

# 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

It's harvest season. That means you can expect to see farm equipment moving between the fields to get in the harvest. Give yourself some extra time and be careful driving around equipment on the roads. Pass safely and legally when moving around slow equipment. It's human nature to get frustrated behind a slow-moving vehicle, but remember, you'll be more late if you have to stop at the hospital first.

With fall truly underway, I'm happy to announce that Clay Electric Cooperative's summer projects have concluded. **1677-003** We upgraded a major three-phase corridor west of Flora that serves a large number of our members. This improved infrastructure will be more resilient in storm situations and be able to handle increased needs as our members' load profiles shift. As more household items become electrified, demand increases. Your electric cooperative is taking steps now to be ready for an electrified future.

If you are considering installing solar generation, a whole-home generator, electric vehicle fast chargers, or just have questions about your bill, don't hesitate to call us. Your cooperative is a resource. It is our mission to help our members get the safest, most reliable, most affordable power possible. Please give us a call before any major project, and we can help you make the most informed decision you can.

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

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

With winter weather on the way, now is the time to seal drafty windows. If you can see daylight around a window frame or if you can rattle a window (movement means possible leaks), the window likely needs to be sealed.

Most window leaks can be sealed with caulk or weatherstripping, which come in a variety of compounds and materials. Visit [energy.gov/energysaver](http://energy.gov/energysaver) to learn how and where to seal air leaks.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



## Dress up with care for HALLOWEEN



Safe  
Electricity.org

When dressing your little ones (or yourself), keep these safety tips in mind:

- Always wear costumes that are labeled flame resistant.
- Wear bright, reflective costumes or add strips of reflective tape to improve visibility.
- Do not wear decorative (colored) contact lenses unless you have seen an eyecare professional.
- Wear makeup and hats rather than costume masks that can obscure or obstruct your vision.
- Test the makeup you plan to use in advance for a possible allergy.

In addition, inspect any plug-in decorations for signs of wear and tear (fraying or bare wires or broken plugs) and replace them if damaged.



# Four ways to boost your cyber hygiene

## October is cybersecurity awareness month

**I**n today's digital world, cyberattacks are unfortunately nothing new. Cyber criminals can attack on a multitude of levels, from large-scale attacks targeting corporations to smaller phishing attacks aimed to gain an individual's personal information.

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month, but good cyber hygiene should be practiced year-round. This year's theme is "See Yourself in Cyber" – because we *all* have a part to play in cybersecurity. When we hear about massive data breaches, it can feel overwhelming and lead us to think we're powerless as individuals to stop cyber criminals.

The truth is, there are several practical steps we can take to safeguard our devices and data. Here are four easy ways to boost your cyber hygiene:

**1. Enable multi-factor authentication.** Also known as two-step verification, multi-factor authentication adds a second step when logging into an account (to prove you're really you), which greatly increases the security of the account. This second step could include an extra PIN, answering an extra security question, a code received via email or a secure token. Regardless of the

type of authentication, this additional step makes it twice as hard for cyber criminals to access your account. Not every account offers multi-factor authentication, but it's becoming increasingly popular and should be utilized when available.

**2. Use strong passwords and a password manager.**

Remember, passwords are the "keys" to your personal home online. Your passwords should always be long, unique and complex. Create passwords using at least 12 characters, never reuse passwords for multiple accounts and use a combination of upper- and lower-case letters, numbers and special characters. **5135-002** If you have a lot of accounts, consider using a password manager to store them easily *and securely* in one place.

**3. Update software.** It may seem obvious, but regularly updating software is one of the easiest ways to keep your personal information secure. Most companies provide automatic updates and will send reminders so you can easily install the update. If you're not receiving automatic software

updates, set a reminder to do so quarterly. Be aware that some cyber criminals will send fake updates; these typically appear as a pop-up window when visiting a website. Use good judgment and always think before you click.

**4. Recognize and report phishing attacks.**

Don't take the bait when cyber criminals go phishing. The signs of a phishing attack can be subtle, so take the extra time to thoroughly inspect emails. Most phishing emails include offers that are too good to be true, an urgent or alarming tone, misspellings and poorly-crafted language, ambiguous greetings, strange requests or an email address that doesn't match the company it's coming from. Most platforms like Outlook, Gmail and Mac Mail allow users to report phishing emails. If you suspect a phishing attempt, take an extra minute to report it.

Cyber criminals are here to stay, but when we all take a risk-based approach to our cyber behavior, we're creating a safer internet for all. Visit [staysafeonline.org](http://staysafeonline.org) for additional cybersecurity tips.

# WHEN POWER LINES COME DOWN



# STAY AWAY

A variety of conditions or scenarios can result in a downed power line. Sometimes downed lines are visible while other times they are hidden by ice, snow, branches or storm debris.

Collisions with a pole or padmount transformer can cause the ground and objects to become energized. Regardless of the cause, always consider a downed line or damaged equipment energized and deadly.

If you are in a car accident involving a downed line, stay in the cab or car and wait until someone from the electric utility says it is safe to get out.

***Call 9-1-1 to report a downed or damaged power line. Stay away and alert others to do the same.***

Remember, if there is a downed line, stay away! Electricity can jump from a wire or object to you to find the quickest path to ground.

Learn more at:

 **Safe  
Electricity.org**

**If you see a downed or damaged power line or pole or a dislodged electrical cabinet:**

- Do not go near it.
- Do not touch it.
- Do not try to move it with another object.
- Do not touch items that could be energized.



# Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting

August 22, 2022

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CECI) was held at the Clay Electric Cooperative Headquarters, Flora, Illinois beginning at 7:00 o'clock p.m. on Monday, August 22, 2022.

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

The invocation was given by Richard Rudolph 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 11 applicants connected for service since the last such review by the board, and (b) cancel those 17 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; **6945-001**
- **REVIEWED**, the Credit Card Statements;
- **REVIEWED**, the Attorney Retainer;
- **REVIEWED**, the Account Summary Report;
- **REVIEWED**, the Federated Report from the Board;
- **REVIEWED**, the CFC Quarterly Loan Payment;
- **REVIEWED**, the CFC Memorandum.

**APPROVED**, the Clay County Water Management Agreement at \$3,282.17 per month for a ninety day trial period.

**WERE UPDATED**, on the CFC Report from the Board.

**WERE UPDATED**, on NRECA News and dues increase.

**APPROVED**, the NRECA dues increase.

**HEARD**, a report by Frank Herman regarding SIPC Board Meeting.

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

**WERE UPDATED**, on the Region 5 meeting.

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

- Monthly Reconciliation;
- SIPC Power Delivered in July 2022;
- July 2022 Cash Flow;
- Line Loss;
- July 2022 Form 7;
- July 2022 Balance Sheet;

**REVIEWED** the Safety Report for the month of June.

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

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

- UUS Patronage Capital Credit;
- Contractor Update;
- Employee Retention Tax Credit;
- Operations Report;
- Communications Report;
- Upcoming meetings.

**REVIEWED**, the UUS Patronage Capital Credit payment.

**HEARD** an update on the Contractors progress in changing poles and installing new wire.

**REVIEWED**, the Operations Report.

**REVIEWED**, the Communications Report.

**WERE REMINDED**, of upcoming meetings on September 26, 2022, October 24, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. and November 28, 2022 and December 27, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. as well as the Annual Meeting on August 25, 2022.

**REVIEWED**, a thank you card from the Stanley Family.

There being no further business to come before the Board, said meeting was declared adjourned at 8:48 p.m.



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.

**Clay Electric Co-operative, Inc.**

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