



CLARKE
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Safety Driven • Energy Smart • Community Invested

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Volume 83, No. 9 | September 2023

HEADLINES

SAFETY DRIVEN | ENERGY SMART | COMMUNITY INVESTED

What: Annual Meeting

When: Monday, Sept. 11

Where: Clarke Electric
Headquarters – Warehouse

Time: 3:30 p.m. Drive Thru,
5:30 p.m. Business Meeting

Whether you're a longtime co-op member, or just moved into our territory, we invite you to find out more about what your electric cooperative has been up to by attending our annual meeting.

Clarke Electric's annual meeting is an opportunity to hear more about the cooperative's finances, updates on business matters, and vote for board candidates in the annual election. We encourage you to engage



with us and exercise your right to have your voice heard as a member-owner.

From 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., drive through our warehouse and pick up a free attendance gift and a free chicken dinner from Thelma Saxton Cater 2 U. You'll also have the chance to win cash prizes; \$500 for attending members and \$500 for voting members.

Please let us know you'll be attending by using the QR code (left), calling us at (800) 362-2154 or emailing us at clarke@cecnet.net.

We hope to see you there!



SAFETY DRIVEN



Live Power Line Safety Demo for County Workers

Clarke Electric, in conjunction with the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC), gave a safety presentation to Clarke County Courthouse employees and supervisors recently.



Scott Meineke, IAEC Safety Director, reminded everyone to treat all power lines as energized. 35-08-06-01

Journeyman Lineman Eric Page used a tree branch to demonstrate what happens when tree branches touch live power lines and an orange to show how quickly flesh can burn when it touches an energized power line.

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

4 KEY FACTORS

That Impact Energy Bills

You pay for the electricity you consume each month, but there are additional factors that impact your energy bills.

1 Fuel Costs

Before electricity can be delivered to your home, it must first be generated at a power plant or from a renewable source. The cost of fuels used to generate electricity fluctuates, which is why you see a power or fuel charge on your monthly bill. This monthly charge covers cost fluctuations without having to continually restructure electricity rates.



2 Service Costs

Your bill includes a monthly service charge, which recovers part of the co-op's ongoing investments in poles, wire, meters, system maintenance and additional costs necessary to provide electric service.



3 Weather

When temperatures soar or dip, your cooling or heating equipment must run longer and at maximum capacity, which can greatly increase your energy use. Extreme temperatures can also affect electricity market prices. When the need for electricity increases due to extreme heat or cold, the price of power typically rises.



4 Energy Consumption

This is the amount of electricity you use each month to power your home's cooling/heating system, appliances, lighting, electronics and more. The amount of electricity you consume is measured in kilowatt-hours, or kWh. You have control over how much energy you use, which can ultimately help manage your monthly costs.



YOU HAVE CONTROL

Smart Lights

Gone are the days when a simple flip of the switch was the only choice for illuminating our homes. While we still have this tried-and-true option, we've entered a new era of innovative technologies, which includes smart lighting.



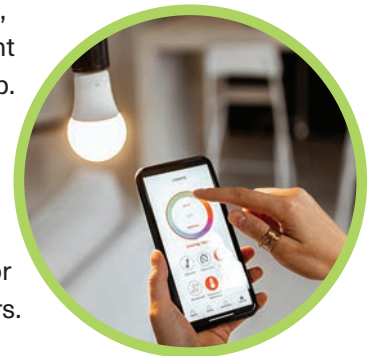
JASON GIBBS
Manager Member
Services

Smart lighting connects to Wi-Fi and offers a variety of cutting-edge functionality, convenience and other benefits.

SMART LIGHTING IS ENERGY EFFICIENT. Most smart bulbs utilize efficient LED technology. Smart lighting gives you more control over how and when you light your home and can result in cost savings on your utility bill.

SMART LIGHTING PROVIDES CONVENIENCE AND CONTROL. Most smart bulbs can be controlled from an app on your smartphone or can be paired with your voice assistant, like Amazon Alexa. You can conveniently control lighting settings from anywhere in your home or when you're away.

SMART OPTIONS EMPOWER YOU TO PERSONALIZE HOME LIGHTING. Bright, warm, purple, green—whatever mood you want to create, smart lighting can help. For a more traditional look, try dimmable white bulbs. If you want to create the perfect ambiance for movie night, look for bulbs that can be adjusted for a variety of endless vibrant colors.



COUPLE SMART LIGHTS WITH SMART SWITCHES. If you want to control your smart bulbs with a physical switch (in addition to using your phone and voice commands), look for smart switches that include a built-in feature that allows both. Many smart light switches include motion detectors as well. 13-01-05-00

If you're looking to take the plunge and integrate multiple smart bulbs to your home lighting system, your best bet may be a kit, like the Philips Hue Starter Kit.

If you want to start small, try a smart bulb in a high-traffic area of your home. It's also worth noting that smart plugs are a great starter option and allow convenient control of lamps or other lighting fixtures that are plugged in to a wall outlet.

Smart lighting can provide multiple benefits. Determine which smart lighting features are most important for your needs, then start shopping!



Have a Safe Harvest

Harvest season and National Farm Safety & Health Week (Sept. 17-23) are right around the corner. If you're a farm operator, remind yourself and your helpers what it takes to be safe on the farm during this busy time.

