

CLOSEDCIRCUIT

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Energy Smart: CEC & CIPCO Launch Utility Scale Solar in Osceola

CLARKE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE IS PART OF CENTRAL Iowa Power Cooperative's (CIPCO) utility-scale solar project which is the largest in the state. The Clarke Solar Farm Project will generate 514,160 kWh of energy as a part of CIPCO's 5.5MW solar project. Once complete, the Clarke Solar Farm Project generation facility will contain 1,296 solar panels and generate enough electricity to power up to 51 homes. In late 2015, CIPCO initiated an RFP for the development of utility-scale solar facilities to be located at several member cooperative sites in Iowa. The multi-site solar installation is the first phase in CIPCO's long-term plan to incorporate solar as an additional emissions and carbon-free resource within its generation assets.

Clarke Electric Cooperative is pleased to partner on this new generation project," said General Manager David Opie. "Supporting the further development of emissions and carbon-free electricity, where it makes economic sense, can benefit our members. The information collected and compiled from the solar farm will provide valuable information and experience for future application."

Utility-scale solar provides reliable, clean electricity generation for members of Clarke Electric Cooperative and compliments CIPCO's existing renewable energy generation portfolio. The development and installation costs for utility-scale systems are significantly below those of residential-scale solar and provide benefits to all members within the system. Members of all income levels will be benefiting from this project.

CIPCO selected Azimuth Energy LLC of St. Louis to install the photovoltaic utility-scale solar project. Azimuth Energy LLC is an engineering, construction and development-support service company focused on renewable energy and energy efficient projects.



ON APRIL 11, CLARKE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE WILL join electric cooperatives across the country in honoring and recognizing our linemen during National Lineman Appreciation Day.

We proudly recognize all electric linemen for the services they perform around the clock in dangerous conditions to keep the power flowing and protect the public's safety.

"Electric linemen don't often receive the recognition they deserve," said Don Lange, manager of operations. "They work all hours of the day, often in hazardous conditions, going above and beyond to restore power. Our linemen, as well as linemen from across the nation, deserve this special day of recognition."

Clarke Electric invites members to take a moment to thank a lineman for the work they do. Use **#ThankALineman** on social media to show your support for the men and women who light our lives.

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



CLARKE
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

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

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Coming Soon...

SEVERAL NEW PAYMENT OPTIONS WILL BE OFFERED SOON to members of Clarke Electric Cooperative.

In addition to these new payment options, we will be able to provide more opportunities for online and mobile account management and usage information. Keep watching for more news on this topic in the months to come. More information will be provided on our website at www.cecnet.net and in our newsletter in the months to come.

Statement of Non Discrimination

CLARKE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. IS THE RECIPIENT of Federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provide that no person in the United States on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is David A. Opie, general manager of Clarke Electric Cooperative, Inc. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above from and /or file a written complaint with this organization; or the Administrator, Rural Utilities Service, Stop 1510, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC, 20250-1510; or the Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410; or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.

February Outages

- Equipment/Maintenance failure - 2
- Trees - 2
- Animal / bird - 3
- Customer caused - 2
- Unknown - 2

Looking Out
for You



The Cooperative Difference: Grassroots Efforts in Action

DIRECTORS AND EMPLOYEES OF CLARKE ELECTRIC joined the Iowa Electric Cooperatives Association for its annual REC Day on the Hill March 16.

The event encourages CEC representatives to meet with legislators on their turf – the State Capitol – and make sure state leaders are aware of issues important to the cooperative. It is also an opportunity to thank them, on behalf of CEC members, for their work.

This year, some of the important priority issues include utility-owned solar, line personnel safety and the skilled workforce policies. RECs are supportive of environmentally responsible power and are focused on incentives rather than mandates. Solar energy must be deployed in a way that works for all member-owners, not just some. A skilled workforce is important to the future of our rural communities. Your cooperative supports policies that will attract and retain skilled workers in the state of Iowa. As always, safety is our top priority. We support legislation focused on the safety of our line personnel.



Jason Gibbs, manager of member services, visits with Rep. Joel Fry.



Pictured, from left: Jason Gibbs, CEC General Manager David Opie, Rep. Joel Fry, and CEC Board Members Randy Rouse, Randy Gaumer and Larry Jackson.

Save the Date: CEC Annual Meeting Sept. 12



A COOPERATIVE FUNCTIONS most effectively with strong leadership. Your board of directors is democratically elected from the membership to represent your interests and to provide long-term vision and directions. 39-05-03-53

Mark your calendar to attend CEC's annual meeting Sept. 12 at the Clarke County Event Center. Democratically elected board seats will be open for Districts 2 and 5. District 4. In May, a nominating committee from those districts will be selected to nominate members to run for the seats. For a district map, please visit www.cecnet.net. If you are interested in serving on the nominating committee, contact the office at (641) 342-2173.



Community Minded: Show Your Care with RECare

YOUR COOPERATIVE IS PROUD TO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY by extending a helping hand to those in need, and encouraging others to do the same.

RECare is a voluntary program that distributes funds to community action agencies to help low income members pay heating bills or cover the cost of winterizing their homes. Your contribution stays in the community and is distributed to qualifying families by the area community action agencies. In 2015, Clarke Electric Cooperative members donated \$942.

Members may donate funds on a one-time or monthly basis. To sign up, please fill out the participation form and send it to the Cooperative.

