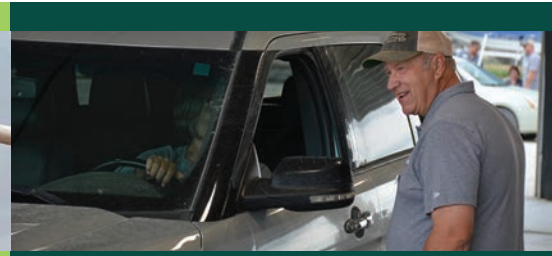
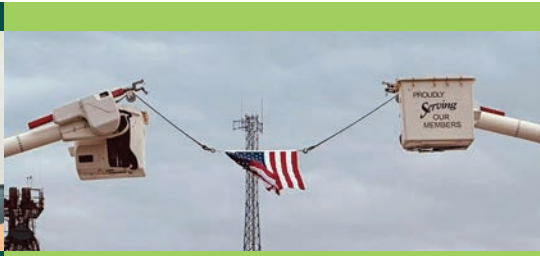




**CLARKE**  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Safety Driven • Energy Smart • Community Invested

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Volume 83, No. 11 | November 2023

# HEADLINES

SAFETY DRIVEN | ENERGY SMART | COMMUNITY INVESTED

## Thanksgiving With A Grateful Heart

When November rolls around, it seems everyone, including me, is so busy with work, family, and holiday-related activities. Yet, Thanksgiving allows a person to stop for a moment, step back and consider their blessings.

Sometimes I get mired down with all the issues and pressures I have to handle each day, but when I compare my situation to others less fortunate, I realize how blessed I am.

First, I get to work with the best co-workers. They sincerely care about giving good customer service to our Members and finding solutions for any issues Members may face. Everyone works with a positive can-do attitude even in the hardest of situations.

Second, our linemen genuinely feel satisfied by restoring a Member's power, regardless of the time of day or the weather conditions. They are proud of working to keep your power on!

Third, the Board that serves our cooperative is truly concerned about our Members, our employees and our cooperative. They work hard to keep our cooperative financially healthy and operationally strong and care about our employees as people. They serve on our Board for the right reasons.



**DAVE OPIE**  
General Manager

*continued on pg. 3*



## Welcome Max Hunter

Help us extend a warm welcome to Max Hunter, who joined our cooperative as an apprentice lineman recently!

Max comes to us from Centralia, Mo. He is a graduate of Ozarks Technical Community College with an Associate of Applied Science degree in Electrical Distribution Systems. He enjoys hunting, fishing and all things outdoors.

He is eager to learn the ropes at the cooperative and begin his career as a lineman. We look forward to the valuable contributions he will bring to our cooperative.



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

## Robinson Joins CEC Board

Please join us in welcoming Zach Robinson as our newest representative of District 7 on the Clarke Electric Board of Directors. Zach was elected by and from the CEC membership during the annual meeting in September.

Zach and his wife, Sheena, live in rural Clio and have been members of Clarke Electric for 16 years. They have three children: Kenzie, Ashtyn and Hesston. Zach and Sheena farm with his father, Marvin, and they have row crops and a cow calf operation as well as custom hire skid loaders, dozers and harvesting and haying.

The family is active in their local community, with Zach serving as a volunteer for the local fire department, 4-H and supporting his children in their many activities.  
15-13-12-00

"I'm interested in learning more about the electric utility industry while being a voice for my friends and neighbors while serving on the Clarke



Electric Board," he said. "I believe my commonsense approach to problem solving will be a valuable asset in the boardroom."

"The entire team at Clarke Electric extends a warm and heartfelt welcome to Zach as our newest member of the Board of Directors," said Dave Opie, general manager. "We're thrilled to have him on our board and are looking forward to the valuable contributions and insights he will bring to our organization."

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

The holiday season is upon us, and that means we'll be using more energy in the kitchen. When possible, cook with smaller countertop appliances instead of the stovetop or oven. Smaller appliances like slow cookers, air fryers and Instant Pots consume less energy. When using the oven or stovetop, match the size of the pot to the heating element and place a lid over the pot while cooking. The food will cook faster, and you'll use less energy.



