

# Clay ELECTRIC News

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

7784 Old Hwy. 50 ■ P.O. Box 517 ■ Flora, Illinois 62839 ■ [www.ceci.coop](http://www.ceci.coop) ■ 618/662-2171 ■ 800/582-9012

## From the Manager

I'd like to talk to you a moment about the RURAL act and how this legislation needs your support. Clay Electric Co-operative is a not-for-profit cooperative. The revenue we collect from our members is used to maintain lines and provide power to our member-owners. Money collected past the amount needed to keep the cooperative running is returned to our members in the form of capital credits each year. As a not-for-profit, Clay Electric Co-operative and cooperatives across the country are provided tax-exempt status. This status lowers costs and keeps our member's rates lower in return. To continue to qualify for tax exempt status, cooperatives must receive no more than 15 percent of their income from sources outside the membership.

For a small cooperative like Clay

Electric, changes to federal tax law in 2017 could lead to the loss of tax-exempt status should any emergency arise. With the language in the 2017 changes, accepting aid from FEMA in the event of a natural disaster or accepting a federal grant for infrastructure improvements could cause the cooperative to lose its status. We shouldn't have to choose between keeping costs and rates low for our members or accepting aid or grants to repair or upgrade services to our members. **13698-001**

The RURAL act would add language to the tax law that would modify the definition of income for determining tax-exempt status to allow cooperatives to still be able to accept grants or aid without the risk of losing their status. We encourage all our members to contact their

representatives and senators and ask them to support the RURAL act. Our crews continue to stay busy maintaining the system and we encourage you to be mindful of work crews and farm machinery as you travel our rural communities. Keeping safe is everyone's responsibility. As you flip through your newsletter, keep your eyes peeled for your member number. There are three member numbers hidden in Clay Electric News. If you find your number and give us a call, you win \$5 off your next bill!



Luke Johnson  
CEO

Clay Electric Co-operative is proud to announce the new Co-op Connections app for your Apple or Android device. You may remember the Co-op Connections discount card. While the discount card will still be available and accepted by our partners, the new digital app has improved usability. With the app you can find local deals, book hotel rooms through our partnership with iBennie, earn cash back, and more.

We would like to take a moment to thank our member businesses for partnering with us to provide you with discounts. This corner of our center section will be dedicated to highlighting the businesses that work with us to provide tremendous services and discounts to our

membership. If you are a business owner interested in partnering with Clay Electric Co-operative, please call our office at 618-662-2171 or email [CoopConnections@ceci.coop](mailto:CoopConnections@ceci.coop). There is no cost to the program. We help our members connect with local businesses and get some great discounts. It's a win-win.

Grounded Coffee Shop is a family owned bistro and coffee shop. They have a variety of sandwiches, salads, wraps and soup. They provide a large variety of specialty coffees including lattes, cappuccinos, frappes, mochas and more. You can also set up a time to use our location for events, birthdays, meetings and more. They are located at 110 E North Ave in Flora.

Find them on Facebook at [fb.me/groundedcoffeeshop](https://www.facebook.com/fb.me/groundedcoffeeshop) or by phone at 618-403-5282.



## CO-OP CONNECTIONS CORNER

# Make sure your water heater is safe

One home appliance that seldom gets much attention is the water heater. However, neglecting the appliance that we depend on to turn cold water into hot can cause serious havoc.

You may only notice issues with this appliance at the prospect of a cold shower, but a water heater that's improperly installed or maintained could cause much more serious consequences than that.

Once it blows, it could blast off like a missile with enough force to lift your house off its foundation. Or, you could be sitting on the couch binge watching Netflix when suddenly it bursts and your ceiling caves in (depending on its location) and you have an instant flood and massive mess on your hands. **11558-001**

A water heater could explode or malfunction for the following reasons:

1. Sediment buildup in the tank
2. Rust corroding the tank
3. Too much internal pressure

How will you know if your heater suffers from one of these maladies?

*If your water heater makes a popping or knocking noise*, there could be water trapped under the sediment. It is like when you boil water and it puts pressure on the lid from the inside out. To prevent this from happening, flush and drain your water heater tank once every year.