Working for You: Vegetation Management Keeps System Reliable

AT THE END OF THIS MONTH WE WILL observe Arbor Day, a chance to recognize the roles trees play in our lives while promoting responsible tree planting and care. This is particularly important to Clarke Electric Cooperative line crews who work diligently to keep our service lines clear of vegetation.



DON LANGE

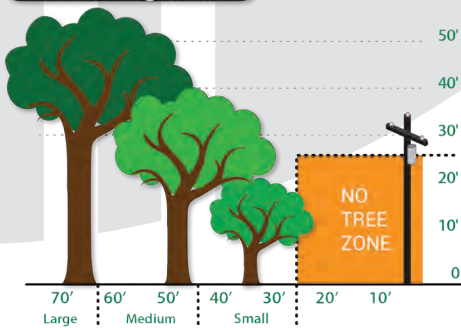
Trees make a tremendous contribution to the environment, but when they grow in the wrong place, they have the potential to threaten the reliability of electric service and public safety. In fact, trees are the leading cause of unplanned service interruptions, including both sustained duration outages and momentary ones.

In order to serve our members with reliable electricity, CEC's vegetation management program is an ongoing effort to keep our right-of-way clear. Vegetation management cycles and methods are determined by using best judgement, assessing local factors and accepted best practices industry standards. Clarke Electric uses contractors and employees to perform this work. Throughout the year, line crews are pruning trees and brush, removing particularly hazardous trees and chemically treating smaller trees and brush in the ROW to impede future growth.

Crews will trim trees back enough to mitigate re-sprouting, which can grow one to three feet annually. If you have a tree on your

property that is near a power line, please contact our office to be put on the list for evaluation. We will make every attempt to contact the property owner prior to any work being done.

Tree Planting Guide



Member Authorization Form

Yes, I want to be a part of members helping members through the RECare program.

Enclosed is a check with a one-time donation.

I would like to make a monthly donation of \$_____.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Mail to: RECare, c/o Clarke Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 161, Osceola, Iowa 50213



CEC Strategic Planning

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND LEADERSHIP TEAM AT Clarke Electric Cooperative recently held a two-day strategic planning meeting to set strategic direction for the cooperative. It is important for the directors to set policy and determine where and how we move forward with our members' best interest in mind while providing safe and reliable electric service at an affordable price.

The last strategic plan was held in 2013 with a renewal date for 2016. With the recent hiring of a new general manager it became even more important to complete this exercise. National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation, our banker, facilitated the meeting with time spent using exercising looking into the future, identifying our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

The board and leadership team also spent time talking about legislative and environmental issues and how they might impact the cooperative membership. The mission statement was reviewed and revised. We believe the new mission statement is more concise and accurately sums up what the cooperative exemplifies.

In the end, the key issues were identified and a summary of goals and initiatives will be developed and carried out by the employees.

Questions or Complaints

CLARKE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE STRIVES TO PROVIDE you with the best service at the lowest possible cost. But sometimes you may have questions regarding your electrical service or billing, or possibly a complaint.

If you have a complaint about Clarke Electric's service rather than its rates, you can reach a representative of the cooperative by contacting us during normal business hours: 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. Monday through Friday at (641) 342-2173 or (800) 362-2154 or clarke@cecnet.net. You can also write to: Member Advocate, Clarke Electric Cooperative, 1103 N. Main Street, Osceola, IA 50213.

If your complaint is not resolved, you may ask for help from the Iowa Utilities Board, Customer Service, 1375 E. Court Ave., Room 69, Des Moines, IA 50319-0069; (877) 565-4450 or customer@iub.iowa.gov.

New Trucks Placed Into Service



Three new trucks were placed in service at the cooperative, along with a new trencher and trailer. The trucks were purchased according to the fleet replacement program. The program identifies the aging pieces of equipment and places them on a schedule for replacement. This helps the cooperative make planned purchases using the replacement program.



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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Safety Program in the Schools



KYLE HALLS, pictured at left, journeyman lineman, and Jason Gibbs, manager of member services, gave a safety demonstration at the Wayne Community High School March 18. Students were able to handle some of the equipment linemen use in their jobs and try on some of the gear that keeps them safe. Halls and Gibbs also gave the

students some real-life scenarios of electrical dangers and quizzed them on what they would do in each circumstance. 06-04-02-02

Clarke Electric Cooperative is happy to offer safety programs to schools and community organizations. Programs can be adapted for any age group with a range of activities and demonstrations. Call the cooperative at (641) 342-2173 if you are interested in this free service.



CEC Cares For Your Safety: Burning Ditches



THE TIME OF YEAR FOR BURNING WEEDS AND GRASS in ditches is here. Use caution when burning the ditches as it can cause extensive damage to cooperative property, resulting in electric service problems.

Always be aware of the location of poles, anchor guy assemblies, underground cabinets, and other important cooperative equipment when burning.

Board of Directors

Tom Carson, Osceola
Randy Gaumer, Murray
Larry Jackson, Clio
Larry Keller, Osceola
Kyle Kelso, Weldon
Frank Riley, Osceola
Randy Rouse, Corydon
Bill Willis, New Virginia
Lydda Youmans, Indianola

David Opie, General Manager

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

Outside Depository Available 24 Hours

641.342.2173 | 800.362.2154

This institution is an Equal Opportunity Provider

www.cecnet.net