

# 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

**W**e hope all our members are being safe this winter. Over the last several years, February has had some brutal winter weather. Make sure you are prepared in your home and car for winter storm emergencies. Your car should have a winter preparedness kit with blankets and extra warm clothes, some food and water, jumper cables, first aid kit, a flashlight with batteries, and other items that may help you get out of the snow or let passersby know that you are stranded.

When you look in the center section this month, you will see a spot for our Community Spotlight. Each

month, we hope to have a community event to spotlight in Illinois Country Living. We submit our articles a month in advance of them being printed, so events should be submitted one month prior to the event date. We will select one event each month to spotlight here. **14663-001** If you have an event to be considered, send it to us either by email at [admin@ceci.coop](mailto:admin@ceci.coop) or by mail to Clay Electric Co-operative — Community Spotlight, P.O. Box 517, Flora, IL 62839.

Lastly, be sure to keep an eye out for your member number in the center section of this magazine. There are

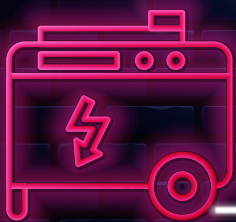
three member numbers hidden within the pages of Clay Electric News. If you spot your number and give us a call, you will win a \$5 discount on your next bill!



Matt Conklin  
CEO

## WHAT IS backfeed?

Avoid deadly backfeed and help keep lineworkers safe.



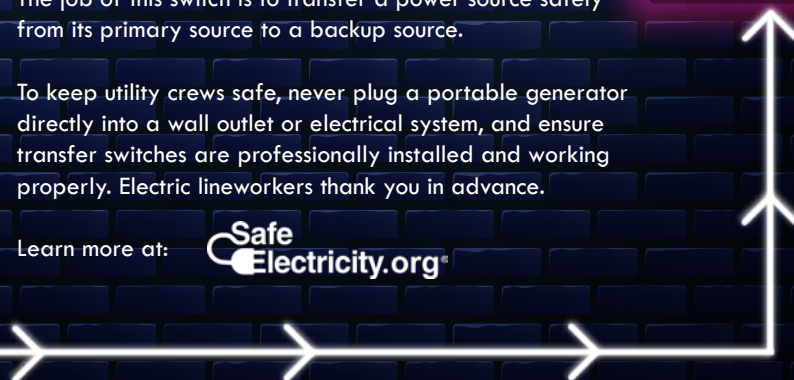
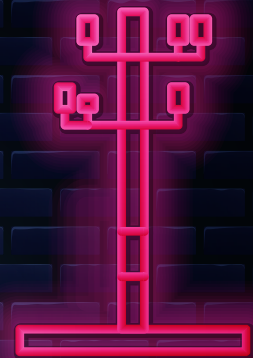
Backfeed happens when a person connects their portable generator to a wall outlet, which allows power to flow in reverse — that is, the alternate power source feeds energy back through their home's electrical system, their meter and back into the power lines.

Potentially deadly backfeed can also happen with permanently installed generators that are not used or installed correctly. They should be wired into your home by a qualified electrician, who will install either an automatic or manual transfer switch, depending on the generator. The job of this switch is to transfer a power source safely from its primary source to a backup source.

To keep utility crews safe, never plug a portable generator directly into a wall outlet or electrical system, and ensure transfer switches are professionally installed and working properly. Electric lineworkers thank you in advance.

Learn more at:

[SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org)



# Horses gallop — and so can power lines

## How can galloping lines impact power transmission and distribution?

**G**alloping power lines are typically caused when ice and high winds occur at the same time. Freezing rain creates icicles and odd-shaped ice formations on power lines and conductors. The ice buildup changes how wind and air impact the now misshapen, ice-covered line. This change in airflow can cause the power line to start to bounce.

Once the lines get going, they can bounce and buck enough to hit another line, damage themselves enough to cause a power outage or even fall to the ground. **11958-001**

There is not much a power company can do to alleviate galloping lines, since the wild motion is caused by Mother Nature. To help prevent this, many power lines have special mechanisms, such as twisted wire or round or angular pieces of metal, attached to the line. While they can help, sometimes they are no match for severe ice and whipping winds.

Aside from ice storms, year-round storms can cause damaging winds, which can knock down power lines and blow trees and limbs onto power lines. Keep the following safety tips in mind:

- When you see power lines on the ground, stay away, warn others to stay away and contact the electric utility or 911. Lines do not have to be arcing or sparking to be live.
- Any utility wire, including telephone or cable lines that are sagging or down, could be in contact with an energized power line, also making it dangerous. Do not try to guess the type of line — stay away from all lines.
- Be alert to the possibility that tree limbs or debris may hide electrical

hazards. Downed power lines can energize objects around them, such as chain-link fences and metal culverts.

- Keep in mind that a dead line could become energized during power restoration efforts or with improper use of generators.
- Never drive over a downed line. It could start a chain reaction and cause additional poles or other equipment to collapse.
- If you are in a car that has contacted or is near a downed power line, stay in your vehicle. Wait until the utility crew

has arrived and deenergized the line. Warn others not to approach the car.

- Only exit a car or cab near or on downed lines if there is a fire. If this happens, cross your arms over your chest and make a solid jump out and away from the car with both feet together. Then hop away at least 50 feet or more while continuing to keep both feet together.

For more electrical safety information, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



The graphic features a stylized spotlight beam shining from the top left onto the text. The Clay Electric Co-operative logo, a green circle with white wavy lines, is positioned above the company name. Below the company name is the text 'A Touchstone Energy Cooperative' with a small logo. The main title 'COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT' is in large, bold, black letters. Below the title is the tagline 'Unleashing the Power of OUR Community!' and a paragraph of text about the magazine feature. At the bottom, there is a call to action to submit community events.

