

# Clay ELECTRIC News

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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## From the Manager

**A** term that is getting thrown around a lot as the nation faces a changing energy market is “demand.” So, when we talk about electricity, what is “demand?”

The short answer is that demand is the maximum amount of electricity that passes through your meter at one time during a billing period. This demand is measured in kilowatts (kW). Electricity is flowing constantly to supply power to your homes and businesses. The more electricity you are using at any moment the higher the demand. For example, if you plug in your electric vehicle to charge at the same time you run your dryer, cook a meal on your electric range, and your electric water heater kicks on, you’ll be setting a much higher demand at that point than if you spread out the usage of those power-intensive appliances. As more electric appliances and other life necessities are added to households, demand is increasing. Each electric appliance usually accounts for 4-5 kW worth of demand, but when they are all running at the same time your demand will increase cumulatively. Three electric appliances running at the same time could set your demand at 12-15 kW.

One way to alleviate this max demand is by staggering the usage of these high demand appliances and not running them all at the same time. When we talk with members about their electric service or a new service, expected demand is a key component to consider for the sizing of that electric service. We need to build their service to withstand the maximum potential demand that member could put on the system. A lot goes into

determining how to best serve a member, and knowing how much demand they expect to generate lets us know what size transformer they will need at their location and if our lines in the area are sufficient for the load.

Most members haven’t been exposed to the concept of electric demand because they aren’t charged for it. Only a few of our very large power users have a demand charge associated with their bill. However, roughly half of the power bill that Clay Electric Co-operative pays is a demand charge. Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC), our power provider, bills for the kilowatts we provide directly to our members and assesses a fee based on the highest demand our system recorded during a billing period. This is why electric demand is getting so much attention right now. With the cost of power rising, we are looking for ways to save money where we can in order to keep our rates as low as possible. In the same way that running three space heaters at once increases the demand at your home, all the members using power on each of our substations adds to a demand reading that SIPC uses to bill us.

When you look at all the power being used simultaneously across all our substations, you are seeing our whole system demand. SIPC monitors demand not just for billing but to account for the needs of seven member cooperatives. SIPC, as our generation and transmission cooperative (G&T), is responsible for meeting the power needs of all its members just as we are responsible to all of you. When you look at it all together you can see how much of a toll on the

electric grid something like an extreme weather event can have. Think back a few years to the polar vortex and how Texas’ grid failed. There were too many people generating an abnormally high demand on the system, and it couldn’t keep up. Clay Electric Co-operative and other utilities are constantly making upgrades to infrastructure to account for the demand and energy needs of members.

In the next few months, we will be adding a demand line on our members’ bills so they will be able to see their demand. To be clear, we are not making any changes to our rates at this time. This line item will be purely informational. We will not be billing this line item; it will simply be there so our members can view it. As we are able to get more information to our membership on our bills, we will keep you informed both in this magazine and through other media. Keep an eye out in coming months for more information on what goes into your bill and what your cooperative is doing to adapt to the evolving energy sector. And, while you’re keeping an eye out, don’t forget to be on the lookout for your member number in the center section of this magazine. 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!



**Matt Conklin**  
CEO

## REMEMBER TO LOOK UP

# When Operating Large Equipment

Millions of workers operate large equipment every day. Examples include cranes, dump trucks, farm equipment, bucket trucks, hydraulic lifts and cement trucks. If the equipment you are operating raises or extends, make sure you follow OSHA's rules for the minimum approach distance to power lines.

If you are planning to work within 20 feet of a power line, most situations require you to contact the electric utility (in advance) to



deenergize the line. On the farm, examples include loading, unloading or moving/relocating a grain bin within 20 feet of an overhead line.

Always use a spotter when equipment could come near overhead power lines. A spotter's view from the ground provides a much better vantage point than what you can see from the cab. Additional safety steps may be required to prevent encroaching on a power line.

If your equipment brushes or contacts a power line or utility pole, knowing what to do saves lives. Unless there is a fire, stay in the cab and alert others to stay far away. Call for help and stay in the cab until utility crews arrive to deenergize the power.

