



CLARKE REC Headlines

The official publication of Clarke Electric Cooperative



SAFETY DRIVEN | ENERGY SMART | COMMUNITY INVESTED Volume No. 80 No.10 | October 2020

VETERANS DAY
HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

The Clarke Electric office will be closed Wednesday, Nov. 11

Board Incumbents Retain Seats; Amendment Passes during Co-op Annual Meeting

MEMBER-CONSUMERS OF CLARKE Electric Cooperative voted to re-elect three incumbents to the Clarke Electric Cooperative Board of Directors.

- \$50**
- Nick Brown
 - Mary Davis
 - Steven and Lynn Ebersole
 - Dwaine Evans
 - Ralph or Billie Evans
 - Harold and Linda Foland
 - Larry and Bonnie Foley
 - Norman and Cheryl George
 - Albert Hewlett
 - Harry and Linda McClelland

Bill Willis (District 1), Cody Miller (District 3) and Larry Jackson (District 7) will all return to the board for another three-year term.

Members also had the opportunity to vote on an amendment to the cooperative's Articles of Incorporation that would allow for electronic voting in the future. That amendment passed. Thank you to all who participated in this year's election by returning your ballots.

Those who returned ballots were entered into a prize drawing with the following winners:

- \$100**
- David and Linda Ballard
 - Clinton and Brandi Dyer
 - Larry and Linda Gillaspay
 - Daniel McNeil
 - Randy and Jeanie Short

WATCH

The video of Clarke Electric's 2020 Annual Meeting is now available at www.cec.net as well as our Facebook page, [Facebook.com/CECIowa](https://www.facebook.com/CECIowa)

We hope to see you in person at our next annual meeting Tuesday, Sept. 13, 2021!

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

When you are home and awake, set your thermostat as low as is comfortable. When you are asleep or out of the house, turn your thermostat back 10° to 15° for eight hours and save around 10% a year on your heating and cooling bills.

Looking Out for You: August Outages

- Unknown – 15
- Animal/Birds – 8
- Wind – 8
- Trees - 6
- Equipment/maintenance failure – 5
- Customer Caused - 2
- Maintenance – 1
- Motor vehicle - 1
- Other - 1

Rain or shine, day or night, we're here for you.

October is National Co-op Month.

#PowerOn

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

Annual Meeting Changes Due to Pandemic

The following are excerpts from the general manager's speech given for the annual meeting

NORMALLY, I WOULD PRESENT TO you in person at our annual meeting; but nothing is normal in 2020. Hopefully, our annual meeting videos found on our website will allow you to stay connected with Clarke Electric in the absence of an in-person meeting.

For CEC, 2019 was a year of progress and preparation for the future. We focused on reducing the number and duration of outages. We began adding wildlife guards and protection to our poles and substations, in addition to prioritizing the replacement of failing underground distribution lines.

We invested in the distribution system and substation equipment, including upgrading substation transformers to improve reliability.

We spent most of 2019 preparing for our facility improvement. This is a big undertaking and will not be completed until 2021. It will provide a healthier and more efficient work environment. It will also

provide a more safe and secure pole yard, grounds and buildings.

We continue to replace retiring employees with talented, professional employees who fit the safety minded, energy smart and community invested culture we have created.

Financially, we continue to pay down debt and monitor financial trends and performances. The weather last year was extreme enough to generate better than budgeted revenues and bottom-line margins allowing us to meet our loan obligations and stay financially healthy. The cooperative works from a board approved budget, balancing the need to update infrastructure while keeping our rates affordable. 35-25-01-02

We continue to advance our use of technology, including expanding our system to allow remote monitoring and switching. All of our employees have computers or iPads, that allow remote access to the cooperative network. This implementation of technology placed us in a position to allow our employees to work remotely, with little interruption of

"business as usual" when the pandemic hit.

Investing in the communities we serve is very important to the cooperative. We continued to support economic development with the awarding of loans to the Lucas County Health Care and Wayne County Housing. We also made donations from our Operation Round-up program to members and organizations in need.

While I would consider 2019 a fairly standard year serving our members safe, reliable and affordable power, I would consider it an outstanding year because we were able to send all of our employees safely home each day to their families.

Thank you for your support and your understanding as we work to bring you the power to live your lives in the communities we enjoy. Please watch the annual meeting reports online at www.cecnet.net.



DAVE OPIE
General Manager

Energy Smart: Pull the Plug and Recycle Your Old Appliances

KEEPING YOUR 15- OR 20-YEAR-OLD refrigerator in operation after you buy a new one may seem like a good idea, especially if it's paid for and still seems to be working fine. However, the reality is the old appliance may be costing you a lot more than it's worth; in fact, if you really need the cold-storage capacity of a second refrigerator (or freezer), you're better off buying a new, low-cost, ENERGY STAR qualified unit.

Clarke Electric works to reward our member-consumers for removing and recycling inefficient refrigerators, freezers and window air conditioners that are operational. Only appliances in working condition are eligible for the program

rebate. There is a limit of three operational appliances per member address.

