



CLARKE REC Headlines

The official publication of Clarke Electric Cooperative



SAFETY DRIVEN | ENERGY SMART | COMMUNITY INVESTED |



The co-op offices will be closed Nov. 26 & 27 for Thanksgiving. From the board of directors, general manager and employees, we hope your Thanksgiving holiday is an enjoyable one. We thank you for your support, and we pledge to do our best each day to serve you.

Energy Efficiency



Tip of the Month

Keep cold air out to save energy! Seal air leaks around pipes and any gaps around chimney and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets.

Source: www.energy.gov

Looking Out for You: September Outages

- Trees – 8
- Animal/bird - 7
- Equipment/maintenance failure – 6
- Unknown - 4
- Lightning - 2
- Customer caused - 1
- Motor vehicle – 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
www.cecnet.net

Utility Bill Assistance Available for Iowa Households Financially Impacted by COVID

IOWA GOVERNOR KIM REYNOLDS announced a new program designed to help Iowa families with their utility bills during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Residential Utility Disruption Prevention Program will provide eligible Iowa households up to \$2,000 toward their electric, natural gas, and water bills if they are at risk of disconnection due to an inability to pay because of a COVID-19 related loss of income.

This new program is part of the federal CARES Act funding allocated to Iowa and is managed by the Iowa Economic Development Authority and the Iowa Finance Authority. Payments through the program will be made directly to utility providers and applied to the applicants' accounts.



"This program will provide our member-consumers with some financial relief and help reduce some of the stress of paying monthly utility bills as we navigate through this pandemic," said CEC General Manager Dave Opie. "Applicants are welcome to contact our office for assistance filling out the required documentation if needed."

To be eligible to receive assistance, a residential electric, natural gas and/or water utility consumer must have:

- A primary Iowa residence with active residential utility accounts (renters may apply as long as the utility account is in the applicant's name);

continued on pg. 2

+ Safety Driven: Call Before You Dig



Fall is the ideal time for tree planting because it allows the roots to become established before the ground freezes and winter sets in.

Teach children to call 811 before they dig - it's not just smart, it's the law.



Know what's below. Call before you dig.

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.



Co-op Moves to Temporary Location During Renovation

WE ARE FORGING AHEAD WITH our building renovation project! Although the pandemic caused our project to slow down and almost come to a standstill, work is progressing. If you drive by the office, you will see large mounds of dirt that was moved to construct our new parking lot on the west side of the building. You will also see that the old warehouse has been completely removed. The new, larger capacity generator has been put into service and a new septic system is in place.

As we move into the next phase of the project, the construction team will focus on the interior of our office and lobby. As they work to remove asbestos, rusty pipes and aged materials safely and efficiently, staff will vacate the main office and temporarily relocate to another building. Fortunately, we're familiar with being displaced when we shifted to working from home during the pandemic.

Beginning Nov. 2, staff will transition to the space formerly occupied by The

Important Notice
As of Nov. 2, the CEC business office has temporarily relocated to 131 W. Washington St., Osceola.

Serene Day Spa at 131 W. Washington St., Osceola. The new location will continue to be staffed with our friendly customer service representatives, taking phone calls and receiving payments in person. Some office personnel will work from their homes during the office renovation. The operations employees will stay onsite and work from the east warehouse while our engineering department will remain at the temporary office set up in the warehouse.

The one thing that won't change during this time is providing our member-consumers with the electric service they rely on. We will continue to offer the drop box payment method in addition to our online payment

option, automatic payment option or a recurring charge to a credit card. Once the concrete driveway work is finished at the headquarters, the payment drop box will again be available to our members. As we get those details, we will make sure to communicate them to you.

The Facility Improvement Plan was designed in a way that will update our existing building and grounds in a manner that saves dollars, retains our heritage and provides effective and healthy infrastructure for many decades into the future. The project is on track to be finished in late spring of 2021. We'll keep you updated on the renovation progress in this newsletter and on our Facebook page.

We thank you for your patience during this important project.



DAVE OPIE
General Manager

Utility Bill Assistance...from pg. 1

- An unpaid utility bill balance or have previously entered into a payment plan with their utility provider;
- An annual income that is 80% of the median family income, based on county and household size;
- Experienced a COVID-19 loss of income (job loss, reduction in hours, reduction in pay) on or after March 17, 2020, that resulted in hardship in paying bills for electric, natural gas, and/or water utility service provided between March 17, 2020, and October 31, 2020.

Applications will be accepted at www.iowahousingrecovery.com through November 20, 2020, or until funding is depleted, whichever comes first. Assistance will be awarded based on application completeness and eligibility in order received until all funds have been exhausted. The website includes answers to frequently asked questions and complete eligibility requirements. You can also call Iowa's Utility Recovery Hotline at (515) 348-8976 or (877) 463-3269 for more information about this program. 58-12-05-01

If you receive electricity from Clarke Electric Cooperative and need assistance with documentation for your application, please contact Jason Gibbs at (800) 362-2154.



Community Invested: Are You Ready for the Cold? Learn More About Our Heat Rate Program

WHILE TRYING TO SQUEEZE IN one last camping trip the weekend of Oct. 17, my family and I started the weekend on Saturday with a high near 70 degrees, and woke up Sunday morning with snow on the ground and a high temp expected to reach a chilly 44 degrees. Nonetheless, we did have a lot of fun.

The quick weather change was a reminder that winter and colder temperatures are upon us. It also made me wonder how many of our member-consumers would be turning on their heat for the season. I feel it is important to remind folks about Clarke Electric Cooperative's Heat Rate Program and how it works.

