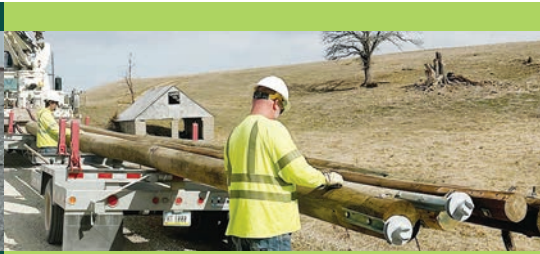




CLARKE
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Safety Driven • Energy Smart • Community Invested

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Volume 84, No. 3 | March 2024

HEADLINES

SAFETY DRIVEN | ENERGY SMART | COMMUNITY INVESTED

Setting the Course for Success

Recently Clarke Electric underwent a strategic planning process that included the employees, management team and the board of directors. Our lender, National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC), facilitated the two-day exercise.

The process gave our team an opportunity to think big and long-term. Here are the reasons why we felt this exercise would be beneficial to our membership:

Long-Term Viability: By setting strategic goals and objectives, we can anticipate and adapt to changes in the industry, regulatory environment, and consumer needs.

Resource Allocation: Strategic planning helps

prioritize where resources should be allocated to achieve our mission and goals.

Risk

Management: By identifying and anticipating risks, we can develop strategies to mitigate them and minimize their impact on operations.

Service Improvement:

Strategic planning helps identify areas for improvement and innovation in service delivery, whether it's upgrading infrastructure, implementing new technologies, or enhancing customer service.



DAVE OPIE
General Manager

continued on page 4

Scholarship Applications Due April 1

High school seniors whose parents are members and reside in Clarke Electric Cooperative's service territory are eligible to apply for post-high school scholarships.

These scholarships can be used for college or vocational technical school. Requirements for the application process include a copy of your transcript and a short essay on why electric cooperatives are important to you. 19-22-02-04

Visit cecnet.net/scholarships for application and more information.



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

Winter Moratorium Ends April 1

Every year between November 1 and April 1, member-consumers of Clarke Electric who are certified as eligible for either low-income energy or weatherization assistance, are given a grace period during which their electricity cannot be disconnected due to lack of payment.

After April 1, the co-op must bring its accounts up to date and will use all available tools to assist our member-consumers who have fallen behind on their bill. Throughout this process, we ensure all member-consumers are treated fairly.

If your account is past due, and you have not set up a payment arrangement by April 1, you will be subject to disconnection of your electric service. To avoid this, you must pay your electric bill in full by April 1 or request a reasonable payment arrangement for your past due account(s). On and after April 1, we are not required to post a 48-hour disconnection notice on your premises. Call our office today to make arrangements or to request information at (641) 342-2173 or (800) 362-2154.

Here are some resources that can help:

Payment Plans: Member-consumers may be eligible to enter into a reasonable payment agreement with Clarke Electric to pay

accumulated debt over time and maintain electric services. If you are past due on your account,

contact me or Cori Smith to discuss payment plan terms.

Budget Billing: For member-consumers with tight budgets, seasonally high electric bills can cause financial difficulties. Clarke Electric's budget billing payment option makes it easier to budget and anticipate. To enroll, contact me or Cori Smith to discuss whether budget billing is right for you.

State of Iowa Resources:

We also encourage anyone who has fallen behind on payment to contact the Iowa Bureau of Energy Assistance at (515) 281-0859 or their local community action agency regarding eligibility for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). More information about LIHEAP can be found at <https://hhs.iowa.gov/programs/programs-and-services/liheap>.

We are happy to work with you to make sure your account is current and avoid any interruption in service.



KIM GRIFFIN
Billing Specialist

Co-op Summer Hours May - August

Please note that Clarke Electric's hours will change effective May 6 through Aug. 22. Phones will be answered Monday-Thursday from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Fridays from 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. The office doors will be open Monday-Thursday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. and closed on Friday.

In 2023, the cooperative piloted a new "summer hours" program during which we tested a four, ten-hour day work week with great success. Our employees worked more efficiently during the condensed work week as we were able to take advantage of longer daylight hours.

Operations crews made less trips to the job sites due to longer working hours at one site. They were able to start and finish projects making less trips. It provided cost savings while increasing productivity. Our employees felt it provided a nice work-life balance and increased job satisfaction. We feel it will help with employee recruitment and retention, by adding the summer flexible work week.

Despite the temporary change, we will continue to provide the safe and reliable service we have always provided. Thank you for your patience throughout our "summer hours" change.

