

Clay Electric News

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

7784 Old Hwy. 50 ■ P.O. Box 517 ■ Flora, Illinois 62839 ■ www.ceci.coop ■ 618-662-2171 ■ 800-582-9012

From the Manager

It is a great time to recognize the importance of safety and education at Clay Electric Co-operative. We are proud to announce that Clay Electric has been recognized for outstanding workplace safety, earning the 2024 awards for Best Loss Time Rate and Best Incident Rate at the AIEC Safety & Energy Conference! These awards reflect our dedication to maintaining a safe work environment and upholding the highest industry safety standards. At Clay Electric, safety isn't just a priority, it's a way of life.

We would also like to extend our congratulations to Kevin Logan, Neil Gould and Bob Pierson for earning their Director Gold Certifications. This program ensures that your elected board members remain informed on the ever-evolving electric industry, allowing them to make well-informed decisions that benefit our membership. Continuous education is essential to the cooperative model, and we are grateful for their commitment to leading Clay Electric forward.

With spring in full swing, many members are starting outdoor

projects, from landscaping to home improvements. If you're planning to dig, don't be an April fool — call 811 before you dig! Contacting JULIE (Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators) at least two

business days before breaking ground ensures that underground utilities are properly marked, preventing potential injuries, service disruptions and costly repairs. **13737-001** Whether you're planting trees, installing a fence, or digging for any reason, calling 811 is a free and easy way to stay safe.

In addition to safe digging practices, we encourage members to keep electrical safety in mind as they



tackle spring projects. If you're using power tools outdoors, be sure to use extension cords rated for outdoor use. Always keep ladders and long-handled tools well away from overhead power lines. And, if your project requires electrical service upgrades or installations, reach out to us as early as possible.

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!



Left: Neil Gould and Bob Pierson. Inset: Kevin Logan.



Matt Conklin
CEO



**Stay safe
this summer:**
**Backyard
electrical
safety**

As the weather warms and you spend more time outdoors, it's essential to prioritize electrical safety. Hidden hazards can pose serious risks.

Here are some critical safety tips to keep your loved ones safe in your backyard.

Stay away from power lines

Overhead power lines can be closer than they appear. Teach children never to climb trees near power lines, and never to fly kites, drones, remote-controlled toys or balloons in areas where power lines are present. If you see a downed power line, stay at least 50 feet away, and report it to your local utility company immediately.

Trampoline safety

If you're considering an above-ground trampoline, remember to look up for power lines. Children jumping high into the air could come dangerously close to overhead electric lines, which pose a serious risk of shock or electrocution.

Thinking about installing an in-ground trampoline instead? Before you dig, call 811 to have underground

utility lines marked. Digging without knowing the location of buried electrical, gas or water lines can result in dangerous utility strikes. This simple step can prevent accidents, service interruptions and costly repairs.

Water safety

Water and electricity are a dangerous combination. Keep these tips in mind to prevent electrical hazards and create a safe space for swimming, soaking and outdoor fun.

- Ensure pool lights, filters and outdoor outlets have ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection and inspect them regularly. GFCIs are designed to quickly shut off electrical power if they detect even a small change in electrical current.
18001-130
- If you notice flickering lights or feel a tingling sensation in the water, exit immediately and contact a professional. Faulty wiring can cause electric shock drowning (ESD).

- Avoid using plug-in devices, like radios, speakers or chargers, near water. Opt for battery-operated, waterproof devices to reduce the risk of shock.
- Know what to do in case of an electrical emergency. If someone is shocked, do not enter the water. Turn off the power source, call 911 and use a nonconductive tool, like a fiberglass pool pole, to assist.
- If it starts to rain, unplug electrical equipment, such as string lights, radios, speakers or power tools. Teach children not to touch electrical appliances with wet hands.

Outdoor sports

Sports and play areas are a haven for children, but they can also contain hidden electrical hazards. Here's how to protect your loved ones:

- Ensure swings and other tall play structures are far from overhead power lines.
- If you have outdoor lighting for night games, ensure the fixtures

are weatherproof and properly installed. Have a professional check for frayed wires or loose connections.

