

Clay ELECTRIC News

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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

From the Manager

Have you ever wondered where your electricity comes from and how it gets to your home? Today, I want to introduce you to two key players in our energy supply: Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC) and the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO).

SIPC is our power supplier. SIPC supplies electricity to seven member distribution cooperatives, including ours, as well as the city of McLeansboro, serving over 84,000 homes and businesses in Southern Illinois. Importantly, our coop-

MISO is a not-for-profit organization that oversees electricity transmission across the central U.S. and parts of Canada, delivering reliable energy to over 45 million people, including our members. MISO balances supply and demand in real-time to maintain grid stability, which is especially important as we integrate more renewable and distributed energy resources.

As the energy landscape continues to shift, managing the electric grid is becoming more complex, especially during periods of high demand or extreme weather. To help meet these challenges, SIPC and our cooperative are planning to launch a Demand Response Program. This voluntary program will offer incentives to members who reduce their energy use during peak times. By lowering demand when energy is most expensive, we can help stabilize the grid and reduce overall power supply costs.

Each month, our cooperative receives a wholesale power bill from SIPC. That bill includes some-

thing called a Power Cost Adjustment, or PCA. The PCA reflects fluctuations in the cost of generating and purchasing electricity and can cause the energy portion of our bill to go up or down. Understanding how this works is important. Reducing electricity use during high-cost periods, and shifting that use to lower-cost times, helps control expenses and benefits all cooperative members. **18001-179**

Additionally, Illinois legislation in recent years has accelerated the transition to more renewable energy sources. While renewables offer certain benefits, they also present their own challenges. Higher energy costs and inconsistent power output, especially during severe or unfavorable weather, are some of the issues we face with the push to transition to a higher percentage of renewable energy sources. These changes add both cost and complexity to the task of providing reliable electricity. Tools like our upcoming Demand Response Program are essential in helping us adapt while keeping true to our mission: to provide safe, reliable, and exceptional service to our member-owners.

Thank you for being a valued member of our cooperative. 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!



erative has a voice at SIPC, with our Manager and several Directors serving on the SIPC Board to ensure local perspectives guide decision-making.

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Matt Conklin
CEO



How to save energy in your home office

Are you looking to lower your energy bills while creating a more efficient workspace? These simple tips can help you power up your home office — without powering up your utility bill.

Bright ideas for energy-efficient lighting

- Replace old bulbs with energy-saving LEDs to reduce energy use.
- Use task lighting to brighten only the areas you need.
- Install dimmers, motion sensors or occupancy sensors to automatically control lighting.
- Turn off lights when leaving a room and keep them off during the day when the sun is shining.

Cutting energy waste with smart management

- Unplug devices like phone chargers, fans, coffee makers and

desktop printers when not in use — they continue to draw power.

- Use a power strip to control multiple devices and reduce standby energy loss, which accounts for up to 10% of energy waste.
- Turn off your monitor if you're stepping away for more than 10 minutes. For longer breaks, set equipment, such as computers, printers and scanners, to sleep mode or power down completely.
- Plug accessories into your computer's USB ports instead of wall outlets so they power down when your computer does.

Choose energy-saving tech

- Consider a laptop, which uses about one-third the energy of a typical desktop.
- Look for the Energy Star label on computers, monitors and

printers. Energy Star-rated appliances use 30-65% less energy than those that aren't certified.

Optimize your office climate

- Install a programmable thermostat to efficiently control heating and cooling. Check with your utility for possible discounts.
- Keep windows closed when heating or air conditioning is on.
- Replace HVAC air filters regularly to maintain system efficiency.
- Schedule an energy audit to uncover even more ways to save — your utility may offer free or discounted audits and rebates.

Making a few simple changes can boost your home office's efficiency, comfort and cost savings. A smarter space starts with smarter energy use.



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.

Summer grilling safety: your guide

Grilling outdoors is not only a good way to keep your house cooler and lower your energy bill, it's a great way to enjoy warm summer days with family and friends — but more than half of grill fires occur during these peak months.

Each year, grill fires cause thousands of injuries and millions of dollars in property loss, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Most grill fires can be prevented with proper maintenance and safe use.

Tips to stay safe

- Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from grates and trays.
- Place the grill on a stable surface, away from homes, deck railings and overhanging branches.
- Keep children and pets at least three feet away.
- Never leave an active grill unattended.
- Use propane and charcoal grills outdoors only to prevent fire hazards and carbon monoxide poisoning.

Gas grills pose a greater fire risk due to leaks. To ensure safe grilling, check for leaks each season:

- Mix equal parts dish soap and water.
- After attaching the gas cylinder, open the valve one turn counterclockwise. **18001-054**

- Apply the soapy mixture to the hose and connections. If bubbles form, a gas leak is present.

