CLARKE
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Safety Driven • Energy Smart • Community Invested
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Volume 85, No. 3 | March 2025

HEADLINES

SAFETY DRIVEN | ENERGY SMART | COMMUNITY INVESTED

ENERGY SMART

Cold Weather Impacts on Your Utility Bill

Today's date is February 20, 2025. On the way to work, my car said it was -9°F. The high today is expected to peak at a frigid 11°. On the bright side, it's sunny and there's a blanket of snow covering the colorless gray/brown ground. Yesterday's high was 9°, the day before that was 8° and the day before that was 5°. It's been more than 96 hours of single digit and below zero temperatures. What does this mean for your energy bill? 53-14-03-55

HEATING SYSTEMS WORK HARDER. When outdoor temperatures drop, your heating system works overtime to maintain a comfortable indoor temperature. Electric furnaces, space heaters, and heat pumps use more energy, leading to higher electricity usage.

JASON GIBBS
Manager Member Services

LONGER HEATING CYCLES. If the weather is harsh, your heating system will run longer cycles to keep your home at the preferred temperature. This constant operation increases energy consumption.

INCREASED USE OF ELECTRIC APPLIANCES. Shorter days and colder

continued on page 2

Cooperative Business Model: Tariff Changes

As an electric cooperative, Clarke Electric Cooperative is governed by the Articles of Incorporation, By-laws, Tariff and internal policies and procedures put in place by government requirements and our governing board of directors.

The three mentioned first are public documents used for the democratic control of our cooperative. They ensure that every member is treated equitably as a part owner of the electric cooperative. The local board reviews these documents periodically to make necessary changes.

We have a membership with the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives and that membership includes a regulatory compliance arm to help Clarke Electric update our tariff. The tariff is a pricing structure that outlines rates, fees, and terms under which an electric cooperative provides electricity to its member-consumers. The jurisdictional portion of the tariff is then sent to the Iowa Utilities Commission or IUC. They function as a regulatory compliance body that ensures the cooperative stays within the guidelines of their tariff while interacting with their membership.

As the utility industry changes, we must make updates to our tariff to keep up with those changes and how they affect

continued on page 4

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.

Utility Bill... continued from pg. 1

weather often mean more time spent indoors. This leads to increased use of lights, electronics, and kitchen appliances, contributing to a higher electric bill.

POOR INSULATION & DRAFTS. If your home has inadequate insulation or air leaks around doors and windows, warm air escapes while cold air seeps in. This forces your heating system to work even harder to compensate for the heat loss.

Whether you use propane or electricity, the amount of electricity it takes to comfortably heat your home is going to be high and that equates to higher bills. We saw this with the cold snaps we had in December and January. Our members' bills were up, some of them significantly.

I would like to remind folks how to think of your usage or kilowatt-hour (kWh) consumption. The meter at your house is measuring the amount of power you are using over an hour of time. It's measured in kWh. Your bill is calculated using the number of kWh you use during the month and multiplying it by the price of the kWh we sell. The price of energy or the price per kWh has not changed since 2012, however, in May 2023, we did have an increase in our facilities charge (Monthly Service Charge) portion of your bill. As you saw in last month's newsletter and you will see in this month's newsletter, we are planning an increase that will be effective May 1, 2025. The details are spelled out in greater detail in the Official Rate Notice. However, you may also call the office if you wonder how you specifically may be impacted.

Did you know that a typical household uses 50-60% of its electricity for heating and cooling and 12-15% on water heating? The rest is typically used for refrigeration, lights, small appliances and electronics.

Here are some common ways to lower your bill:

USE LESS HOT WATER. Shorter showers, launder your clothes on cold, do dishes in the dishwasher and only when the dishwasher is full.

DON'T USE SPACE HEATERS OR USE THEM SPARINGLY. A 1500W heater can cost you an additional $123 per month if it runs constantly.

FOR LIVESTOCK, USE TANK HEATERS WITH THE LOWEST WATTAGE RATING that you can get by with to do the job.

ADJUST YOUR THERMOSTAT. Lowering your thermostat by just a few degrees can result in substantial savings. The U.S. Department of Energy recommends setting it to 68°F while you're awake and lowering it while you sleep or are away.

USE A PROGRAMMABLE OR SMART THERMOSTAT. These devices automatically adjust temperatures based on your schedule, optimizing energy use and reducing waste.

SEAL DRAFTS & IMPROVE INSULATION. Use weatherstripping around doors and windows to prevent heat loss. Adding insulation to attics and walls can also improve your home's energy efficiency.

DRESS WARMLY INDOORS. Wearing cozy layers, socks, and blankets can help you feel comfortable without having to crank up the heat.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SUNLIGHT. Open curtains during the day to let in natural heat from the sun and close them at night to keep the warmth inside.

UNPLUG UNUSED ELECTRONICS. Many appliances and devices continue to draw power even when turned off. Unplugging items or using smart power strips can help reduce unnecessary energy use.

MAINTAIN YOUR HEATING SYSTEM. Regularly replacing air filters and scheduling professional HVAC maintenance ensures your system runs efficiently, preventing excessive energy use.

By taking these steps, you can keep your home warm and comfortable while keeping your electric bill in check. Stay cozy and energy-conscious this winter!

WHERE DO YOU FIND VALUE?

Did you know the average daily cost of electricity is $4.57,or about $140 per month?

