

# 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

**A**s December arrives, it's a perfect time to reflect and say thank you to our team and members. This year, we celebrated reaching 2,000 safety days, a milestone that highlights the safe and efficient work our crews do every day. We're grateful for our dedicated staff and for you, our members, whose support makes our work fulfilling. **11584-001**

For those of our members receiving rural water from Clay County Water, Inc., remember to attend the annual meeting on Monday, Dec. 9 at Floyd Henson Jr. High School. Registration

starts at 5:30 p.m., with the business meeting starting at 6 p.m. Meeting notices should be arriving by the time this magazine reaches you. If you have not received one, additional copies are available at the cooperative headquarters at 7784 Old Highway 50 in Flora. Members who attend will receive a \$10 bill credit.

From everyone at Clay Electric Co-operative, we wish you a Merry Christmas filled with warmth, joy and light. We look forward to serving you in the coming year with the same commitment that guides us every day.

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'll win \$5 off your next bill!



**Matt Conklin**  
CEO



**WISHING YOU A VERY  
MERRY CHRISTMAS  
& THE HAPPIEST OF  
NEW YEARS!**

**The office will be closed on Tuesday, Dec. 24 and Wednesday, Dec. 25 for Christmas and on Wednesday, Jan. 1 for New Year's Day.**



## Keep your family safe and your holiday season merry with these fire safety tips

### Cooking safety in the kitchen

The kitchen is often the heart of holiday celebrations, but it can also be a hot spot for fires. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), cooking equipment is the leading cause of home fires, accounting for nearly 20% of holiday-related incidents. Here's how to stay safe.

- \* Never leave burners or the oven unattended. Keep a fire extinguisher nearby for emergencies.
- \* Ensure children stay away from the kitchen, where hot appliances and sharp utensils can pose risks.
- \* Install smoke detectors at least 10 feet away from cooking appliances and test them monthly to ensure they're working.

### Be aware of holiday fire risks

The combination of candles, fireplaces and flammable decorations increases the risk of fires during the holidays. On average, fire departments respond to 150 Christmas tree-related fires and 790 decoration-related fires annually, according to the NFPA.

### Candle safety

- \* Only burn candles where you can keep an eye on them.
- \* Extinguish candles before going to bed, leaving the room or leaving the house.
- \* Use heat-resistant surfaces for candles, placing them out of reach of children and pets.
- \* Keep candles away from flammable items like trees, decorations, curtains and furniture.

- \* Opt for battery-operated candles near flammable objects.

### Christmas tree fire prevention

A beautiful Christmas tree adds to the festive spirit, but it's essential to ensure it's safe.

- \* Choose a fresh tree. Fresh trees have needles that are hard to pull from branches and have a sticky trunk bottom.
- \* Keep the tree away from heat sources such as fireplaces, space heaters and vents.
- \* Check the water level daily to prevent the tree from drying out.
- \* Place the tree away from high-traffic areas and doorways.
- \* If using an artificial tree, ensure it is labeled as fire-resistant.
- \* When discarding a real tree, place it far from your home and other combustible objects, as dried trees are highly flammable.

### Holiday lighting safety

Decorative lights add cheer to the season, but safety is key.

- \* Purchase lights from reputable retailers and ensure they are approved by recognized testing labs like UL or CSA.
- \* Only use lights designed for outdoor use when hanging outside.
- \* Use circuits equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) for outdoor lights.
- \* Avoid water and snow when using extension cords and outdoor lights.

- \* Stay at least 10 feet away from power lines while hanging lights.
- \* Check for broken sockets and frayed wires before use.
- \* Avoid plugging too many devices into a single outlet.
- \* Turn off indoor and outdoor decorations when going to bed or leaving the house.

### Fireplace safety tips

A cozy fireplace is a holiday favorite, but it requires careful handling.

- \* Decorate wisely. Avoid hanging flammable decorations like stockings and greenery directly on the mantel.
- \* Perform annual maintenance. Have your chimney and fireplace checked and cleaned at least once a year. **14984-001**
- \* Use a screen. Install a screen to prevent embers from landing on floors or carpets.
- \* Burn responsibly. Never burn trees, wreaths or wrapping paper in the fireplace, as they can ignite rapidly and cause flash fires.

By following these fire safety tips, you can enjoy a joyful and safe holiday season with your loved ones.





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Co-operative, Inc.

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P.O. Box 517  
Flora, Illinois 62839

## COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

### Unleashing the Power of OUR Community!

Clay Electric Co-operative's Community Spotlight is featured in each issue of Illinois Country Living Magazine and on our Facebook page each Thursday.

If you have a community event you would like to see spotlighted, send your submissions to us by email at [admin@ceci.coop](mailto:admin@ceci.coop) or by mail to Clay Electric Co-operative, Inc.—Community Spotlight, PO Box 517, Flora, IL 62839



Clay  
County  
Water, Inc

## ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, December 9th @ 6:00pm

Registration begins at 5:30pm

Floyd Henson Jr High School  
609 N Stanford Road, Flora, IL

Members in attendance to receive a  
\$10 bill credit.



## Deck the Halls SAFELY

- Use only lights, cords, animated displays, and decorations rated for outdoor use.
- When decorating outside, look up and around for power lines. Never throw lights or other decorations into trees near power lines.
- Keep ladders, equipment, and yourself at least ten feet away from power lines.
- Cords should be plugged into outlets equipped with Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs).

For more holiday safety tips visit:

Safe  
Electricity.org

# Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting

Oct. 28, 2024

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 7 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 28, 2024.

Trustees present were Bob Pierson, Bill Croy, Kevin Logan, Frank Herman, Frank Czyzewski, Richard Rudolphi, Evan Smith, Josh Schnepfer and Neil Gould. 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 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. 14994-001

**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**, requested retirement of Capital Credits.

**REVIEWED**, the Federated Member Update.

**APPROVED**, the CRC rate increase.

**REVIEWED AND DISCUSSED**, the 2025 Budget, including:

- SIPC Power Cost;
- Capital Credits;
- Advertising and Donations;
- Capital Items;
- 2025 Budget.

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

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

**WERE INFORMED**, of the BLC 903 Training.

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

- Monthly Reconciliation;
- SIPC Power Delivered in September 2024;
- September 2024 Cash Flow;
- Line Loss;
- September 2024 Form 7;
- September 2024 Balance Sheet.

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

**REVIEWED**, Monday Morning Safety meeting held Oct. 28, 2024.

**REVIEWED**, the Cybersecurity Report.

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

- Chicken Farm New Load;
- Operations Report;
- Communications Report;
- Upcoming meetings.

**WERE INFORMED**, of a new Chicken Farm being built on our lines with potential for a large new load.

**REVIEWED**, the Operations Report.

**REVIEWED**, the Communications Report.

**APPROVED**, moving the

December meeting to Dec. 20, 2024, at 3:30 p.m.

**WERE REMINDED**, of upcoming meetings on Nov. 25, 2024, at 3:30 p.m., Dec. 20, 2024, at 3:30 p.m., Jan. 27, 2025, at 3:30 p.m. and Feb. 24, 2025, at 3:30 p.m.

**SCHEDULED**, the Christmas party for Dec. 20, 2024, at 6 p.m.


**REVIEWED**, thank you notes.

There being no further business to come before the Board, said meeting was declared adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

## 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.

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Office hours:  
7:30 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.

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