

# CLOSED Circuit


Volume 71, No. 7

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ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Cooperative Highlights:

### ► Copper Thefts Continue

Copper theft remains a safety issue for your cooperative. If you see anything suspicious, call the cooperative or your local law enforcement agency.

### ► Crews at Work

CEC crews are working to rebuild a FEMA line at the southwest edge of Osceola. Croft Contractors are working in the Clio substation area. Coddington ROW crews are working in the Grand River substation area.

## CEC Membership = Savings

Did you know that you can save from 10 to 60 percent on your prescription medications if you do not already have prescription drug insurance? Members of CEC who have been using their Co-op Connections cards to purchase prescription drugs have saved 36 percent of the cost or almost \$13,800. Visit [www.co-opconnections.coop](http://www.co-opconnections.coop) to find participating pharmacies and the prices of drugs. You can even print your own Co-op Connections Pharmacy discount card.

In July 2008, Clarke Electric Cooperative mailed Co-op Connections cards—a national discount card—to all of our members. It can be used locally, regionally, nationally, or online to receive deep discounts on such things as bolts



of fabric, clothing, automotive items and services, restaurants, sporting goods, hotels and motels, gifts, and many services. A list of all participating retailers and discounts when using your Co-op

Connections Card is on our website. Visit [www.cecnet.net](http://www.cecnet.net) and click on the link. The list is also available on [www.co-opconnections.coop](http://www.co-opconnections.coop).

If you have lost your card or did not receive a card, please call Jason Gibbs, at 641-342-2173.

The following is a partial list of local participating retailers:

- Ben Franklin/Betty's Quilt Shop
- Hart's Bridal
- Kelly's Clip and Curl
- Robinson's True Value & Variety/Just Ask Rental
- Scrapbook Heaven
- The Gold Boutique
- Total Image
- Wineland Automotive
- Carpenter's Hall/Cater 2U
- Curry Pest Control
- Earth Angels
- Family Shoe
- Flowers-N-More

**Since July 2008, members of Clarke Electric Cooperative have spent \$24,117 to purchase \$37,917 worth of prescription drugs.**

### Communications Shelters Erected in Phase 2 of DOE Grant

Clarke Electric employees are now assembling and installing communications shelters in each of the eleven substations in Clarke Electric's territory. Communication components will be housed in these climate-controlled shelters. This new technology is part of CEC's Department of Energy Grant.



# Finding the Value of Electricity

Nowadays, cell phones and personal digital devices are a part of our culture. Everyone, it seems, is connected on the go—whether they're just making phone calls, text messaging, or checking e-mail. Such communication freedom is a luxury we pay for, generally without grumbling.

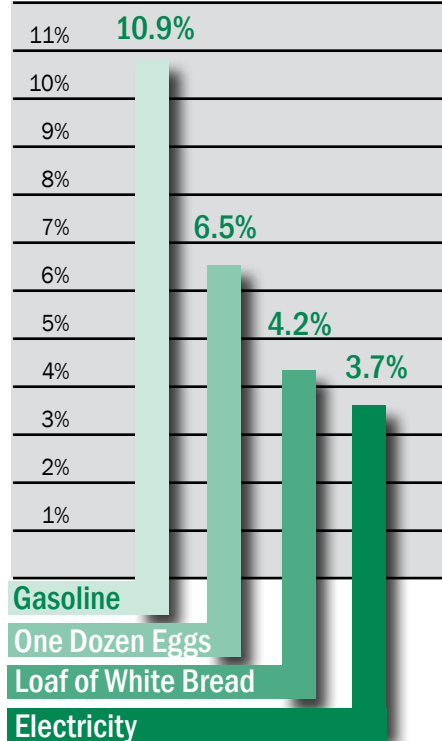
So why is it that when it comes to electricity—a necessity in our modern world—many of us grumble and complain when the electric bill comes every month? We expect electricity to be there at the flip of the switch, and when it's not, we get angry or frustrated.

Hey, I'm no different—I expect the lights to come on every time, too. And as the General Manager of Clarke Electric Cooperative, I have a special responsibility to make sure your electric service is safe, reliable, and affordable. But I also believe that when compared to other commodities, electricity remains a great value.



Bill Freeman  
CEC Manager

## Cost Increases in Last 10 Years



For example, over the past 10 years, gasoline has shot up 10.9 percent on average every single year, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. A loaf of white bread has increased 4.2 percent annually, and a dozen eggs 6.5 percent per year. In comparison, electricity has increased just 3.7 percent a year nationally for the past decade. When you consider how reliable electricity is, the value goes up even more.