Electricity fuels our daily life essentials, from heating/cooling equipment to entertainment devices and appliances. Think of how vital power is compared to other everyday purchases. That's real value.

Morning To-Go Latte

Fast-Food Combo Lunch

All-Day Power

Sources: Energy Information Administration, MoneyGeek and CNET

Winter Moratorium Ends

KIM GRIFFIN
Billing Specialist

As the cold months fade, the winter moratorium comes to an end. It's now time for the co-op to bring accounts up to date for those member-consumers who have gotten behind on their electric payments. Our staff uses all the available tools to assist those members who have fallen behind while ensuring all members are treated fairly, paying for the product they consumed.

If your account is past due, and you have not made payment arrangements by April 3, you will be subject to disconnection of your electric service. To avoid disconnection, you must pay your electric bill in full by April 3 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.

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.

State of Iowa Resources: We also encourage anyone who has fallen behind on payment to contact the Iowa Department of Human Rights at (515) 281-0859 or their local community action agency regarding eligibility for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). LIHEAP assists low-income families with meeting the costs of home heating. Applications are accepted at your local community action agency and, if eligible, may provide a one-time per year payment to assist with heating costs for eligible households.

We are happy to work with you to make sure your account is current to avoid any interruption in service. If your account is past due and you have not made a payment arrangement, please call us before April 3 at (641) 342-2173 or (800) 362-2154.

COMMUNITY INVESTED

Scholarship Application Deadline April 1

DEADLINE : April 1, 2025

WHO: 2025 high school graduates with parents or legal guardians who reside within Clarke Electric's service territory.

WHAT: The scholarships may be used for college or vocational technical school. Minimum scholarship amount $500. $10,000 has been set aside for scholarships. The size of the award depends on the quality of applications and number of people who apply.

HOW: Apply online at www.cecnet.net 30-17-05-00

INCLUDE: Applicants must include a copy of their transcript and a short essay on the topic, "Why are electric cooperatives important to you?"

CONTACT: Kim Griffin, (641) 342-2173; kgriffin@cecnet.net.

Reminder: Please Update Your Contact Information

We are updating member-consumer information. If your phone number or email address has changed, please notify us by phone, (800) 362-2154 or email us at clarke@cecnet.net. You can also scan the QR code at right to go directly to our website and update the member form.

It is important for Clarke Electric to have your most current contact information. This helps us to identify who you are when you call in to report an outage or request a service. It allows us to get important information to you as necessary. The information is not sold or given to others. We do share the information with our billing affiliate, but it is done in a secure environment.

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

Tariff Changes...continued from pg. 1

the services we provide for our membership. We recently conducted a major review of our tariff and made several changes. The following changes to Article 17 of our tariff were recommended and approved at our February board meeting. The entire tariff can be found on our website at cecnet.net.

Rates

Our current rate structure was recently reviewed with an increase in rates effective May 1, 2025. It should be noted we are not governed by the IUC when it comes to rate setting.

Rate Class	Current Avg. Monthly Rate	+ Increase	New Avg. Monthly Rate	Percent Increase
Single Phase: Non-Commercial	$150.51	$13.87	$164.38	9.22%
Single Phase: Multi-Dwelling Unit (MDU)	$106.90	$9.71	$116.61	9.08%
Commercial Service (0-75 kVA)	$277.82	$25.23	$303.05	9.08%
Large Commercial Over 75-999 kVA	$4,339.37	$392.04	$4,731.41	9.03%
Large Power >=1,000 kVA	$17,656.08	$1,595.43	$19,251.51	9.04%

Rate Class	Current Rate	+ Increase	New Rate	Percent Increase
Electric Space Heating (per kWh)	$0.058	$0.005	$0.063	8.62%

FEES AND CHARGES

Idle Service Charge

Idle services have been redesigned to capture the cost of the infrastructure to have the poles and wires in place to serve members. We are required by the IUC to maintain all poles and wires in a state of readiness, even if they are not being used. If a member decides they would prefer to stop paying a monthly service charge and energy charge and keep that service in a state of readiness they must pay an idle service fee of $27.50. If they don't pay the idle service fee, the cooperative can remove the service at their discretion. The fee was $18 and has increased to $27.50.

Service Call Charges and Trip Charges

Service call trip charges have increased from $125 to $150 if a truck is dispatched during normal business hours to make repairs on a member's wiring or equipment. A trip charge during overtime hours has increased from $200 to $300 if a truck is dispatched after normal hours to make repairs on a member's wiring or equipment.

Posting Fee

A member shall pay a posting fee when a cooperative representative travels to a member's location to post for non-payment. The fee increased from $125 to $150

Disconnection/Reconnection Fee

If a member is disconnected for non-payment the fee has increased from $125 to $150 per main meter. If a member requests a reconnection of electric service in the same name, the reconnection fee has increased from $125 to $150 during regular business hours. Any disconnection/reconnection after business hours has increased from $200 to $300.

The member shall pay a disconnection fee of $50 per main meter anytime the cooperative disconnects electric service remotely.

Looking Out for You:
January Outages

Equipment/maintenance failure: 2
Unknown: 2
Vandalism: 1

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
(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
Vice President: Randy Rouse
Secretary: Randy Barnard
Treasurer: Lydda Youmans
Asst. Sec./Treasurer: Larry Keller

Directors
Liz Beck
Cody Miller
Zach Robinson
Natalie Rydl

GENERAL MANAGER
David Opie

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.