



CLARKE REC Headlines

The official publication of Clarke Electric Cooperative



SAFETY DRIVEN | ENERGY SMART | COMMUNITY INVESTED Volume No. 81 No. 4 | April 2021

SAVE THE DATE
SEPT 13

Clarke Electric Annual Meeting

Thank A Lineworker April 12



POWERING LIVES, WORKING LONG hours in difficult weather conditions and being on call, is not just a job for the linemen at Clarke Electric Cooperative, it's a way of life. When the power goes out, so do our linemen. Wherever they are and whatever they're doing, the call comes in and they go out. They are dedicated to keeping the power flowing to your homes and businesses each and every day.

On April 12 for Lineman Appreciation Day, Clarke Electric is proud to honor the dedicated linemen working for our member-consumers.

We invite you to take a moment to thank a lineman for the important work they do. Use #ThankALineworker on social media to show your support!

Energy Efficiency



Tip of the Month
Some manufacturers set water heater thermostats at 140 degrees, but most households usually only require them to be set at 120 degrees. Consider

lowering your heater's temperature to save energy and slow mineral buildup in the heater and pipes.

Looking Out for You: February Outages

Equipment/maintenance failure – 5
Unknown - 1

Co-op Leadership Completes Strategic Planning

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT objectives of the Board of Directors is strategic planning. Every few years, the board and management team meet to set the long-term direction for the cooperative. It is a time to take a step back, look at the overall big picture of the electric industry, trends, infrastructure, and the needs, wants and expectations of member-consumers. We

look at where we have been, and where we need to go to protect the integrity of the member-owned assets while meeting our power requirements.

It is the cooperative's business structure to perform this exercise on a three-to-five-year basis. This year we invited our cooperative banking institution's regional vice president to facilitate the

continued on pg. 2



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

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

+ Safety Driven: Contact 811 Before You Dig

IF YOU HAVE PLANS FOR SPRING that involve digging, for instance a new garden, backyard patio or shed, remember to keep safety in mind for all projects and call 8-1-1 before you dig. It's the law!

Most of us never think about the electric, gas, water and other utility lines buried below the ground, but hitting one of these lines while digging is not the reminder you'll want—trust us! And it's easy - just call 8-1-1 at least three business days before you start. Or you can submit a request online by visiting www.call811.com/811-owa.

Here's how the process works:

1. After you contact 811, all affected utilities will be notified. It may take the utilities a few days to respond to your request, so please be patient.

2. The affected utilities will send someone out to mark the buried lines with paint or flags.

3. Before you break ground, confirm that all the utilities have responded to your request. If you placed your request by phone, use the process explained by your 8-1-1 call center representative. If you submitted your request online, refer to your 8-1-1 center ticket to confirm everything.

Remember, you are responsible for the cost of the locate if you own the equipment being located. There is no cost to you if the cooperative owns the equipment you are requesting to locate. See graphic below.

By taking this important step before you break ground on your project, you can help protect yourself or a neighbor and protect from the uninterrupted flow of power.

day-and-a-half meeting in February to develop a plan to guide the cooperative through 2024. It starts with a survey sent out to each board and management team member to identify strategic issues, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats currently impacting the cooperative. This list is compiled and used by the facilitator to find common threads that should be identified and discussed as a group.