CLARKE ELECTRIC

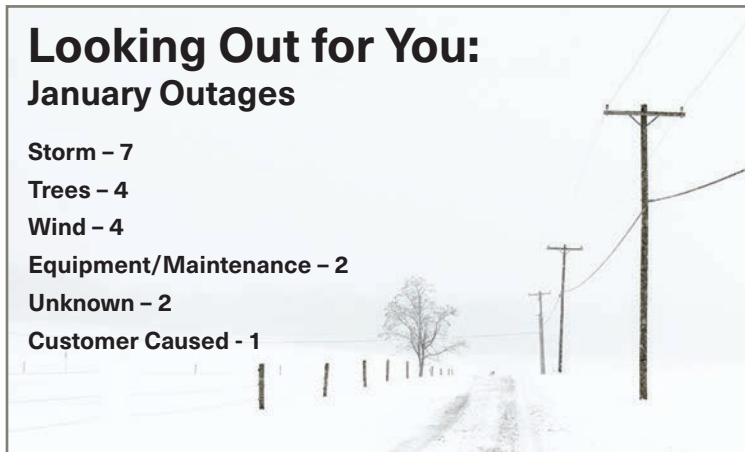
SUMMER LOBBY HOURS 2024

MONDAY	7:00 - 4:00
TUESDAY	7:00 - 4:00
WEDNESDAY	7:00 - 4:00
THURSDAY	7:00 - 4:00
FRIDAY	CLOSED
SATURDAY	CLOSED
SUNDAY	CLOSED

Phones answered Mon-Thurs 6:00 - 4:00 ; Fri 7:30 - 4:00

Looking Out for You: January Outages

- Storm - 7
- Trees - 4
- Wind - 4
- Equipment/Maintenance - 2
- Unknown - 2
- Customer Caused - 1





Show You Care with RECare

Even though spring is on the way and will bring warmer temperatures, many Clarke Electric Cooperative member-consumers are struggling to catch up on winter heating bills.

As an electric cooperative, Clarke Electric is invested in helping our communities thrive, and that means supporting our low-income member-consumers, too.

RECare is a nationwide program exclusive to rural electric cooperatives that encourages fellow member-consumers to make a one-time or monthly donation that can help alleviate the stress for other member-consumers straining to pay their winter heating bills. Funds may also be used to weatherize the recipient's home to make electricity use more efficient.

And don't worry; your donation is directed to a local community action agency for distribution to low-income families in your community. 41-29-04-03

You can feel good that the dollars you donate are helping your friends and neighbors. 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

Watch Out for Those Electrical Transformers



That large green power box on your property may look harmless, but as an important piece of electrical equipment, it can be very dangerous if you aren't careful.

These green boxes contain a transformer, in which power is stepped down from 7,200V to a more usable 240V before moving on to your home's breaker box. Once there, the voltage can be further reduced to 120V depending on what breaker you use to supply power to your appliances.



Heavy snowfall in January caused several incidents in which these boxes were covered with snow and then struck by a vehicle or other moveable machinery.

When this happens, it's important to call our cooperative right away.

The wires within the box

may have been severed or affected in a way that can make it hazardous for anyone who may come in contact with the box.

As we enter spring, please also remember that you should not dig near, play on, or landscape around these transformers. While safe, they are not meant for touching, climbing or playing around despite them being in or near your outdoor space.

If you notice any type of damage to the transformer in your area, please contact our office right away at (641) 342-2173.



JASON GIBBS
Manager Member Services

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



Cory Dommer and Jarad Taylor are pictured framing poles for the Lacona line replacement.

Operations Update

CEC crews are working in the north circuit of the Lacona substation building five miles of single phase line as part of our construction work plan. This will improve system reliability.

We have CR Environmental right of way contractors also

working in the north circuit of the Lacona substation.

Selenriek Construction is busy in the I-35 and Hopeville substations changing out rejected poles that were identified by SBS Contractors during their fall inspections.

Strategic Planning...from pg. 1



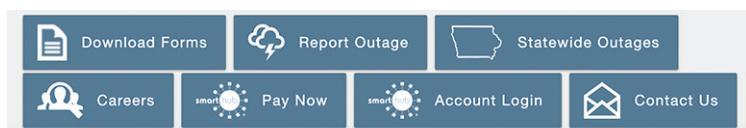
Manager of Member Services Jason Gibbs, left, and CEC Board Member Ed White participate in a strategic planning exercise.



General Manager Dave Opie provides his thoughts on co-op initiatives.

Regulatory Compliance: Strategic planning ensures that the coop stays compliant with relevant yet complex regulations and anticipates any regulatory changes that may impact our operations.

The resulting initiatives that came from the strategic planning sessions will keep us financially secure, open for business, improving the quality of life for our members while providing our members with a safe, reliable, and affordable power source. We will share the results of our strategic plans as we put the results into action over the next three to five years.



Looking for SmartHub?

If you're looking for the SmartHub link on our Web site, take note that it has moved. You can now find the direct link to SmartHub at the top right hand side of our

home page, www.cecnet.net.

This change was needed due to intermittent problems with the log-in screen. We hope this provides you with a faster service and less aggravation.

Get Your Member News by Email

If you would like to receive your membership newsletter via email, just let us know. You can call or email us at Clarke@cecnet.net. We will send it at the beginning of each month.



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

OFFICE HOURS

Mon.-Fri.: 7:30 AM - 4 PM

Summer Hours (May 6-August 22)

Mon.-Thurs. 7 AM-4 PM, closed Friday

Phones answered Mon.-Thurs. 6 AM-4 PM and Fri. 7:30 AM-4 PM

Outside depository available 24/7

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Ed White
Vice President: Randy Rouse
Secretary: Marni Kelso
Treasurer: Lydda Youmans
Asst. Sec./Treasurer: Randy Barnard

Directors
Larry Keller
Cody Miller
Zach Robinson
Natalie Rydl

GENERAL MANAGER

David Opie

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.