Clarke Electric Cooperative member-consumers who use electric heat as their primary heat source and use an electric water heater for their hot water needs, qualify for a special discount on the energy they use to heat their home or shop.

Each year from Oct. 1 through May 31, all of the kilowatt-hours your household uses are calculated at a rate of 5.8 cents per kilowatt-hour (\$0.058/kWh) instead of the regular retail price of 11.3 cents per kilowatt-hour (\$0.113/kWh). This is a very good discount that will save you real money on your winter heat bill, and it requires a separate meter be installed. 36-12-01-03

If you have any of the following heating systems, you are eligible for the Heat Rate

Plus Program:

- Geothermal
- Air-source heat pump (Mini-Split)
- Electric furnace
- Electric boiler
- Electric baseboard heat



JASON GIBBS

If you are a member who already has a heat meter, it's important that the breaker powering the meter is always left on. If it isn't, not only does it show up as an outage, but it also prevents us from being able to read your meter.

For more details please visit www.cecnet.net or feel free to call me at (641) 342-2173.

Server "Vault" Part of Co-op Remodel

THE MAJOR REMODEL PROJECT AT the co-op opened the door for some improvements to their information technology service in addition to updating and modernizing portions of our facilities.

"Throughout our planning process, we knew that addressing our information technology security and infrastructure would be key," said CEC General Manager Dave Opie.

Central Iowa Power Cooperative Manager of IT Service Operations Dillon Town was brought in to move the cooperative's existing IT equipment from an office workroom into its onsite vault, a 10' x 20' room inside thick concrete walls with a secure vault door.

"Clarke is positioning itself to protect the technology they have onsite to ensure whatever disaster strikes, they can still serve their members," Town said. "We always hope that the unthinkable doesn't happen, but 2020 has people rethinking every business process and procedure."

Town worked closely with CEC GIS Mapping & SCADA Technician Kevin Foley to

maximize the opportunity of moving the server room. Part of the project entailed physically separating the cooperative-owned IT equipment from the SCADA equipment onto two network racks.

"Separating the SCADA was an important piece for the security of both systems," Foley said. "It also puts us in a better position should there be any future regulations that require them to be separate. This way limits the opportunities of either system being hacked or otherwise compromised."

Like any vault, the server room will have the tendency to heat up quickly once the machines are installed and functioning. To remedy overheating, Town said the room will be serviced by three air conditioners – a primary unit and two backups to make sure the room stays cool if one unit fails.

In the event of a power outage, co-ops have backup generators to keep their vital equipment online. A larger generator donated by Clarke County Hospital will be installed that can provide backup power to the entire facility, something the old generator was unable to do.



Dillon Town, left, and David Foley, work on setting up the new server vault.

"We took this opportunity to upgrade the battery backup units to make sure we'd have enough battery power to run all the equipment for a few hours in the event the generator failed," Town said.

"We know we can't stop disasters from happening, but hopefully, the steps we're taking now to secure our technology will lessen the impact to the cooperative and most importantly, the member-consumers we serve," Opie said.

Operations Update: 3 Substation Upgrades Completed

CLARKE ELECTRIC CREWS HAVE recently completed important upgrades to three substations within our service territory. The improvements were in accordance with our 2020 operations plan and ensure we're able to provide dependable electricity to our member-consumers.

Osceola: The substation transformer was replaced with a new SPX (Waukesha) 7.5/9.38 MVA transformer increasing the capacity of the substation by 50%. This will allow for future growth and contingency switching. Substation cover-up was applied while the substation was out of service and motor capacitors were re-wired in the voltage regulator controllers to allow for safer and more efficient future maintenance.

Derby: The substation transformer was replaced with the 5/6.25 MVA Virginia Transformer that was previously in service at the Osceola substation increasing the capacity of the substation by 33%. This additional capacity will support added while allowing for contingency switching. The voltage regulators were also replaced

with new 328-amp units to match the capacity of the substation transformer. Substation cover-up was applied while the substation was out of service.

Humeston: The substation transformer was replaced with the 3.75/4.687 MVA GS Hevi-Duty Electric transformer that was previously in service at the Derby substation increasing the capacity of the substation by 50%. Additionally, the voltage regulators were replaced with 219-amp units to match the capacity of the substation. This will allow for future growth and contingency switching that could allow Humeston to pick up load from Derby. The transformers that were retired from this substation were 47 years old.



Information on photos - who, when, where...

Member Leased Light Program with New LED Lights

WITH THE ONSET OF SHORTER DAYLIGHT HOURS, YOU might want to consider leasing a light from Clarke Electric so when you come home and it is dark outside, you won't have to worry about how to get to the door. Clarke Electric offers the leased light program to our members without the hassle of repairs or maintenance.

For a low monthly fee of \$7.50, we will install and maintain an LED light on your property and make repairs when needed. LED light bulbs are an extremely efficient, brighter and long-lasting light source. All you do is pay for the electricity, it's just that simple.

Qualifications for our leased light program:

- You must be a member-consumer of Clarke Electric Cooperative.
- The light must be on the meter pole, or any Member-owned

pole on the Member's side of the meter provided the Member arranges for 120-volt electric service to the pole.

- Clarke Electric Cooperative will furnish, install and maintain the light and fixture during normal cooperative working hours.
- The light will be turned on and off using a dusk-to-dawn photocell (cannot be controlled by a switch).

The Cooperative reserves the right to remove the light at its discretion.

These qualifications are deemed to be understood and agreed to by the member upon the member's request for installation of the leased light. Call for more details: (800) 362-2154.



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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

David Opie, General Manager

Office Hours: Mon - Fri 7:30 am - 4 pm

Outside Depository Available 24 Hours

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