

CLOSED Circuit


Volume 71, No. 3

March 2011

Official Publication of



ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Cooperative Highlights:

► Croft Construction

Workers will begin changing poles in the Clio substation area.

► Coddington

Workers will be clearing right-of-way in the White Oak substation area.

► IES Construction

Workers will finish the transmission underbuild in the White Oak substation area.

► Watts Electric

Workers will finish the construction work in the Lacona substation area and begin changing poles in the Medora substations area.

► Clarke Electric Crews

Clarke Electric crews will begin upgrading the Medora substation and changing poles in the Murray substation area.

The Power of Local Control

At Clarke Electric Cooperative, we're not alone in our mission to deliver a safe, reliable, and affordable supply of power to rural residents. There are 35 electric distribution cooperatives like us in Iowa alone and approximately 900 nationwide.

Despite our obvious similarities, each co-op is unique with its own history and distinctive mix of residential, industrial, commercial, and agricultural consumer-members. All co-ops make their own business decisions independently, as described in the Fourth Cooperative Principle, "Autonomy and Independence." It's one of seven unique guidelines that govern cooperative operations.

Remaining autonomous and independent allows us to best serve the needs of you, our owners. For example, a sound decision made by a co-op with a relatively small number of members spread out over a mostly rural area might not work for another with more members in an urban setting. Local ownership and control means that co-op member-owners receive service that is best suited for their needs.

Although Clarke Electric Cooperative sails our own ship, so to speak, we are not sailing alone. We are members of Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives (IAEC, a statewide association), Central Iowa Power Cooperative (CIPCO, our power generator), and the

National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA, a Virginia-based national service organization representing approximately 900 consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives, public power districts, and public utility districts in the United States). We're also a member of Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives, an alliance of more than 700 electric cooperatives nationwide. 56-01-05-02

These umbrella groups provide support and products like *Living with Energy* in Iowa and valuable safety courses for our employees. Politically, IAEC and NRECA advocate for us with lawmakers in Iowa and Washington, D.C., keeping these public officials aware of how their votes can impact our members and their electric bills.

Another benefit is that none of these groups tell us what to do. Decisions about how to deliver your electricity at the lowest possible cost are left to our employees and to our board of directors, who are elected by you, our members.

Leaders of our co-op, members just like you, are knowledgeable about this area and its needs. Our ability to make our own decisions allows us to serve you in the most efficient way possible. And that's the way it should be.



25 YEARS



Roger Phillips

5 YEARS



Bill Freeman

5 YEARS



Nick Ganon

CEC Employees ↑



CEC Board Members →

3 TERMS



Tom Carson



Frank Riley

Call 811 Before You Dig



1-800-292-8989 | **811**
www.iowaonecall.com | Know what's BELOW. Call before you dig.

Anytime you plan to excavate, including digging, whether it's a small or a large construction project or homeowner project, call Iowa One Call 48 hours prior to excavating (excluding weekends and/or holidays). Iowa One Call will notify the owners/operators of underground facilities who participate in Iowa One Call. The various underground facility operators will dispatch locate personnel to the area to mark the underground facility locations with flags and paint markings, showing where underground facilities are located

so the excavator can avoid damaging the facilities. Iowa law applies to professional contractors as well as homeowners, and encompasses a wide array of outdoor projects including:

- Installing a fence
- Planting trees or shrubs
- Building a patio, addition, deck, garage, outdoor shed or any similar structure that requires any form of digging
- Putting in a new driveway
- Installing a septic system or water drainage system
- Terracing or landscaping



Winter Moratorium Ends April 1

If your account is past due, and you have not made payment arrangements by March 31, you will be subject to disconnection of your electric service. To avoid disconnection, 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 Norma at our office today to make arrangements or to request information at 641.342.2173 or 800.362.2154

Join Clarke Electric's Renewable Energy Program

Clarke Electric Cooperative has offered a Renewable Energy Program to our members since 2004. Individuals can voluntarily contribute to a fund that will be used for the development of alternate energy production facilities in Iowa, including wind energy, biomass, solar, and other nontraditional generation technologies.

Customers do not directly purchase alternate energy, but rather participate in the development of these resources. Contributions may be retained until they reach a sufficient level to pursue a particular development, make a grant to another entity pursuing alternate energy development in Iowa, or arrange for purchases from alternate energy production facilities.

Some Renewable Energy Program Highlights

- Available to customers within any of our rate classifications.
- Customers can contribute a one-time dollar amount or on a monthly basis. The minimum contribution is \$1.00.
- Forms of participation include: cash, check, credit card, ACH, or paying an additional amount with your monthly electric bill.
- One-time contributions to the program will be accepted.
- Monthly contribution sign-ups are allowed with program utilizing the contribution line item appearing on customers bills.

We're pleased to offer this option to you and welcome your participation. If you have questions, would like to sign up, or would like more information about this program please call our office at 800-362-2154.

**Customer Authorization Form
for Renewable Energy Contribution**

Yes, I would like to be a part of Renewable Energy Development in Iowa by making a contribution.

Enclosed is a check with a one-time donation.

I would like to make a monthly donation of _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please mail to: Renewable Energy, Clarke Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 161, Osceola, Iowa 50213



Tune In to TV Energy Savings

So you've bought an ENERGY STAR-qualified TV to save energy. Don't stop! There's even more you can do to boost your TV's efficiency.