Do not operate a hydraulic/scissor lift near an overhead power line.

Learn more at

 Safe  
Electricity.org®

# CELEBRATE

## the Power Behind Your Power.

Lineworker Appreciation Day | April 10, 2023



**E**lectric lineworkers provide an essential service: They install and maintain overhead and underground power lines that keep electricity flowing. **1054-001** These specialized workers are on call 24/7 in case severe storms or other circumstances cause the power to go out.

Lineworkers work with high-voltage electricity, often at great heights, in all kinds of weather conditions. Maintaining the power grid is physically demanding. To become proficient, most lineworkers go through a technical training program and first learn on the job as apprentices under the careful eye of seasoned lineworkers who have earned journeyman status.

Electric power line installers and repairers held approximately 126,600 jobs in 2021, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Nearly half of these employees worked for electric power generation, transmission and distribution utilities.

### Safety comes first

Lineworkers spend numerous hours in safety training each year and must understand and apply crucial safety regulations.

Protective clothing is required to shield lineworkers since they work around high voltages. Collectively, gear components can weigh up to 45 pounds.

According to the U.S. BLS, electric power line installers and repairers typically:

Install, maintain or repair the power lines that move electricity.

- Identify defective devices, voltage regulators, transformers and switches.
- Inspect and test power lines and auxiliary equipment.
- String (install) power lines between poles, towers and buildings.
- Climb poles and transmission towers and use truck-mounted buckets to access equipment.
- Operate power equipment when installing and repairing poles, towers and lines.
- Know and implement safety standards and procedures.

When a problem is reported, lineworkers must identify the cause and fix it. This usually involves diagnostic testing using specialized equipment and repair work. To work on poles, they usually use bucket trucks to raise themselves to the top of the structure, although all lineworkers must be adept at climbing poles and towers when necessary. Workers use specialized safety equipment to keep them from falling when climbing utility poles and towers.

Storms and other natural disasters can cause extensive damage to power lines. When power is lost, line repairers must work safely and efficiently to restore service. We salute our lineworkers who work around the clock to keep the power on. Their safety, as well as yours, is our top priority.

# Work Zone Awareness Week sheds light on safety



**N**ational Work Zone Awareness Week, April 17-21, 2023, is a good time to learn more about work zone safety; however, work zone safety should be observed 365 days a year to save lives.

Cars or trucks that speed through a work zone not only endanger workers on the ground. Driving too fast or too close to a work truck can also put an elevated worker in danger by causing their raised bucket to move or sway.

Streets and highways are lined with power poles and electrical equipment, and narrow roadways often require crews like ours to place their equipment in or near traffic lanes. Be alert to utility and other work zone crews for their safety and yours. Besides our crews, you might encounter road workers, other utility crews, tree trimmers or first responders working in or on the side of the road.

According to the National Work Zone Safety Information Clearinghouse, 774 fatal crashes and 857 deaths occurred in work zone crashes in 2020 (at the writing of this article, data was not available for 2021). **7550-001** Many other work zone crashes result in injuries. In 2020, 102,000 work zone crashes occurred.

## To help keep roadside crews safe:

- Keep a safe distance between your vehicle and traffic barriers, trucks, construction equipment and workers.
- Be patient. Traffic delays are sometimes unavoidable, so allow time for unexpected setbacks.
- Obey all signs and road crew flag instructions.
- Merge early and be courteous to other drivers.
- Use your headlights at dusk and during inclement weather.
- Minimize distractions. Avoid activities such as texting, operating a radio, applying makeup and eating.

Remember, slow down when approaching a work zone and move over for first responders and work crews. Do your part to help everyone return home safely at the end of the day.

## Dig Smart. Dig Safe.

Before you dig, call 811 or visit [call811.com](http://call811.com) to mark underground utility lines. 811 is a free service that helps keep our community safe.



**April is National Safe Digging Month.**

## MEMBER PRIZES

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.



# Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting

Feb. 27, 2023

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, Ill., beginning at 4:55 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 27, 2023.