*If your tap water is a brown, rusty color*, you may have rust in the water tank. Although water heaters have something called an anode rod to prevent this, it can deteriorate over time. Be sure to inspect the rod every two years and at least annually once your warranty has expired. The rod itself should be replaced every four to five years; sooner if you have a water softener.

If your water heater's temperature and pressure relief valve (aka T&P) keeps opening to release water or it leaks (a sign that your valve is bad), you could have a potential

bomb-projectile combo on your hands. To help prevent too much pressure in your tank:

1. Set the temperature at 120 to 125 degrees. Setting it too high (140+ degrees) causes pressure to build in the tank. (Additional benefit: this will help lower your energy bill.)
2. Test your T&P twice a year (or have it tested by a professional) to make sure it is working properly. You can find the valve on the top or side of your tank (be careful—the water will be extremely hot; it is not like the sink or shower when you wait for hot water to make its way through the pipes).

For additional information, consult a qualified service technician. For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## Simple safety steps for your water heater

After you've checked your water heater for **sediment, rust and pressure**, follow these other simple safety steps:

- Remove paper, accumulated dust or other combustibles from around the heater.
- Extinguish the pilot light before using flammable liquids or setting off aerosol bug bombs near the unit. Never store combustibles nearby.
- If the device is in the garage, raise it so the pilot light is 18 inches above the floor. This can help prevent floor-level gasoline vapors from igniting.
- Inspect the flue for breaks or gaps that could leak deadly exhaust gas. (This is a good practice to do on other gas appliances too.)
- Consider installing an automatic gas-shutoff valve (or consider getting one installed) that stops the flow of gas if the ground moves or if gas flow increases dramatically. The valve, which costs around \$300, prevents fires when a gas line breaks due to flood, earthquake or other disaster.
- Install carbon monoxide detectors as close to a gas water heater as possible and within 15 feet of all bedrooms; change batteries per manufacturer's directions.
- Some jurisdictions require expansion tanks installed on the cold-water line to allow for thermal expansion; check your local requirements and the manufacturer's specifications for more information.



Every month we will have three member numbers hidden throughout Clay Electric News. If you find your member number that corresponds to the one found on the upper right corner of your bill, call our office and identify your number and the page it's on. If correct, you will win a \$5 credit on your next electric bill.



## Twelve 2020 IEC Memorial Scholarships available

Illinois electric cooperatives will award 12 scholarships in 2020 to financially assist deserving students in the electric cooperative family. The 12 scholarships, \$2,000 each, will be awarded through the Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program.

Six scholarships will be awarded to high school seniors who are the sons or daughters of an Illinois electric co-op member. A seventh scholarship, the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship, will be awarded to a student who is the son or daughter of an Illinois electric cooperative employee or director. Four additional scholarships are reserved for students enrolling full time at a two-year Illinois community college who are the sons or daughters of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees or directors. **8341-004**

The 12th scholarship, the LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker's Scholarship, will help pay for costs to attend lineworker school conducted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community

College, Springfield, Ill. Sons and daughters of co-op members, relatives of co-op employees or directors, and individuals who have served or are serving in the armed forces or National Guard are all eligible for this scholarship.

"We hope to assist electric cooperative youth while honoring past rural electric leaders with these scholarships," says CEO Luke Johnson. "Clay Electric and the other Illinois electric cooperatives are always seeking ways to make a difference in our communities. One of the best ways we can do that is by helping our youth through programs like this one. In addition, we are very pleased to offer the electric lineworker's scholarship. It will benefit not only electric cooperative youth but also those fine men and women who have served their country through their military service and may now be wanting to become a trained lineworker."

For more information regarding the scholarships, contact Clay Electric Co-operative at [ClayCoop@ceci.coop](mailto:ClayCoop@ceci.coop).

## Daylight Savings Time ends November 3

Don't forget to set your clocks back!



Our office will be closed  
November 11

# THANK YOU VETERANS

VETERANS DAY - NOVEMBER 11

Happy  
Thanksgiving

Our office  
will be closed  
November 28-29  
for Thanksgiving

# Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting

## September 23, 2019

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Clay Electric Co-operative, Inc. (CECI) was held at the Clay Electric Co-operative Headquarters, Flora, Illinois beginning at 6:55 o'clock p.m. on Monday, September 23, 2019.