TVs are bigger than they used to be.

Some of the largest ones can use as much electricity each year as a new, conventional refrigerator. But ENERGY STAR-qualified TVs use roughly 40 percent less energy than standard models.

Of course, if the set is left on when no one is watching, that costs money. But in some cases, even if you hit the "off" button, "energy vampires" might go to work—meaning your TV could still consume power. 32-32-01-01

Here are a couple of things you can do to stop that drain.

- Many high-definition TVs come with a quick start option. By turning it off, you'll save energy and add only a few seconds to start-up times.
- To stop energy vampires, use a power strip as a central turn off point. When you're not watching TV and not planning to record a program later, simply flip the power strip's off button.

For more tips on how to save energy and money:

Visit www.energysavers.gov

www.TogetherWeSave.com or

call the efficiency experts at Clarke Electric, 1-800-362-2154



ENERGY STAR-qualified televisions use roughly 40 percent less energy than standard models.



71 years of answering the call



January Outages
Construction (7)
Equipment Failure (7)

CEC cares
 for your **SAFETY**

CEC offices
 will be closed
 Good Friday,
 April 22.



Reading Pays!

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

It Takes a Cut Above to Stay a Step Ahead

For years, trees have been appreciated for their shade, planted for their fruit, harvested for their wood and venerated by countless poets and philosophers. Trees contribute to our health, beautify our neighborhoods, help regulate our atmosphere, and can even reduce our electric bills, if carefully planned and planted.

However, trees can also cause headaches for their human neighbors. Their roots can damage foundations. They can topple in storms and destroy buildings. And, their high-reaching limbs can interfere with the reliable delivery of electricity to your home.

Limbs and leaves in contact with power lines can conduct electricity, creating a potentially dangerous condition for anyone who comes near. Tree-to-line contact also contributes to what electric system professionals call "line loss." The term refers to electricity created at a generating plant that does not reach its destination, an inefficiency that increases costs for us and for you.

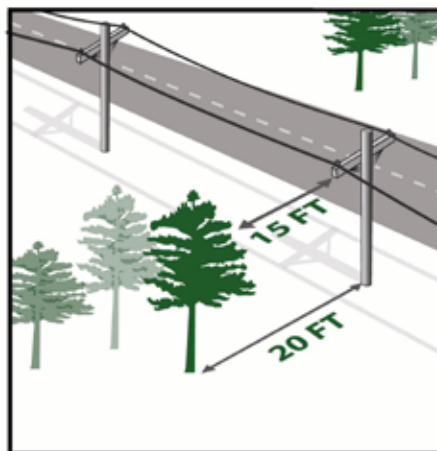
Clarke Electric Cooperative strives to be a good steward of one of nature's gifts. However, we must maintain the integrity of the system by regularly trimming and pruning trees. Crews and contractors who work for us to clear rights of way are trained to work around high-voltage lines safely and preserve the plants when possible. Cooperatives that keep their rights of way clear can demonstrate the benefits in reliability and savings to their members.

Vegetation management for distribution lines is addressed through the National Electric Safety Code (NESC). Distribution lines deliver electric energy to cooperative members. Although there are no specific requirements, NESC states, "vegetation that may damage ungrounded supply lines should be pruned or removed." In addition to safety concerns and outage prevention, vegetation management is necessary to reduce unexpected costs to electric cooperatives. By keeping rights of way clear, co-op crews are able to restore power more quickly, improve reliability, and prevent expensive repairs to systems damaged by fallen trees or neglected vegetation.

And, please, if existing trees are close to the lines and need trimming, don't try to tackle the job yourself. Every year, amateur tree trimmers are hurt or killed when trying to clear limbs near power lines. Call the professionals at your co-op.



If you decide to plant a tree, you can help make our crews' tasks easier. Look up for power lines. Think about the mature height of the tree. Don't plant trees that could eventually reach up and touch power lines.



It's YOUTH TOUR time!

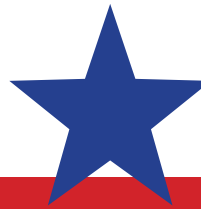
HS Juniors

Essay Topic

What a Rural Electric Cooperative means to me and my community

Essay guidelines

- Entries should be typed on one side of 8.5 X 11 in. paper.
- Entries should be no more than 500 words and a minimum of two pages.



Application Deadline: March 7

Essay Deadline: March 21

Youth Tour Judging: March 30

Trip Dates: June 11 – June 16

Info at: www.cecnet.net

or call Jason at 641-342-2173

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Zip _____

Phone _____ CEC Acct # _____

School _____

Parents' Names _____



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

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.

Bill Freeman, Manager

Don Lange, Manager of Operations and Engineering

Dave Opie, Manager of Finance

Jodee Eckels, Editor

Office Hours:

7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday - Friday

Outside Depository Available 24 Hours

Closed Circuit is owned, controlled, and directed by Clarke Electric Cooperative, Inc., in Osceola, Iowa. It is printed monthly to help its members achieve maximum benefits from the conservative use of electrical energy, to inform them of the business of the cooperative, and for the general welfare and safety of rural residents in its service area of south central Iowa. Editing and layout by The Write Place.