Those cell phones I mentioned earlier? Nearly a third of all U.S. households have four electronic devices, such as cell phones, plugged in and charging, according to the Residential Energy Consumption Survey by

the U.S. Energy Information Administration. In the past 30 years, the amount of residential electricity used by appliances and electronics has increased from 17 percent to 31 percent. More homes than ever use major appliances and central air conditioning. Digital video recorders (DVRs), computers, and multiple televisions have become commonplace.

Clearly, our appetite for electricity shows no signs of slowing down. So the next time you flip a switch, use your toaster, or run your washing machine, remember the value electricity holds. And know that we at Clarke Electric Cooperative are looking out for you by working together to keep electric bills affordable, controlling costs through innovation, and putting you, our members, first.



The **Pull the Plug** program pays you to save energy responsibly. Appliances in working condition qualify for the following rewards: (limited to 3 appliances)

- Refrigerator .....\$35/unit
- Freezer ..... \$25/unit
- Window air conditioner ..... \$25/unit

**Call 800-362-2154 to recycle old appliances.**

Our program contractor, Environmental Services of Iowa, will call you to schedule a collection time for your appliance to be recycled. Save money by replacing old appliances with new Energy Star® appliances.

## Reading Pays!

**Look for your hidden account number in this issue and call during July to have \$10 deducted from your monthly energy account.**



*Save the Date!*

### Annual Meeting Reminder

**September 12, 2011**

- Clarke Community High School,
- 5:30 p.m. Free pork sandwiches by Madison Co. Pork Producers
- 7 p.m. Business session
- Entertainment provided by Pat Meade and The Rumley Brothers
- \$10 energy credit to all attending members
- Drawings: 10-\$50 and 5-\$100.
- Golf carts shuttle members from parking lot to school.

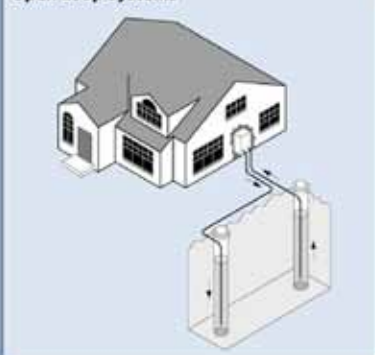
# Geothermal—The Smart Choice

As we are all aware; heating and cooling your home continue to cost more each year. These costs could cause a significant increase in everyone's budget. If you are looking for a way to help out your budget, why not install a ground source heating and cooling system? This is an efficient, safe, and affordable way to cut your energy costs long-term. The unique design of a geothermal system transfers the earth's heat, concentrates it, and delivers it throughout your home. In warm weather, the process is reversed.

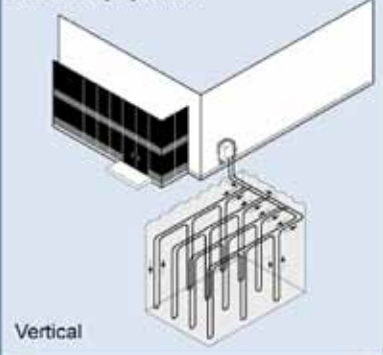
## Types of Geothermal Heat Pump Systems

There are four basic configurations for geothermal heat pump ground loops. Three are "closed-loop systems," where a water and antifreeze solution is continually moved through pipes; the fourth is an "open-loop system," where groundwater or well water is used.

Open Loop Systems

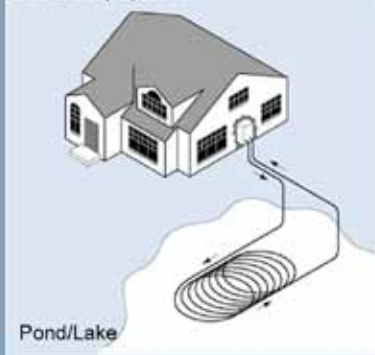


Closed Loop Systems



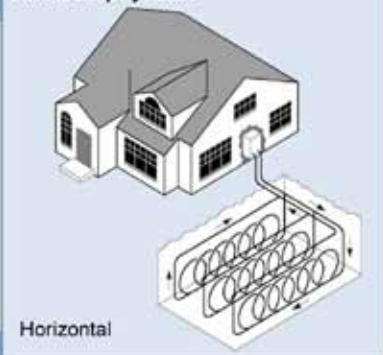
Vertical

Closed Loop Systems



Pond/Lake

Closed Loop Systems



Horizontal

Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

There are two common types of geothermal units, closed loop and open loop. All units use a series of pipes, coils, or loops that are placed below the ground's frost level. The pipes have a special water-based solution in them, which is circulated continuously.

