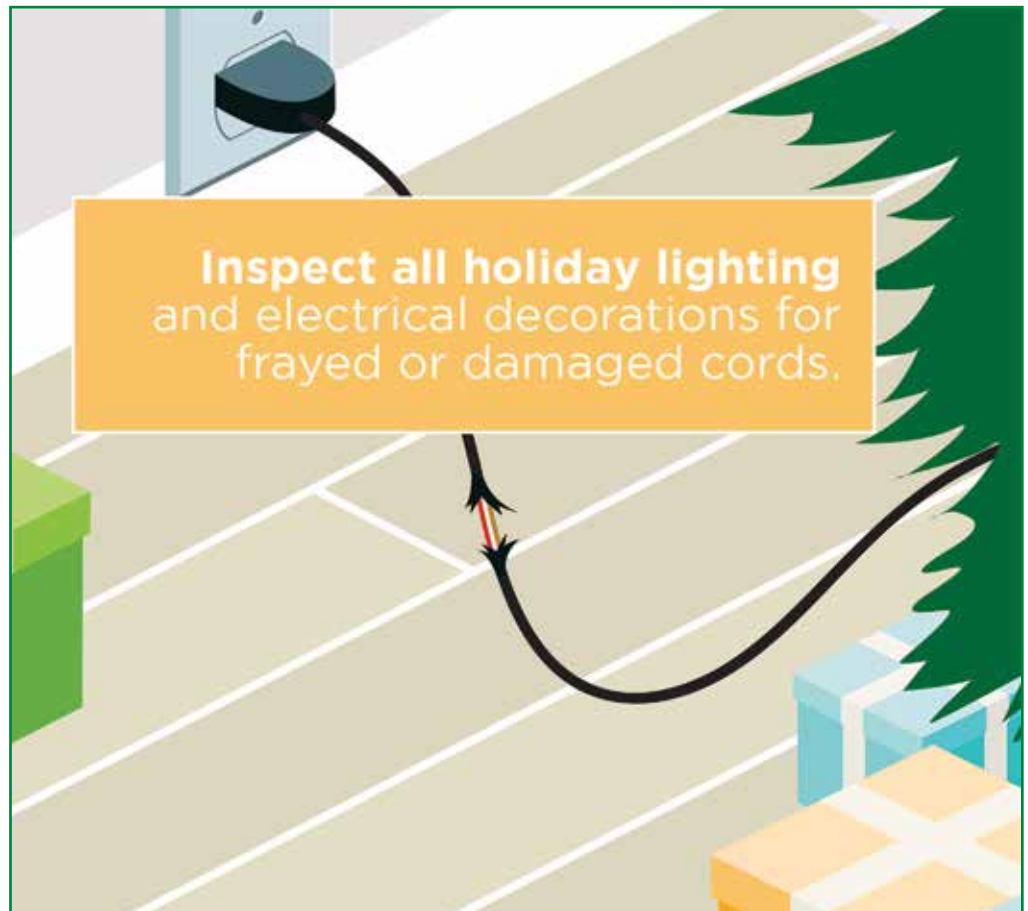
of electricity purchased by that member-consumer the previous year. An allocation is the member-consumer's share of the net margins Clarke Electric sets aside into a separate account. This money is used as operating capital for reliability improvements and maintenances over a period of years.

A retirement is the amount a member receives back as a patronage dividend. It is a portion of the total patronage balance. The amount paid is decided annually by the board of directors based on the financial needs of the cooperative. 37-13-08-04

### Has Your Information Changed? Let Us Know!

It's important for Clarke Electric to maintain updated contact information for our member-consumers. If you've had a recent change, contact the office at (800) 362-2154 with your new information.

## + Safety Driven: Holiday Safety Tip



**CLARKE**  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

David Opie, General Manager  
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