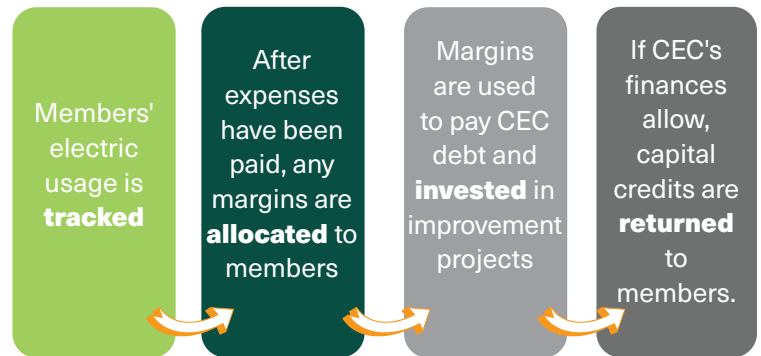
## Membership Matters: We Pay You

One of the benefits of being a member of Clarke Electric Cooperative is receiving money back in the form of a patronage dividend. After all expenses have been paid, the money that is left is then allocated to different accounts, including the payment of dividends back to its members.

If you left the system before the 20-year rotation you will receive the money in a check mailed to your last known address. Remember to keep your address updated with the cooperative so you can receive your patronage dividend.

If you are a current member, you will receive a credit on your December bill. We work for you and membership does matter!

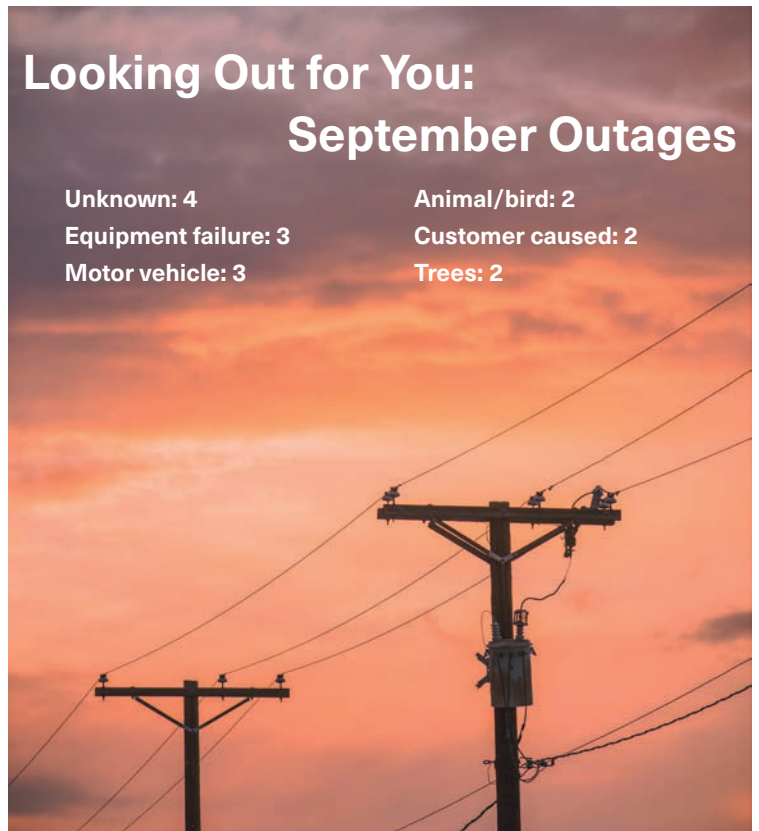
## How Capital Credits Work



## Looking Out for You: September Outages

Unknown: 4  
Equipment failure: 3  
Motor vehicle: 3

Animal/bird: 2  
Customer caused: 2  
Trees: 2





## New Phone System Proves Challenging

Every day, Clarke Electric staff make decisions to help improve our service to the membership. A year ago, we were informed that the co-op's phone system would no longer be supported and that we would need to choose a new phone system.

With the help of our IT provider, we decided to utilize the functionalities of the Microsoft Teams software to also serve as our phone system. Since the pandemic, we have been using Teams as an internal communication source and hold paid licenses. As a computer-based phone system, Teams allows calls to come in through our computers so that we can then route them to the appropriate employee's computer and cell phone through the Teams app. Sounds easy, right?