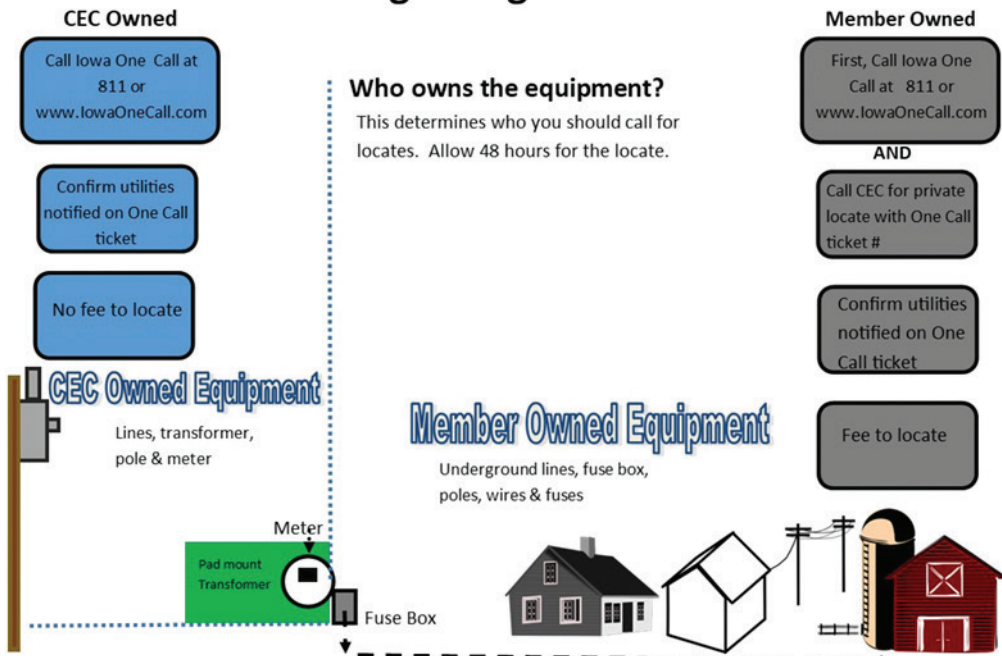
Following the group discussion, a list of strategic goals identified were safety, member satisfaction, emerging technology such as electric vehicles and solar, AMI technology, long-term financial forecasting, rates, succession planning, and training. Clarke Electric strives to keep safety at the top of everyone's mind, whether they are an employee, co-op member-consumer or community member. Member satisfaction is a measure of understanding in trying to provide valuable services to and for our member-consumers. Looking to implement technologies to enhance our services or promote better customer service is important. Taking those things into consideration requires a careful budgeting process to make sure the cooperative stays financially sound while implementing the opportunities identified. Lastly, we continually try to empower the employees to be capable and dedicated in their service to you.

The next steps will include putting together the goals, initiatives, responsibilities and timelines to complete the strategic plan by 2024. These initiatives further enhance the safety and reliability of our delivery of power to our member-consumers. 4-35-09-03

We are confident our strategic planning process will continue to lead us to a brighter future, one that is safe, reliable and affordable. We are proud to serve you!

We are: Safety Driven-Energy Smart-Community Driven

Planning to Dig or Excavate?



SUMMER

PLANT ENERGY SAVINGS

WINTER

Plant deciduous trees to block heat from the sun in the summer and let sunlight in during the winter.



Energy Smart: Renewable Energy Program

CLARKE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE offers a renewable energy program that gives individual member-consumers the ability to voluntarily contribute to an alternative energy fund. All of the money collected will be used for the development of alternative energy production facilities in Iowa. Alternative energy production facilities may include wind energy, biomass, solar, and other nontraditional generation technologies.

Through this program, member-consumers do not directly purchase alternative energy, but rather participate in the development of these resources. Contributions may be retained until they reach a sufficient level to pursue a particular development, make a grant to another entity pursuing alternative



energy development in Iowa, or arrange for purchases from alternative energy production facilities.

Program highlights include:

- Available to member-consumers within any of our rate classifications.
- Member-consumers can contribute a one-time dollar amount or on a monthly basis. The minimum contribution is \$1.
- Contributions may be made by cash, check, credit card, ACH, or paying the additional amount with your monthly electric bill.
- Once you have signed up, your participation will continue at the same level until you notify us that you wish to change the amount of your contribution or end your participation in the program.

Renewable Energy Contribution Form

YES, I will make a one-time contribution of \$ _____

YES, I will contribute monthly in the amount of \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

Clarke Electric Cooperative Acct #: _____

REC Day on the Hill Goes Virtual

ON MARCH 17, EMPLOYEES and directors of Iowa's electric cooperatives met virtually with their state representatives and senators to discuss co-op priorities.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, co-op advocates used virtual platforms to discuss important issues with legislators. This year's topics included vegetation management,

expanding broadband connectivity and balancing sales tax treatment of utilities.

IAEC's annual advocacy event, known as REC Day on the Hill, is typically held at the Iowa State Capitol during the legislative session. Our event provides co-op leaders with a prime opportunity to discuss issues important to our member-consumers.



