

# 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

Spring and planting season are well underway, and we remind our members to be careful out in the fields and on the roads as slow machinery is moving around our rural areas. Saving a few minutes of travel isn't worth risking life and limb for. Especially be mindful of tall machinery and overhead powerlines. **10980-003**

Each year, the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) coordinates with the cooperatives of Illinois for Youth Day in Springfield. The event happens in May each year, and we send six area juniors up to Springfield to meet their legislators, tour the Capitol building, learn about the cooperative business model and Illinois' electric and telephone cooperatives, and visit historic sites to take in the history of our state.

This year our group got an extra special treat, as Senator Jason Plummer took extra time out of his day to invite Clay County juniors from Clay Electric Co-operative and Wabash Telecommunications to his offices for an extended conversation about state government and his experience representing his constituents. We deeply appreciate Senator

Plummer's time and commitment to the youth of the state and informing the next generation of leaders.

The opportunities aren't over for these kids. Two of our Youth Day juniors will be selected to attend Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. in June. The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) is the organization that coordinates with statewide associations and cooperatives across the nation to put together a weeklong experience for lucky juniors to travel to the nation's capital, view historic monuments, and visit important cultural sites including Gettysburg, Arlington National Cemetery, the Supreme Court, and multiple other memorials and museums. They learn what makes cooperatives so different from for-profit institutions and network with young leaders from across the nation and make connections that will benefit them for a lifetime. For many, Youth Tour is a life-altering experience. We are so excited and proud to be able to provide this opportunity to young members of our community.

In service to our members, this month our forestry crew will still be



working on the Iola substation's south feeder. They'll be clearing rights-of-way of dangerous trees to improve reliability. We expect them to be working on lines connected to the Iola substation. This is the northwest corner of our system north of Hickory Hill Lane and west of U.S. Route 45. Their work area will be highlighted on the map included in this section.

Don't forget to search for your member number in the center section of this magazine. Three lucky numbers are hidden each month in Clay Electric News — if yours is there and you call us; you'll earn a \$5 credit on your next bill!



Matt Conklin  
CEO



## Do not overlook overhead power lines

**I**t can be easy to overlook things that we see every day, including overhead power lines. However, failure to notice overhead lines can be deadly. If you or an object you are touching contacts or gets too close to a power line, you could be seriously injured or killed.

Overhead power lines require 10 feet of clearance in all directions. This distance rule applies to the power lines draped from pole to pole that line roads (distribution lines), as well as the drop-down lines that service homes or other structures.

If your job requires you to operate equipment in the vicinity of large transmission lines and towers, they require even more clearance than distribution and drop-down lines. That clearance is determined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). OSHA mandates line clearance distances for all types of power lines.

Be mindful of overhead power lines when completing the following tasks:

### Home maintenance

Always be aware of the location of power lines, particularly when using long tools, such as ladders, pool

skimmers and pruning poles. Lower long tools and equipment before moving or transporting them. Other safety tips include:

- Carry ladders and other long items horizontally whenever possible.
- Be careful when working on or around your roof.
- Never go on a roof in windy or bad weather. **11918-001**

### Yard work

When trimming trees, do not allow yourself or trimmers to come within 10 feet of overhead power lines, including service lines to your home or outbuilding. Also:

- Do not trim trees near power lines; instead, leave this to certified line clearance tree trimmers.
- Do not use water or blower extensions to clean gutters near electric lines.

### Farming

Review power line locations and other potential electrical hazards with all workers at morning safety

meetings. Equipment that could get too close or contact a power pole or line includes sprayer tips, tall equipment, dump trucks, augers and other extensions.