- If kids are playing with a ball and it goes inside a substation fence, teach them never to touch or climb the fence to attempt to retrieve it or any other item. Instead, call your electric utility to safely take care of it.
- Install a weather app on your phone to inform you of weather alerts. Lightning can occur up to 10 miles away from the heart of the storm, so if you hear thunder, seek shelter inside.

Supervise children around electrical equipment

Children are naturally curious, which is why they should be kept away from outdoor electrical equipment like utility boxes, transformers and air conditioning units. If you have an outdoor generator, make sure it is stored in a secure, ventilated area that children cannot access, and never plug a generator

directly into your home's electrical system.

Avoid DIY electrical work

If you're planning a backyard upgrade, such as installing landscape lighting, sports lighting or poolside outlets, leave the electrical work to licensed electricians. DIY electrical projects can pose serious safety risks to you and your family if done incorrectly.

From poolside play to backyard sports, it's important to be aware of electrical hazards and how to avoid them. By following these guidelines, you can create a home oasis that is both fun and safe.

For more tips on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

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.

Our office will be closed on Friday, April 18th.

WIRED FOR SERVICE.

We thank electrical lineworkers for their commitment to powering our local communities.

LINEWORKER APPRECIATION DAY

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting

Feb. 24, 2025

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 3:30 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 24, 2025.

Trustees present were Bob Pierson, Neil Gould, Bill Croy, Frank Herman, Frank Czyzewski, Richard Rudolphi, Evan Smith and Josh Schnepfer. Also present were Matt Conklin, CEO, and Attorney for the Board Tyra Cycholl. Kevin Logan 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 Frank Czyzewski, 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.

HEARD, the Manager's Report on Safety.

REVIEWED, Monday Morning Safety meeting held Feb. 24, 2025.

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, Policy 100-1, 100-2, 100-4, 100-5, 100-6, 100-7, 100-8, 100-9, 100-10 and 100-11.

APPROVED, revisions to Policy 100-3 and 200-2 as presented.

APPROVED, closing the line of Credit Debt for 2024 into a 30-year loan. **14119-001**

HEARD, an update on the Cost-of-Service Study and the CFC Quarterly Loan Payment.

REVIEWED, the Worker's Compensation Retention Rebate from Federated.

REVIEWED, the CRC patronage Capital Credit check.

REVIEWED, an update from Jim Matheson regarding NRECA political issues.

HEARD, a report by Bob Pierson regarding SIPC as well as notice of the SIPC Loan Forecast and 2024 Patronage Capital.

HEARD, a report by Kevin Logan regarding the AIEC board meeting.

DISCUSSED, upcoming Board Training and Events including:

- The NRECA Annual Meeting;
- CRC Forum Registration;
- NRECA BLC 990 CCD Refresher;
- AIEC CRC Director Workshop;
- NRECA Legislative Conference.

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

- Monthly Reconciliation;
- SIPC Power Delivered in January 2025;
- January 2025 Cash Flow;
- Line Loss;
- January 2025 Form 7;
- January 2025 Balance Sheet.

REVIEWED, the Cybersecurity Report.

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

- Director's Gold Certificates for Robert Pierson, Neil Gould and Kevin Logan;

■ WEC Solar Discussion;

■ Chicken Farm Update and System upgrade map;

■ Operations Report;

■ Communications Report;

■ Upcoming meetings.

CONGRATULATED, Bob Pierson, Neil Gould and Kevin Logan on becoming Gold Certificate Directors.

APPROVED, refunding Invenenergy their deposit of \$25,000 in lieu of WEC's Guarantee to pay up to \$25,000.

HEARD, an update on the Chicken Farm and System upgrades.

REVIEWED, the Operations Report.

REVIEWED, the Communications Report.


HEARD, five juniors were going to Youth Day in Springfield.

WERE REMINDED, of upcoming meetings on March 24, 2025 at 3:30 p.m. and April 28, 2025 at either 3:30 or 7 p.m., May 27, 2025 at 7 p.m. (moved to Tuesday due to the holiday) and June 23, 2025 at 7 p.m.

REVIEWED, a thank-you card from a member.

There being no further business to come before the Board, said meeting was declared adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

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