Trustees present were Bob Pierson, Neil Gould, Bill Croy, Kevin Logan, Richard Rudolphi, Frank Herman, Frank Czyzewski, Evan Smith and Josh Schnepfer. Also present were Matt Conklin, CEO, and Attorney for the Board Tyra Cycholl. The meeting was opened by Bob Pierson, who presided, and Neil Gould acted as secretary thereof.

The invocation was given by Bill Croy and was 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.

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

- **APPROVED**, the prior meeting minutes;
- **APPROVED**, (a) to admit to membership those applicants connected for service since the last such review by the board, and (b) cancel those former members shown on the Manager's Report since the last such review by the Board, said members no longer taking service;

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

- **REVIEWED**, the Work Orders;
- **REVIEWED**, the Disbursements;
- **REVIEWED**, the Credit Card Statements;
- **REVIEWED**, the Attorney Retainer;
- **REVIEWED**, the Account Summary Report;
- **REVIEWED**, the Federated Report from the Board.

**APPROVED**, sending 4 students to Youth to Washington instead of 3.

**REVIEWED**, the farm contracts.

**DISCUSSED**, Policy 100-10 and filled out Conflict of Interest forms for Directors.

**REVIEWED**, CFC Quarterly Loan Payment and CFC Long Term Loans.

**WERE UPDATED**, on NRECA News.

**HEARD**, a report by Bob Pierson regarding SIPC Board Meeting.

**HEARD**, a report by Matt Conklin regarding SIPC President update and SIPC Credit Rating. **8270-001**

**HEARD**, a report by Kevin Logan regarding AIEC Board Meeting.

**WERE UPDATED**, on the NRECA Annual Meeting, including the Dinner Reservations and Meridian Dinner.

**DISCUSSED**, the Legislative Conference, Springfield Lobby Day, Aces Conference and CFC Forum.

At 5:43 **APPROVED**, entering into executive session.

At 5:53 **APPROVED**, exiting executive session and returning to the regular meeting.

**HEARD** and **APPROVED**, a financial report by Matt Conklin as to the following:

- Monthly Reconciliation;
- SIPC Power Delivered in January 2023;
- January 2023 Cash Flow;
- Line Loss;
- January 2023 Form 7;
- January 2023 Balance Sheet;

**REVIEWED**, the Safety Report for the month of January.

**REVIEWED**, the Monday morning Safety meeting.

**HEARD** and **APPROVED**, the Manager's Report by Matt Conklin on the following topics:

- Bob Pierson and Kevin Logan Gold Level certificates;
- Retirement of Karen Forth;
- CFPC Training for Matt Conklin;
- CRC Capital Credit Check;
- Ameren Rate Increase;
- CFC Strategic Planning Summary;
- Federated Cyber Security Coverage;
- Meridian Cyber Security Quote and Services;
- Cost of Service Study;
- Operations Report;
- Infrastructure Report;
- Communications Report;

■ Upcoming meetings.

**WERE INFORMED**, Bob Pierson and Kevin Logan Gold Level Directors.

**DISCUSSED**, the retirement of a member of the office staff in 2024.

**DISCUSSED**, CFPC Training for Matt Conklin.

**WERE INFORMED** of the CRC Capital Credit Check.

**DISCUSSED**, the Ameren Rate Increase.

**REVIEWED**, the CFC Strategic Planning Summary.

**WERE INFORMED** of Federated Cyber Security Coverage.

**DISCUSSED**, Meridian Cyber Security Quote and Services.

**APPROVED** the Meridian Cyber Security Quote.

**WERE UPDATED** on the Cost-of-Service Study.


**REVIEWED**, the Operations Report and the Infrastructure Report.

**REVIEWED**, the Communications Report.

**WERE REMINDED**, of upcoming meetings on March 27, 2023 at 5 p.m.; April 24, 2023, May 22, 2023 and June 26, 2023 at 7 p.m.; and the Safety Committee Meeting on March 16, 2023.

There being no further business to come before the Board, said meeting was declared adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

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