**Clay Electric Co-operative, Inc.**  
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

## COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Unleashing the Power of OUR Community!

Clay Electric Cooperative's first "Community Spotlight" will be featured in March's Illinois Country Living Magazine!

We're turning the spotlight on YOU—because your community events deserve recognition. Each month, we'll select one outstanding event to feature in the magazine, showcasing the heart and soul Clay County, Illinois.

Have a community event in the works? Submit it at least a month prior to the big day and watch your event steal the limelight! Send your dazzling submissions via email to [Admin@ceci.coop](mailto:Admin@ceci.coop) or via mail to Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc. Community Spotlight, PO Box 517, Flora, IL 62839.

Let's make every event a blockbuster! Your community works deserve to be in the spotlight, and we're here to help make it happen.







## Staying Safe Until Power is Restored



How long it takes to get your power restored depends on:

- the extent of the storm's destruction 
- the number of outages **#?**
- when it becomes safe for utility personnel to get to the damaged areas 

There are many steps in the assessment and restoration process—clearing downed power lines; ensuring public health and safety facilities are operational; checking power stations and transformers; repairing transmission lines, substations, and distribution lines; and getting power restored to consumers within the various damaged areas.

### Storm Safety Kit



Drinking water & food  
Blankets, pillows, & clothing



Basic first-aid supplies



Prescriptions



Basic toiletries



Flashlights



Battery-operated radio



Battery-operated clock



Extra supply of batteries  
Phone



Cash and credit cards



Emergency numbers  
Important documents (in a waterproof container)



Toys, books, & games



Baby supplies



Pet supplies



Stay safe until we can restore power to you. We and our partner Safe Electricity recommend the following safety precautions:

- Stay far away and keep others away from downed power lines. Just because they are damaged **does not mean they are dead!**
- Never enter a flooded room if electrical outlets are submerged. **The water could be energized.**
- **Do not** turn power off if you must stand in water to do so.
- Before entering storm-damaged buildings, **make sure electricity and gas are turned off.**
- If you clean-up outdoors after a storm, **do not use electric equipment** when it is wet out.
- If you are driving and come upon a downed power line, **stay away and keep others away.** Contact emergency personnel or your utility company to address the downed power line.
- If your vehicle comes in contact with a downed power line, **do not leave the car!** Wait for utility professionals to make sure the power line is de-energized before exiting the car.

For more information, visit:



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Area rugs are an easy, cost-effective solution to cold floors. Adding area rugs to hard-surface flooring can add warmth to any room and keep your feet cozy on cold winter days.

Choose rugs made from wool or other natural fibers and plush or high-pile textures for the most insulation. Place rugs in areas where you need additional warmth, like the foot of a bed or under a coffee table.

Area rugs can enhance the aesthetic of your home and keep you cozier.



## 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

Dec. 19, 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 3:26 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 19, 2023.

Trustees present were Bob Pierson, Neil Gould, Bill Croy, Kevin Logan, Frank Herman, Frank Czyzewski, Evan Smith and Josh Schnepfer. Also present were CEO Matt Conklin and Tyra Cycholl, Attorney for the Board. Richard Rudolphi was present via conference call. 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**, the percent base retirement of capital credits for member's accounts.

**APPROVED**, write-offs.

**APPROVED**, the SIPC Waiver of 90-day for notice of rate increase.

**APPROVED**, the Voting Delegate slate as presented.

**APPROVED**, the 2024 IRS Mileage.

**REVIEWED** and **DISCUSSED**, the 2024 proposed Budget.

**APPROVED**, the 2024 Budget including: Capital Items, Advertising, Capital Credits, SIPC Power Costs and overall Budget.

At 3:43 p.m. entered into Executive Session and Matt Conklin left the meeting.

At 4:02 p.m. exited Executive Session and returned to the regular meeting and Matt Conklin returned to the meeting.

**APPROVED**, a 3% raise for Matt Conklin.

No report by Bob Pierson and Kevin Logan regarding SIPC and AIEC as those meetings have not occurred yet this month.

**DISCUSSED**, Policy updates to reflect new SIPC rates and per diem changes.

**APPROVED**, Policy 1000-1, 1000-3, 1000-4, 1000-15, 1000-16, 1000-41, 1000-44 and 800-4.

**DISCUSSED**, upcoming Board Training and the NRECA Annual Meeting.

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

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

**HEARD**, the Manager's Report on Safety.

**REVIEWED**, Quarterly Safety Committee meeting held Dec. 5, 2023.

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

**WERE UPDATED**, on the Meridian Cybersecurity issues and quotes for Cybersecurity updates.

**APPROVED**, the NISC quote for Cybersecurity.

**REVIEWED**, the Cybersecurity Report.

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

- Egyptian Shared Services;
- Neighboring Cooperative Facilities charge;
- Operations Report;
- Communications Report;
- Upcoming meetings.

**APPROVED**, the Shared Services Agreement with Egyptian.

**REVIEWED**, the Facilities Charge.


**REVIEWED**, the Operations Report.

**REVIEWED**, the Communications Report. **11271-002**

**WERE REMINDED**, of upcoming meetings on Jan. 29, 2024, Feb. 26, 2024, and March 25, 2024, at 3:30 p.m. and April 22, 2024, at either 3:30 or 7 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Board, said meeting was declared adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

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Office hours:  
7:30 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.

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