



CLARKE REC Headlines

The official publication of Clarke Electric Cooperative



SAFETY DRIVEN | ENERGY SMART | COMMUNITY INVESTED Volume No. 81 No. 10 | October 2021



Office Closed

The Clarke Electric Cooperative office will be closed Thursday, Nov. 11 in observance of Veterans Day. Thank you to all our veterans for their service to our country.

Energy Efficiency



Tip of the Month

Shut the door on wasted energy by weather stripping and sealing all exterior doors. If you have an old exterior door, consider replacing it with a newer, energy efficient model.

Looking Out for You: August Outages

- Lightning: 16
- Equipment/maintenance failure: 9
- Unknown: 9
- Animal/bird: 6
- Trees: 3
- 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

Board Election, Prize Drawing Results

TWO AT-LARGE CANDIDATES WERE re-elected and one new face has joined the board following this year's board election during Clarke Electric's annual meeting.

Larry Keller and Randy Rouse were elected for another three-year term and newcomer **Marni Kelso** was successful in securing her seat in District 6. Thank you to everyone who took the time to mail in or drop off your ballots. Keller will begin his third term by retaining his position as Board Secretary. Rouse, who is entering his fourth term will retain his position as Board Vice President and also continue to represent the cooperative on the Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO) Board of Directors.



MARNI KELSO

Congratulations to these raffle drawing winners!

\$100 WINNERS

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| John Carson | Marianne Lester |
| Venita Escher | Lyle Woollis |
| Jeff Glenn | |

\$50 WINNERS

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Don Burgett | Leora Keller |
| David Curnes | DJ Opdahl |
| Maurice Dean | Billie Paynter |
| Larry Gillaspay | Dennis Sterns |
| John Heilman | James Vickroy |



*Outgoing CEC Board Director **Kyle Kelso** receives a commemorative electric meter lamp for his 15 years of service to CEC member-consumers and the board of directors. ►*

Friday, Oct. 29

10 am-3 pm

1103 N. Main, Osceola

All CEC member-consumers and the public are invited to stop by during our open house and rededication ceremony and see the newly renovated office!

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

Annual Meeting Message: 2020 Year in Review

THIS YEAR HAS BEEN DIFFERENT

than past years and so our Annual Meeting is also different than past years. We invited our members to “take a spin” for this year’s annual meeting with a drive-thru experience. We planned this year’s meeting differently for many reasons: to minimize large gatherings, to create the best value for our member-consumers and to show off our updated facilities. Hopefully you took advantage of the chance to drive through our modernized warehouse and chat with our great employees and board members.

Our amazing employees and board of directors work hard for your cooperative. We sincerely believe in our mission statement of *Safety Driven, Energy Smart and Community Invested!*

I believe our cooperative responded very well to changing and challenging circumstances in 2020. Our numbers were solid. Our financials were strong and included enough of a margin to keep our

balance sheet healthy. Operationally, we accomplished an impressive amount of maintenance work and our service numbers continued to improve.

In the thick of the worst part of the pandemic, our linemen performed proactive system maintenance. As restrictions surrounding the pandemic eased, our member-consumers were anxious to begin postponed projects and our co-op responded to a surge of construction work later in the year.

Surprisingly, kilowatt hours did not increase as dramatically as we anticipated due to many of our member-consumers working from home. That includes our office staff who could work remotely thanks to technology we had the fortitude to put in place over the last several years. I’m proud of every member of our staff who made the commitment to provide the same level of exceptional service no matter their location.

Throughout this trying time, our cooperative was able to deftly take

advantage of the situation and move forward with our facility improvement plan. We knew this would involve vacating our offices, but that process went much more smoothly for employees who were already working from home. We also set up a temporary office on the Osceola square to maintain the face of the cooperative and provide a drop-off location for bill payments. We appreciate our member-consumers who followed our progress and changes on our Facebook page, in this newsletter and on our website.

One thing that didn’t stop during the pandemic was the ever-evolving energy landscape, and Clarke Electric Cooperative wants to support our member-consumers who have questions or are considering environmentally friendly options for their home or farm. If you’re considering installing solar, wind energy or purchasing an electric vehicle, please reach out to us. We’re aware of vendors who do not have your best interests at heart. We want to make sure you have the facts if and when you are ready to make the investment in any form of alternative energy.