Simply call (855) 838-7817 to request collection of your eligible appliance(s). The program contractor will then contact you to verify the information and schedule a pick-up date for the eligible appliance(s).

Qualifying appliances:

Fridge - \$35

Freezer - \$35

Window A/C - \$25

All appliances must be able to cool. For complete details, please call the toll-free number.



+ Safety Driven: *Pole Top Rescue*

WHEN LIVES ARE ON THE LINE, it's vital that Clarke Electric linemen act quickly and skillfully to ensure everyone's safety. In an emergency situation, our linemen must know the safest and most practical way to rescue their partner if they are rendered unconscious after making contact with an energized line.

Every year, our linemen undergo pole top rescue safety training with assistance from the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives' (IAEC) Safety and Loss Control Instructors. Each linemen must successfully complete the testing process. Pictured at right is Construction Foreman Cory Dommer practicing his pole top rescue technique.

As an OSHA mandated safety training requirement, the training is designed to evaluate each lineman on their ability to properly rescue an injured and/or stranded lineman. Each lineman must balance their skills with safety, climb a pole and rescue a 185-pound training mannequin. The



lineman must then secure the mannequin using ropes and pulleys and safely deliver them back to the ground.

In a perfect world, this is one skill that you hope a lineman never needs to use. But if they do, the training is an opportunity for the linemen to prepare and hone their skills if the need should ever arise.

Working to Reduce Outages

IN THE SUMMER MONTHS, STORMS can be attributed to a large portion of the outages we experience across our service territory. As we transition to fall weather, animals and birds are responsible for many of the outages likely due to increased activity getting ready for cold weather. Typically, Clarke Electric will see an increase in outages during July, August and September months.



CHAD MCINTOSH

Recently, Clarke Electric began installing wildlife guards or cover-ups to reduce the chance of outages caused by critters. In 2019 they were placed at the Lacona and I-35 substations. We'll continue this effort with approximately two substations per year until completed. Even with the outages we experience, Clarke Electric indices show power is available to our members 99.97% of the time, certainly a number that makes us proud.

If your power goes out, please check with your neighbors and call in the outage. It helps the cooperative determine how widespread the outage is and how many men we need to send out.

If your lines blinked before you lost power, then you know the equipment on the power lines is doing its job. **Usually, blinking lights are a result of momentary outages that occur when something comes in contact with an energized power line. This could be an animal, a tree or tree branch, or a strike of lightning.**

When the lights blink, it is an indication that the cooperative's equipment is operating properly. Blinking lights is a signal that the equipment that protects the lines and keeps the power from going off for more than just a moment is working correctly. A device called a reclosure is used on the power lines whenever there is a circuit breaker on the line.

continued on pg. 4

LOOK UP AND LIVE

Failure to notice overhead power lines could be a deadly oversight.

As farm operators move tall equipment back and forth from the fields, coming into contact with overhead power lines becomes a significant hazard. And even if direct contact isn't made, coming close can cause electricity to jump, or "arc" to the equipment.



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BENEFITS OF TREE TRIMMING

Clearing trees and overgrown vegetation is vital to provide safe, reliable power to our consumer-members.

We clear certain areas in our service territory, known as rights of way, to:

- Keep power lines clear of tree limbs
- Restore power outages more quickly
- Keep crews and members of our community safe
- Reduce unexpected costs for repairs

Vegetation management improves service reliability for you - our members!

Outages...from pg. 3

If the short circuit is temporary, which is usually the case, the reclosure permits power to continue flowing through the line with only a brief interruption of service (meaning your lights blink.)

If the short circuit continues, the reclosure will cut off power to that section of the line and hopefully isolate the trouble before it can cause further problems. Without reclosures, every short circuit would cause power to be off until the cooperative could send a line crew to restore service. Usually, these reclosures will operate or trip three times before stopping the flow of electricity and causing an outage. This reclosure protects the lines from damage.

If you were affected by outages this summer or fall – we thank you for your patience while our linemen work tirelessly to restore power.

CLARKE ELECTRIC USES A CONTRACTOR TO PERFORM RIGHT OF WAY maintenance (ROW). Recently, Midwest Spraying was in the Hopeville substation area spraying to contain vegetation from growing up into the power lines and right of way. Next the contractors will move into the Grand River substation area. 57-36-01-09



DO YOUR PART. BE #CYBERSMART.

The line between our online and offline lives is indistinguishable. In these tech-fueled times, our homes, societal well-being, economic prosperity and nation's security are impacted by the internet.

If everyone does their part - implementing stronger security practices, raising community awareness, educating vulnerable audiences or training employees - our interconnected world will be safer and more resilient for everyone.



5 Tips for Making Laundry Efficient

1. Opt for cold water when you can. This will save firing up the water heater and there are some laundry soaps now made especially for cold water washing.
2. Use high efficiency (HE) detergent where recommended by the washer's manufacturer.
3. In the dryer, keep the lint screen clean. Not only will it work more efficiently, it will reduce the chance of a fire by improving circulation.
4. Use the automatic cycle instead of timed drying to avoid overdrying.
5. Hang it out to dry! Research the best techniques online and let nature do the rest.



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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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