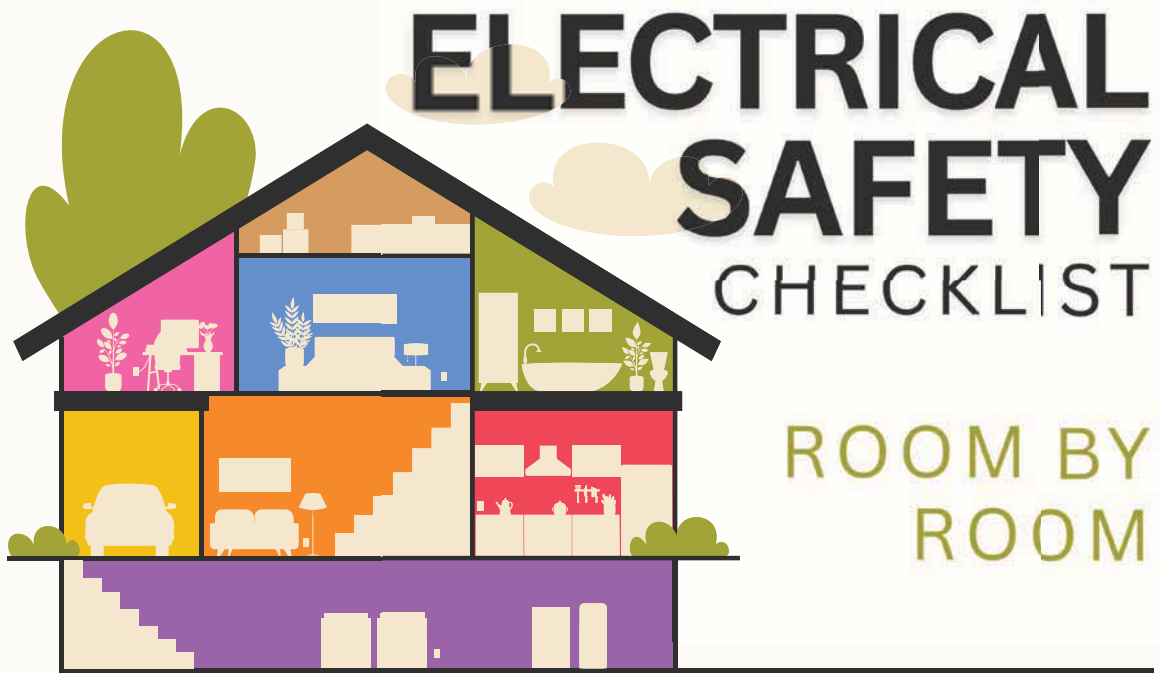
### At work

Follow all OSHA distance requirements when operating dump trucks, cranes, concrete pump truck extensions and when working on a roof or in a bucket.

### Other reminders

- Do not come within 50 feet of a downed or damaged power line. Warn others to stay away. Call 911 to report it.
- Never climb trees near power lines. Even if the power lines are not touching the tree, they could come in contact when weight is added to the branch.

**Look up and look out for overhead power lines. Contact can happen in an instant. For additional electrical safety tips, go to [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).**



Check these monthly to keep your home and family safe.

#### Kitchen

- Clean refrigerator coils and allow space for airflow.
- Store and use appliances away from the sink.
- Use and test GFCI outlets.
- Inspect cords for cracks or frays.
- Keep cords off counters; unplug when not in use.

#### Bedroom

- Place and test smoke and CO detectors on every level and near sleeping areas.
- Keep cords out from under rugs or furniture.
- Unplug devices and chargers when not in use.
- Make sure lightbulbs are the correct wattage.
- Plug window AC units into a dedicated circuit.

#### Basement

- Ensure washer and dryer are stable and ventilated.
- Remove dryer lint after each use.
- Set water heater to 120°F or lower.
- Have furnace inspected and confirm proper ventilation.

#### Bathroom

- Keep appliances away from water (sink, toilet, tub, shower).
- Unplug appliances when not in use.
- Use and test GFCI outlets.

#### Living Room

- Use safety caps on unused outlets, especially if children or pets are present.
- Ensure electronics have space for airflow.
- Replace cracked light switch or outlet covers.
- Avoid overloading outlets, power strips and surge protectors.

#### Garage

- Use and test GFCI outlets.
- Inspect cords for cracks or damage.
- Unplug tools and appliances when not in use.
- Place garage refrigerators/freezers on dedicated appliance circuits.

Learn more at: [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org)



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

March 23, 2026

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 o'clock p.m. on Monday, March 23, 2026.

Trustees present were Bob Pierson, Neil Gould, Bill Croy, Frank Czyzewski, Frank Herman, Richard Rudolphi, Evan Smith and Josh Schnepfer. Also present were Matt Conklin, CEO, and Attorney for the Board Tyra Cycholl, Earl Ridlen, Auditor, and Carrie Goldstein. 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 Josh Schnepfer, 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 the Quarterly Safety Report.

At 3:35 p.m. Earl Ridlen presented the Auditor's Report.

At 4:10 p.m. Earl Ridlen and Carrie Goldstein left the meeting.

**APPROVED**, the Auditor's Report.

**HEARD**, the Manager's Report on Safety including:

- The Monthly Safety Report;
- Monday Morning Safety meeting held March 17, 2026.

**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 CFC Report from the Board;
- **REVIEWED**, the CRC Report from the Board.

**APPROVED**, the AIEC Voting Delegate.

**APPROVED**, the AIEC Direction Election Certification.

**APPROVED**, the REDLG loan to Harter Township.

**REVIEWED** and **APPROVED**, policy 800-24.

**REVIEWED**, policy 900-2, 900-3 and 900-6.

**UPDATED**, on Federated Capta Credit Check.

**WERE UPDATED**, on NRECA issues from Jim Matheson.

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

**HEARD**, a report by Bill Croy regarding AIEC.

**REVIEWED**, Events and Training.

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

- Monthly Reconciliation;
- SIPC Power Delivered in February 2026;
- February 2026 Cash Flow;
- Line Loss;
- February 2026 Form 7;
- February 2026 Balance Sheet.

**REVIEWED**, the Cybersecurity Report.

**HEARD** and **APPROVED**, the Manager's Report by Matt Conklin

on the following topics:

- PCA Projections;
- Youth to Springfield;
- 2026 Board Reelections;
- Operations Report;
- Communications Report;
- Upcoming meetings.

**DISCUSSED**, PCA Projections and plan moving forward.

**UPDATED**, on Youth to Springfield.

**WERE UPDATED**, on 2026 Board Reelections.

**REVIEWED**, the Operations Report.


**REVIEWED**, the Communications Report.

**WERE REMINDED**, of upcoming meetings on April 27, 2026, at 7 p.m., May 26, 2026, at 7 p.m., June 22, 2026, at 7 p.m. and July 27, 2026, at 7 p.m. **13225-001**

**WERE REMINDED**, the employee appreciation lunch is April 22 at 11:30 a.m.

There being no further business to come before the Board, said meeting was declared adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

## Clay Electric Co-operative, Inc.

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