Community Invested: Show You Care with RECare

THE ONGOING CORONAVIRUS pandemic has left many of our member-consumers wondering how they're going to pay their winter heating bills. Now more than ever, Clarke Electric encourages members to help their neighbors and community by participating in RECare.

A one-time or monthly contribution to the RECare program can help offset high bills for those who need it. RECare funds can also be used to weatherize the recipient's home and help make electricity usage more efficient. Your donation is directed to local community action agencies for distribution to low-income families near you.

Consider contributing to RECare and help your neighbors and your community with high heating expenses. It's an easy way to show you care!

Member Authorization Form

Yes, I want to be a part of members helping members through the RECare program.

____ Enclosed is a check with a one-time donation.

____ I would like to make a monthly donation of \$ _____.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

*Mail to: RECare
c/o Clarke Electric Cooperative
P.O. Box 161
Osceola, Iowa 50213*

Building Remodel Update

PROGRESS CONTINUES ON THE BUILDING REMODEL. THE SIDES AND ROOF of our new warehouse are up. The tubing for a heated floor is in the process of being laid to help keep the trucks road-ready during the winter weather months. Once complete, the concrete floor will be poured. A wash bay is included in the warehouse. Being able to wash trucks at our facility will help prolong the life of our equipment. The framework for the walls of the office building are up and the drywall process is beginning. The office remodel is scheduled to be completed by the end of May, while the warehouse is scheduled for the end of June. We are excited to show our member-consumers the upgraded facility.



Gardeners, Consider No-Till Method



NO-TILL GARDENS HAVE BEEN gaining ground with farmers in recent years, partly because of the energy savings. The principles behind no-till gardening work well for large farms, as well as smaller home gardens and can be done without chemicals. Research shows that this approach can produce more fruits and vegetables within a few years, and they get better over the long term. 41-23-05-02

Two ideas are at the heart of no-till gardening. First, don't break up the soil. We usually think that by breaking up the soil and mixing it up, we keep weeds from growing. But tilling can bring weed seeds that are deep in the soil to the top where they can germinate and grow. Tilling also destroys microbes in the soil that bring nutrients to the plants.

The second idea is to spread thick layers of compost and other mulch on top of the soil. When compost and other mulch are spread on top, they feed the soil from above, the same way leaves in a forest fall to the ground, decompose and turn into rich soil over time. When you build up the soil by spreading layers of compost and other mulch on top, the weed seeds are kept dormant. Mulch keeps the soil moist, so less water is used to irrigate, which means less electricity use for pumping water from your well or community water system.

Utility Bill Assistance Available for Iowa Renters Impacted by COVID-19

GOVERNOR REYNOLDS recently announced a new program designed to assist eligible lowans who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and need assistance with rent and utility bills. The Iowa Rent and Utility Assistance Program will provide rent and/or utility assistance for up to 12 months.

Funded by the federal Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, the Iowa Rent and Utility Assistance Program is administered by the Iowa Finance Authority. Eligible renters can receive financial assistance with past due electricity, gas, propane, fuel oil, water, sewer and/or trash removal bills incurred no earlier than March 13, 2020. Utility

payments through the program will be made directly to utility providers and applied to the applicants' accounts.

Full eligibility details for the Iowa Rent and Utility Assistance Program are available at iowahousingrecovery.com.

The website includes an eligibility precheck and answers to frequently asked questions. You can also call Iowa's Utility Recovery Hotline at (515) 348-8976 or (877) 463-3269 for more information about this program.

If you receive electricity from Clarke Electric and need assistance with documentation for your application, please contact Kim or Cori at (800) 362-2154 or clarke@cecn.net.



CLARKE
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

PO Box 161, 1103 N Main, Osceola, IA 50213-0161

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

David Opie, General Manager
Office Hours: Mon - Fri 7:30 am - 4 pm
Outside Depository Available 24 Hours
641.342.2173 | 800.362.2154

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

www.cecn.net

Board of Directors

Randy Barnard, New Virginia
Larry Jackson, Clio
Larry Keller, Osceola
Kyle Kelso, Weldon
Cody Miller, Thayer
Randy Rouse, Corydon
Ed White, Osceola
Bill Willis, New Virginia
Lydda Youmans, Indianola