The closed loop is most commonly used in the Midwest. You have the option to use a horizontal loop system when adequate land surface is available. The pipes are placed in trenches below the frost line and are 100 to 350 feet long. If land surface is limited for various reasons, a vertical loop is used. Drilling equipment is used to bore small diameter holes from 50 to 200 feet deep.

The basic principle of the ground-source heating unit is to pick up

**Depending on the size of your home, a geothermal unit can cut your heating costs by as much as 50 percent in the winter and cooling costs by 30 percent in the summer.**

and dispel heat. As the water solution circulates through the coils it picks up the earth's natural heat and carries it to the heat pump where it is compressed to a higher temperature and distributed throughout your house. In the summer the process can be reversed, and the unit can be used to cool your home. A desuperheater adds an extra energy savings by using the excess heat to warm water for your household.

A geothermal unit has a higher up-front cost than traditional heating units but will pay for itself within a three- to five-year time frame. Depending on the size of your home, a geothermal unit can cut your heating costs by as much as 50 percent in the winter and cooling costs by 30 percent in the summer. 36-13-03-03

The units are very safe. The absence of gas, flame, or fumes make this an environmentally smart choice. There are no tanks or noisy outdoor equipment to bother you or your neighbors.

Geothermal systems can be placed in both new or existing homes making this an easy choice when building, remodeling or reducing energy costs. The ground loop has an expected life of over 50 years and requires no maintenance.

Contact Kevin Foley, your local geothermal dealer, for more information on how to save energy dollars at 800-362-2154.

Look for a bill stuffer in your July bill for more details about our energy efficient GeoComfort line.

**71 years of  
answering the call**

## May Outages

- Animal/bird (2)
- Construction (6)
- Customer-caused (1)
- Equipment failure (11)
- Lightning (16)
- Maintenance (6)
- Vehicle (1)
- Power Supply (1)
- Wind (2)



## Study Provides Revenue Information

Clarke Electric Cooperative recently hired an independent consultant to perform a Cost of Service Study (COSS) to determine if each rate class was providing the revenue needed to cover the increased cost of doing business.

**Community  
Minded**

The results of the study were shared with the Board of Directors at the June meeting. As was the case in the 2008 COSS, fuel, material, inflation, legislative regulations, and increasing demand for electricity all continue to

contribute to the increased cost of doing business. You see it readily at the gas pump or the grocery store. Our cooperative is experiencing the same increases. It is our business practice to perform periodic studies, present them to the board for approval, and notify our members if there is justification for an increase. 06-30-03-53

We don't take this job lightly. The board will continue to study the numbers to make sure the adjustments are fair and equitable to each rate class. Look for more information in future issues of the *Closed Circuit*.

**NOTHING COMPARES**  
to the Iowa State Fair

August 11 - 21, 2011.



**NOTHING COMPARES**  
to the satisfaction of ownership

of your local electric cooperative – the place for innovation,  
accountability, integrity and commitment to community.



**Touchstone Energy**  
Cooperatives of Iowa

sponsoring the 4-H Exhibits Building

Iowa State Fair  
**OFFICIAL  
SPONSOR**

## Working to Keep Your Electric Bills Affordable.

It's hard to predict the future, but one thing seems certain—  
**new government regulations will increase the cost of electricity.**

We're committed to updating you on government policy changes as we work together to keep your electric bills **AFFORDABLE**. Find out how we're *Looking Out for You* at [www.ourenergy.coop](http://www.ourenergy.coop).



America's Electric  
Cooperatives



**CLARKE**  
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Looking Out  
for You



*Clarke Electric Cooperative, Inc.*

Clarke Electric Cooperative, Inc., exists to professionally serve our members' changing needs, enhancing quality of life through leadership in community development and providing service excellence for our members' energy requirements.

P.O. Box 161, Osceola IA 50213 • 641-342-2173 • 1-800-362-2154

Our Web site: [www.cecnet.net](http://www.cecnet.net)

Board of Directors: Tom Carson, Osceola; Ralph Evans, Decatur; Randy Gaumer, Murray; Larry Jackson, Clio; Paul Keller, New Virginia; Kyle Kelso, Weldon; Marilyn Marsh, Lucas; Frank Riley, Osceola; Bill Willis, New Virginia.

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