

Annual Meeting 2019: The Train Never Stops

MORE THAN 250 CONSUMER-members of Clarke Electric Cooperative attended the 79th Annual Meeting Sept. 16.

In his address, General Manager Dave Opie



compared the ongoing operations of the cooperative to a train that is continually on a journey of improvement.

"I strongly believe that the Clarke Electric train is on the right track," Opie said. "It's the track that allows the cooperative to deliver



safe, reliable and affordable electricity to our consumer-members. But being on the right track is a journey. We must continually strive to do the right thing for our consumer-members. The track we are on provides a work culture that is good for our employees who are empowered to deliver great service to you."

In 2018, the cooperative invested \$2 million to improve and upgrade the electric delivery system, technology and equipment, Opie said.

"With 1,800 miles of distribution line, 11 substations, an office, warehouses, trucks and equipment we have to be good stewards of the infrastructure while methodically planning upgrades," he said. "The train never stops, just like our commitment to deliver power to our members 24/7/365."

Promoting a culture of safety for CEC employees, members and their communities is always a top priority, Opie said. The cooperative provides safety demonstrations for young children, law enforcement personnel and civic groups



and runs safety ads on radio stations and in local papers as reminders about the dangers of electricity. 23-15-01-02

In the coming year, consumer-members can expect to see some changes to the existing cooperative office and warehouse. Opie said CEC is moving forward with a planned \$2.9 million upgrade and remodel that will make the buildings much more energy efficient and environmentally safe, while increasing security of the grounds. Trucks will be secured inside, safe from weather and theft.

The original building was erected in 1953 with an addition in 1974. Although the dollar amount is large comparatively in

today's dollars, it is not as large as the cost for the original building or the addition.

Opie also reported to the membership the base rate for the power cost adjustment (PCA), set in 2006, and after 13 years, it appears it should be adjusted. The cooperative will continue to review the PCA rate and how an adjustment would affect the membership. More information will be communicated in future newsletters.

Each incumbent director was reelected:

- **District 2: Randy Barnard**
- **District 4: Lydda Youmans**
- **District 5: Ed White**

Following the meeting, the Directors met to elect the following officers:

- **President: Kyle Kelso**
- **Vice-President: Randy Rouse**
- **Secretary: Larry Keller**
- **Treasurer: Lydda Youmans**
- **Asst. Sec./ Treas.: Ed White**

Finally, congratulations to the drawing winners, pictured below, who took home 10 \$50 cash prizes, 5 \$100 cash prizes, an Amazon Fire tablet, and more.



DAVE OPIE
General Manager



+ Safety Driven:

Linemen Test Skills That Can Save Lives



THERE ARE MANY REASONS FOR linemen to pair up as they work around energized utility lines. One of the most important reasons is to be able to rescue a fellow lineman.

Clarke Electric always wants to make sure its employees are prepared for any type of situation. Practicing pole top rescue annually is the best way for our linemen to react immediately and potentially save a life if they ever encounter an unfortunate situation. Yearly training is conducted by the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. All CEC linemen must successfully pass the test.

Pictured is Apprentice Lineman Dominic Cresta practicing pole top rescue with weights that simulate a human body. In an emergency situation, every moment counts. The more a lineman can practice the skill the quicker the rescue can be made and lives saved during an actual emergency.

HAVE A SAFE HARVEST

It's everyone's responsibility to prioritize safety on the farm and our rural roadways. Give tractors and traveling farm equipment plenty of room during harvest season.



- Slow down
- Watch for hand signals when it's OK to pass
- Pass cautiously
- Watch for flashing amber lights
- Remember, ag operators have a right to be on the road, too



CLARKE
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Safety Driven • Energy Smart • Community Invested
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Energy Smart: *Recycle Old Appliances*

F YOUR PROJECT LIST THIS FALL includes cleaning out your garage or basement, remember that old appliances in working order may be recycled.

Clarke Electric Cooperative offers a program called "Pull the Plug" to encourage its consumer-members to recycle their old appliances. There are significant benefits to the environment and your community when you recycle old appliances. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), proper disposal of an old refrigerator, freezer or air conditioner can:

- reduce your household energy consumption, saving you money and

preventing greenhouse gas emissions.

- save landfill space and energy by recycling the metals, plastics, and glass contained in your old appliance.

Cost

- Refrigerator: \$35
- Freezer: \$35
- Window A/C: \$25

All appliances must be in working order. Clarke Electric contracts with an outside vendor to collect appliances for recycling.

Call (855) 838-7817 to schedule pick up of your old appliance or for more information.



Blinks May Cause Headaches, But It Means System is Working

SEVERE WEATHER, ANIMALS AND birds in the wrong place at the wrong time are responsible for many of the summer outages Clarke Electric sustained in July, August and September. Lightning, trees, and wind is usually the weather-related culprits for summer outages, but animals and birds can cause just as many headaches.

When your power goes out, first check with your neighbors to see if their power is also out. If it is, then call in the outage, even if you think someone else has. This helps the cooperative determine how widespread the outage is and how many linemen should be sent out.

If your lines blinked before you lost power, then you know the equipment on the power lines is doing its job. Usually, blinking lights are a momentary outage that occur when something comes into contact with an energized power line. This could be an animal, a tree or tree branch, or a strike of lightning. 46-09-01-01

Blinks are a nuisance, but they eliminate a lot of extended outages by protecting wires and equipment from serious damage. When the circuit is broken, a device called a reclosure (like a fuse for high voltage electricity), tries to restore the circuit. If the fault is still there, it opens again. It does this one more time and if unsuccessful in restoring the circuit, a power outage occurs by cutting power to the troubled section of line and isolating the problem before it can cause further issues.

Most often in these cases, the circuit can be restored with only a few blinks. Without reclosures, every short circuit would cause power to be off until the cooperative would send a line crew to restore service.



CEC Lineman Adam McCuddin demonstrates what happens when tree limbs or brush come into contact with an energized line. Such instances may cause the power to "blink" as a way to protect the system and avoid a larger outage.

Thank **You!**

If you were affected by summer outages, thank you for your patience while our linemen worked tirelessly to restore your power!

What's That Smell?

HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED THAT sometimes when you turn on your heat for the first time in several months that there is an odor that comes with it? Some people equate this with the smells of fall, alongside burning leaves and pumpkin spice, for instance. But it may mean your furnace needs maintenance.



When your furnace isn't used for long periods of time, dust can collect in the heat exchanger and in the air ducts. When the furnace is turned on, the dust burns off and releases an odor. This is normal and should disappear within a few hours. If the problem persists, you may need to change your air filters.

Don't ignore the smell; it could be a serious problem like a broken electrical component in the furnace. If it smells like burning rubber or burning plastic, it could be a small problem or a major situation. If it smells like smoke, it could indicate a blocked chimney. If it smells musty, it could indicate that mold is trapped on the furnace filter or on the humidifier filter if you have one.

The best advice is to change your furnace filters regularly, and get your furnace inspected annually. If something doesn't smell right, it probably isn't. Call an HVAC professional to check it out. You'll save money if your furnace is running efficiently, and you can rest easy through the winter months that your furnace is in tiptop shape.

Board of Directors

Randy Barnard, New Virginia
Larry Jackson, Clio
Larry Keller, Osceola
Kyle Kelso, Weldon
Cody Miller, Thayer
Randy Rouse, Corydon
Ed White, Osceola
Bill Willis, New Virginia
Lydda Youmans, Indianola



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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

David Opie, General Manager

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