If you detect a leak, turn off the gas and grill immediately. If the leak stops, have the grill serviced by a professional before use. If the leak continues, move away and call the fire department for assistance. Do not move the grill.

Bonus safety tip: Open the lid before lighting a gas grill to prevent gas buildup. If the flame goes out during use, turn off the gas and wait at least five minutes before relighting.

Charcoal grilling is a favorite way to cook outdoors but pose fire and carbon monoxide risks if not handled properly. Follow these essential safety tips:

- Only use charcoal starter fluid designed for grills; never use gasoline or other flammable liquids.
- Never add lighter fluid to a lit fire — this causes flare-ups.
- Store starter fluid away from heat sources and out of children's reach.
- Let charcoal coal and ashes cool completely before disposing of them in a metal container.

Electric grills are safe outdoors if proper safety precautions are followed:

- Ensure your electric grill is outdoor-rated to withstand exposure to moisture and varying temperatures.
- Never use an electric grill in rainy or wet conditions. Store the grill in a dry place when not in use.
- Keep electrical connections away from water, damp surfaces and pools to avoid electric shock.
- Always plug your grill into a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) outlet to protect against shocks. If using an extension cord, make sure it's outdoor-rated and GFCI-protected.
- Check the power cord for frays, cracks or damage before use.
- Turn off and unplug the grill after use.

If your electric grill stops working, consult the manufacturer instead of attempting electrical repairs yourself.

Cleaning your grill

Dirty grills are a leading cause of grill fires, according to the NFPA. Despite the belief that a seasoned grill enhances flavor, regular cleaning is essential for safety and performance:

- Let the grill cool before cleaning or storing it.
- Clean all grill parts including grates, burners, side tables and grease traps to prevent grease fires.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for proper cleaning.

Take these precautions and enjoy a safe and flavorful grilling season.



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COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

CECI 81st Annual Meeting will be held August 21st at Oil Belt Christian Service Camp with registration at 5:00pm and business meeting starting at 6:30pm.

Activities Include:

- ◇ Pork Chop or Chicken Dinner
- ◇ Health/Vendor Fair with the Clay Health Department, Clay County Hospital, and others!
- ◇ A bill credit for all registered members
- ◇ Scholarship and Prize Drawings
- ◇ Director elections for Districts 1, 3, & 9 (Nomination packets available now at CECI headquarters)
- ◇ Cooperative updates and more!

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting

May 27, 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 6:54 p.m. on Tuesday, May 27, 2025.

Trustees present were Bob Pierson, Neil Gould, Bill Croy, Kevin Logan, Frank Herman, Frank Czyzewski, Richard Rudolphi, 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 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 Safety including:

- The Monthly Safety Report;
- Monday Morning Safety meeting held May 27, 2025;
- The Upcoming Safety Committee Meeting.

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.

OPENED, the ten sealed bids for the trailer.

APPROVED, the bid of high bid.

APPROVED, the retirement of capital credits for a member.

At 7:08 p.m., approved going into executive session.

At 8:01 p.m., approved exiting executive session and returning to the regular meeting.

REVIEWED and APPROVED, policy revision to Policies 200-8 and policy reviews to Policies 200-9, 200-10, 200-11, 200-12 and 200-13.

REVIEWED and DISCUSSED, the Cost-of-Service study and revised revenue requirement.

DISCUSSED, CFC Mail Ballot and Bylaw changes.

UPDATED, on Federated member issues.

UPDATED, on CRC member issues.

UPDATED, on NRECA issues.

HEARD, a report by Bob Pierson regarding SIPC, Voices for Cooperative Power and Illinois Pollution Control Board.

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

DISCUSSED, upcoming Board Training and Events including:

- AIEC Annual Meeting.

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

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

REVIEWED, the Cybersecurity Report.

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

- Vehicle Incident;
- Staff Continuing Education;
- Bitcoin Mining inquiry;
- Operation Report;
- Communications Report;
- Upcoming meetings.

DISCUSSED, a Vehicle incident and reviewed pictures of the same.

REVIEWED, the completion of Continuing Education classes for a staff member.

DISCUSSED, Bitcoin Mining inquiry.


REVIEWED, the Operations Report. **10770-003**

REVIEWED, the Communications Report.

WERE REMINDED, of upcoming meetings on June 23, 2025, at 7 p.m., July 28, 2025, at 7 p.m., August 25, 2025, at 7 p.m., and September 22, 2025, at 7 p.m., and the annual meeting Aug. 21, 2025 at 5 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Board, said meeting was declared adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

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