Trustees present were: Frank Czyzewski, Kevin Logan, Bill Croy, Bob Pierson, Richard Rudolph, Neil Gould, Greg Smith, Danny Schnepfer and Frank Herman. Also present were Luke Johnson, CEO; Tyra Cycholl, Attorney for the Board; Adam McKnight, Member Services Manager; and Jason Strong with CFC. The meeting was opened by Bob Pierson, who presided and Greg Smith, Secretary, acted as secretary thereof.

The invocation was given by Frank Czyzewski, followed by the pledge of allegiance.

The following proceedings were had [all action being first duly moved and seconded, and all action taken being upon the unanimous vote of the Board or without dissenting vote of abstention unless otherwise stated]:

**APPROVED**, the Suggested Agenda.

**HEARD**, from Jason Strong with CFC regarding the Cost of Service Study. Thereafter, at 8:15 p.m., Jason Strong left the meeting.

**APPROVED**, the Consent Agenda including the following:

- **APPROVED**, the prior meeting minutes, with the corrected date for the Safety Meeting;
- **APPROVED**, (a) to admit to membership those 11 applicants connected for service since the last such review by the board, and (b) cancel those seven former members shown on the Manager's Report since the last such review by the Board, said members no longer taking service;
- **APPROVED**, the Work Orders;
- **APPROVED**, the Disbursements;
- **APPROVED**, the Credit Card Statements;

- **REVIEWED**, the Attorney Retainer;
- **REVIEWED**, the Account Summary Report;
- **REVIEWED**, the AIEC Regulatory Compliance;
- **REVIEWED**, the Federated Litigation;
- **REVIEWED**, the CFC Report. **APPROVED**, the deceased estates **APPROVED**, the Agreement for Purchase of Power for Cory Anderson. Bob Pierson abstained from the vote. **APPROVED**, the CFC line of Credit Resolution and Agreement with the date changed to September 23, 2019.

**REVIEWED** and **DISCUSSED**, the Bids for Truck #1 Replacement.

**APPROVED**, the Dan Hecht bid for Replacement of Truck #1.

**APPROVED**, the CoBank line of credit renewal and Agreement and Promissory Note.

**DISCUSSED**, two member requests to come to the November 25, 2019 meeting as well as one member request to come to the December 23, 2019 meeting.

**APPROVED**, the requests by members to attend the November and December meetings. Each member to be given a 15 minute block of time to present to the board. Thereafter, at 8:45 p.m., Adam McKnight left the meeting.

**REVIEWED**, the AIEC Financial Report.

**HEARD**, about upcoming training. At 9 p.m., **APPROVED**, entering into Executive Session.

At 9:15 p.m., **APPROVED** exiting Executive Session and returning to Regular Session.

**HEARD** and **APPROVED**, a financial report by Luke Johnson as to the following:

- August 2019 Form 7;
- August 2019 Balance Sheet;
- August 2019 Cash Flow;
- SIPC Power Delivered in August 2019 dated September 6, 2019;
  - August 2019 Power Factor;
  - August Power Cost Adder;

- August Line Loss;
- Monthly Reconciliation. **HEARD**, a Safety Report for the month of August. **REVIEWED**, the Federated Safety Assessment dated August 21, 2019. **REVIEWED**, the Monday morning safety meeting sheet dated September 16, 2019.

**HEARD** and **APPROVED**, the Manager's report by Luke Johnson on the following topics.

- September Operations Report;
  - Communications Report;
  - Upcoming meetings
- REVIEWED**, the September Operations Report. **REVIEWED**, the Communications Report.

**WERE REMINDED**, of upcoming meetings on October 28, 2019 at 7 p.m. in the Clay Board Room and November 25, 2019 and December 23, 2019 at 1 p.m. in the Clay Board Room. The Christmas Party will be December 16, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. at Johnny and Junes.

There being no further business to come before the Board, said meeting was declared adjourned at 9:37 p.m.

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Office hours:  
7:30 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.

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