"Like all things, it was anything but easy," said Cori Smith, customer service/

cashier. "Features that were a part of our old system were as easy as pushing a button to park, transfer, and page a phone call. Although the Teams system has those capabilities, it's not as easy to find a button for each function!"

Through trial and error, co-op staff are finding their way through each issue and working to become more proficient.

"Our cooperative employees are nothing if not tenacious when it comes to learning a new skill and making it the best it can be," said Dave Opie, general manager. "With that being said, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you, our members, for your patience as we acclimate to the new system if you have called us in the past month."

## COMMUNITY INVESTED

## Show You Care with RECare

As you plan your end-of-year giving, remember that you can help a local family pay their heating bill this winter or improve the overall energy efficiency of their home.

A one-time or monthly contribution to the RECare program 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 this winter. 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

## Thanksgiving...from pg. 1

When I run into our Members at social gatherings, I'm often greeted with positive comments and thank-you's for our employees' dedicated hard work and compassion. The recognition reminds me we are all in this together and it really does make a positive difference.

Personally, I feel blessed to have a wonderful family, friends, and neighbors. I am extremely thankful for the privilege to serve you and to work with such amazing co-workers, board members and cooperative members. I wish you a safe and happy Thanksgiving season.



## WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU? @ cecnet.net



Statewide  
outage map



Leased Light  
Program



SmartHUB



Rebates &  
Online Forms



Operation  
Round-UP



Call Before  
You Dig



Email  
newsletters



RECare



# A Storm is Brewing: Electric Reliability is in Jeopardy

Supply chain delays. Disorderly retirements of dispatchable electric generation. Complex regulations on power plant emissions. Regional warnings about a lack of generation capacity to cover electric demand. Permitting delays for needed electric transmission infrastructure.

Individually, any one of these issues is enough to seriously impact reliability of electric service. But all these scenarios are playing out simultaneously across the nation and a perfect storm may be on the horizon.

Electric reliability across America is in serious jeopardy, and frankly, it's unacceptable. Here are the facts:

Dispatchable sources of electric generation like coal and nuclear are being retired far too early. And their generation capacity is being replaced by intermittent sources of generation like wind and solar. The downside: These intermittent sources only work when the wind blows and the sun shines.

Battery storage is not yet feasible for longer durations on a utility-scale level. For all practical purposes, electricity must be generated as it is being consumed. This becomes a problem when the wind isn't blowing or the sun isn't shining and energy consumption is high. 37-22-01-02

Demand for electricity continues to grow as our society becomes increasingly reliant on electricity.

Locally owned electric cooperatives work hard to provide reliable and affordable electricity for the member-consumers they serve. Co-ops are mission driven to power lives and empower communities and they make long-term decisions to ensure power is available when it's needed.

That's why we believe in a power generation strategy that prioritizes energy diversity. The same adage used for sound financial investing also applies to power generation: don't put all your eggs in one basket. Iowa's electric cooperatives use dispatchable sources of power like coal and natural gas because they can control the output and ramp up generation when needed to match sudden increases in electric demand. But our ability to provide reliable electricity is in jeopardy.

In May, the Environmental Protection Agency released its proposed rule to limit greenhouse gas emissions from new and existing fossil-fuel-fired electric generating units. The proposal is part of the current administration's misguided regulatory agenda to create a carbon-free power sector by 2035 and net zero emissions economy-wide by no later than 2050. We believe this proposal will further strain America's

electric grid and undermine decades of work to reliably keep the lights on across the nation.

But that's not the only threat we face. The 2023 NERC summer reliability assessment is just the latest in a series of alarming reminders about the new electric reliability challenges facing the nation. Nine states experienced power interruptions last December as the demand for electricity exceeded available supply.

It's imperative that policymakers work to prioritize reliability in every energy policy discussion. Federal policies must recognize the compromised reliability reality facing the nation before it's too late.

The families, farms and businesses served by electric cooperatives deserve affordable AND reliable electricity to power their lives.

*Chuck Soderberg is Executive Vice President and General Manager of the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. Congressman Randy Feenstra represents Iowa's 4th District.*



**CHUCK  
SODERBERG**



**REP. RANDY  
FEENSTRA**



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## OFFICE HOURS

Mon.-Fri.: 7:30 AM - 4 PM | Outside depository available 24/7

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David Opie

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*