I hope you take a moment to review the cooperative’s financial statement that was provided in the August issue of this newsletter. In it you’ll be able to see that your local electric cooperative fared well during very difficult conditions. 47-12-07-00

Lastly, I’m happy to report there will be no change to our rates in 2021 or 2022. In fact, our last rate change was in 2016. We are currently exploring alternative rates that will give our member-consumers more options for their changing life needs, though those will not likely be available until 2023.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding as we strive to provide safe, reliable and affordable power to you! A video of our annual meeting reports is now available on our website at www.cecnet.net.



DAVE OPIE
General Manager



Pictured clockwise from top left: Billing Specialist Kim Griffin and Customer Service/Cashier Cori Smith; Manager of Member Services Jason Gibbs helps members sign up for the prize drawing; staff tend to visitors in the drive-thru.

+ Safety Driven: Harvest Safety



AGRICULTURE IS THE BACKBONE of our country. In addition to being one of the most labor-intensive professions, farming is also considered one of the most dangerous jobs in the U.S.

As you prepare for harvest season, please keep these safety tips in mind.

- Maintain a 10-foot clearance around all utility equipment in all directions.
- Use a spotter and deployed flags to maintain safe distances from power lines and other electrical equipment when working in the field.
- If your equipment makes contact with an energized or downed power line, contact 9-1-1 immediately and remain inside the vehicle until the power line is de-energized. In case of smoke or fire, exit the cab by making a solid jump out of the cab (without touching it), and hop away to safety. 12-22-04-53
- Consider equipment and cargo extensions of your vehicle. Lumber, hay, tree limbs, irrigation pipes and even bulk materials can conduct electricity, so keep them out of contact with electrical equipment.

HALLOWEEN SAFETY TIPS

HAVE A SAFE TRICK OR TREAT NIGHT!



WALK SAFELY

- Cross the street at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks.
- Always walk on sidewalks or paths. If there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible. Children should walk on direct routes with the fewest street crossings.



TRICK OR TREAT WITH AN ADULT

- Children under the age of 12 should not be alone at night without adult supervision. If kids are mature enough to be without supervision, they should stick to familiar areas that are well lit and trick-or-treat in groups.



KEEP COSTUMES CREATIVE AND SAFE

- Decorate costumes and bags with reflective tape or stickers and, if possible, choose light colors.
- Have kids carry glow sticks or flashlights to help them see and be seen by drivers.



DRIVE EXTRA SAFELY ON HALLOWEEN

- Drive slowly, anticipate heavy pedestrian traffic and turn your headlights on earlier in the day to spot children from greater distances.
- Popular trick-or-treating hours are 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. so be especially alert to kids during those hours.

5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Careless digging poses a threat to people, pipelines and underground facilities. Always call 8-1-1 first. Here are five easy steps for safe digging.



1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before your work begins. The operator will notify the utilities affected by your project.

2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.

2-3

3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.



5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project location.



Clarke Electric's Responsibility:
Equipment, poles, wires, transformer and meter.

Property owner's responsibility:
Fuses and wires from meter to building/home.

It's the law to call for a locate of all equipment (yours and ours) when digging or excavating. If you need all powerlines on your property located, you must contact both Iowa One Call and Clarke Electric separately. If equipment is owned by Clarke Electric, there is no charge. Please contact the cooperative with any questions.



Pole Top Rescue

LINEMEN PRACTICE POLE TOP RESCUE which is a vital skill all linemen must be able to perform. Time counts in an emergency situation and linemen know from practice the safest and most practical way to rescue their partner if contact is made.

Linemen work in pairs for many reasons not the least of which is the important task of watching their partner while he is working on or near energized lines. In the pole top rescue scenario, linemen place an emergency radio call, put on climbing gear, climb 20 feet up a utility pole, rig a rope, lower a 105-pound mannequin and begin lifesaving procedures. A trainer watches every move for any lapses in safety procedures.

Performing a rescue is one of many skills linemen learn in a rigorous training program that emphasizes diligence and safety. Pictured is Journeyman Lineman Doug Reasoner practicing these skills during a recent safety training session.

Pole top rescue is tested annually at the cooperative with the assistance of the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperative's (IAEC) Safety and Loss Control Instructors.

New Signs for Remodeled Office



The cooperative installed its new exterior signage in September as part of the remodel project. Plan to come and see all the changes at our open house Oct. 29 from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.



The Cooperative Difference: October is National Co-op Month



Dylan Bragg & Hunter Koehn

Eric Page

Electric co-ops were local before it was cool!

All co-ops exist to meet a community need. We're proud to be homegrown.



CLARKE
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PO Box 161, 1103 N Main, Osceola, IA 50213-0161

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

David Opie, General Manager

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

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