To start, be prepared and take farm safety seriously. Putting safety first requires alertness, focus and knowledge of hazards and steps to take in the event of an accident.

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines.
- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from power lines at all times, in all directions.
- Look up and use care when moving equipment, extending augers or raising the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance from electric lines.

- Always set extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads to prevent contact with overhead power lines. Grain augers should always be positioned horizontally before being moved.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, contact the co-op.
- If contact is made with a power line, stay on the equipment. Make sure to warn others to stay away and call 911. Do not leave until the utility crew says it is safe to do so. Only exit if the equipment is on fire. If this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together, without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Then, keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

COMMUNITY INVESTED

Need Help with Heating Bills?

The 2023-2024 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps qualifying Iowa homeowners and renters pay a portion of their primary heating costs during winter. The assistance is based on household income, household size, type of fuel, and type of housing.

WHEN TO APPLY:

- Elderly (60+) and/or disabled: Oct. 1, 2023 to April 30, 2024
- All other households: Nov. 1, 2023 to April 30, 2024

WHAT TO TAKE:

- Proof of income (for all household members 19+).
- Income documentation from the past 30 days, the last 12 months, or last calendar year, whichever is easier or more beneficial.
- Social Security Numbers for all household members (documentation required)
- Most recent heat bill *and* electric bill

If you receive alimony or child support, it will also need to be verified. Additional income not listed here may be required.

PROOF OF INCOME:

- Wage Earners: Bring copies of check stubs for the 30-day period preceding the date of application, or a copy of federal income tax return.

- Fixed Income: May include Social Security Benefits, Supplemental Security Income, Family Investment Program, Veteran's Assistance, Unemployment Insurance, and pensions. Bring copies of your check stubs from the previous 30 days.
- Self-Employed/Farmers: Bring a copy of most recent federal income tax return.
- FIP Recipients: Bring your current DHS Notice of Decision or contact your local office for acceptable document information.

Questions? Visit <https://humanrights.iowa.gov/dcaa> or write to: LIHEAP, IA Dept. of Human Rights, 321 E. 12th St., Des Moines, IA 50319

You can also contact South Central Iowa Community Action Program, 114 S. Fillmore, Ste. 2, Osceola, IA 50213; (641) 342-2101; scicap.org

Income Maximums

Household Size	Annual Gross Income
1	\$29,160
2	\$39,440
3	\$49,720
4	\$60,000
5	\$70,280
6	\$80,560
7	\$90,840
8	\$101,120

For households with more than 8 members, add \$10,280 for each add'l member.

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

Why is Vegetation Management Important?

Generally speaking, healthy trees don't fall on power lines, and clear lines don't cause problems. Proactive trimming, pruning and spraying keep lines clear to improve power reliability. However, traditional vegetation management is costly and time consuming. It includes on-the-ground, labor-intensive efforts involving workers overseeing the quality and completion of contractor work. Clarke Electric's Reliability Plan calls for 20% right-of-way maintenance over a five year cycle.

Planned Outages Improve Reliability

Although it may seem counterintuitive, we also maintain power reliability through planned, controlled outages. By carefully cutting power to one part of our local area for a few hours, we can perform system repairs and upgrades, which ultimately improve electric service. Planned outages can also be used to balance energy demand, but only in rare circumstances. Rest assured,

we will always try to notify you in advance of a planned outage, so make sure we have your correct contact information on file to receive the latest information.



CHAD MCINTOSH
Manager of Operations

Managing vegetation is an essential tool in ensuring power reliability and minimizing the risk of outages. As advancements become more accessible, we anticipate using additional technologies to ensure a consistent energy supply while managing the environment.



CEC linemen demonstrate the dangers of wayward vegetation making contact with power lines.



Questions or Complaints?

Clarke Electric Cooperative strives to provide you with the best service at the lowest possible cost. But sometimes you may have questions regarding your electrical service or billing, or possibly a complaint.

If you have a complaint about Clarke Electric's service rather than its rates, you can reach a representative of the cooperative by contacting us during normal business hours: 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. Monday through Friday at (641) 342-2173 or (800) 362-2154 or clarke@cecnet.net. You can also write to: Member Advocate, Clarke Electric Cooperative, 1103 N. Main Street, Osceola, IA 50213.

If your complaint is not resolved, you may ask for help from the Iowa Utilities Board, Customer Service, 1375 E. Court Ave., Room 69, Des Moines, IA 50319-0069; (877) 565-4450 or customer@iub.iowa.gov.

Looking Out for You:

July Outages

Equipment/Maintenance Failure – 10	
Animal/bird – 5	Unknown – 2
Lightning – 3	Trees – 1
Power supply – 3	

WANTED:

Rural Iowa high school students who have a passion for leadership

Check out our webinar series in October for a chance to win Apple AirPods and a \$1,000 scholarship!

www.iowayouthtour.com

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(641) 342-2173 | (800) 362-2154
cecnet.net

OFFICE HOURS

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Ed White	Directors
Vice President: Randy Rouse	Larry Jackson
Secretary: Larry Keller	Marni Kelso
Treasurer: Lydda Youmans	Cody Miller
Asst. Sec./Treasurer: Randy Barnard	Natalie Rydl

GENERAL MANAGER

David Opie

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.