

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

As winter settles in, we at Clay Electric Co-operative thank you for your trust in us to keep the power flowing safely and affordably. This year, your cooperative has replaced 205 poles, strung 6 miles of new wire, and maintained an outstanding 99.94% reliability rating.

Snow, ice and high winds can test our system in the winter months. If you or a loved one relies on electrically powered medical equipment (oxygen concentrators, CPAP machines, dialysis units, etc.), please have an emergency action plan in place for backup power. While we try to maintain the electrical infrastructure to mitigate power outages, weather events can and will happen. It is important to remember that restoration times depend on the extent of storm damage and crew safety. We cannot guarantee immediate restoration, so please keep battery backups charged, extra medications on hand, and a family emergency plan ready.

For our water members, the Clay County Water annual meeting will be on Dec. 2, 2025, at Floyd Henson Jr. High School in Flora. Registration starts at 5:30 p.m., with the business meeting at 6 p.m. Attendees get a \$10 credit on your next water bill. If you are unable to attend but know someone who will be able to, fill out a proxy form and send it with them. Each attending member can serve as proxy for one other Clay County Water member, and both will receive their bill credits. We look forward to seeing you there! **792-001**

Thank you for your support. Check the magazine's center section for your member number. Three are hidden in Clay Electric News; find yours and call for a \$5 bill credit.

From all of us to all of you, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Matt Conklin
CEO

Christmas Tree Fire Safety

- **Pick fresh:** Choose a tree with green needles that don't fall off easily.
- **Trim base:** Cut 2" before placing in stand.
- **Water daily:** Keep the stand full and the tree fresh.
- **Placement matters:** Keep at least 3' from heat sources; don't block exits.
- **Secure tree:** Anchor to prevent tipping, especially with pets or kids.
- **Light it right:** Use only UL-listed lights; replace damaged strands.
- **No candles:** Never decorate with a flame.
- **Turn off lights:** Unplug when sleeping or away.
- **Use smoke alarms:** Test monthly.
- **Ditch when dry:** Remove promptly; don't store near home or garage.

Learn more:

Safe
Electricity.org®

Reflecting on progress, planning for the future

As we close another year, I want to pause and express gratitude — for you, the members of Clay Electric Co-operative — for your continued trust and support. Our cooperative was built on the promise of people coming together to improve the quality of life in their communities, and that promise still guides everything we do today.

Each decision, whether it's about delivering reliable electricity, innovating for the future or advocating for smart energy policies that impact our local community, comes back to one simple question: How will this benefit the members we serve?

This past year has been marked by meaningful progress, both in strengthening our local system and in working at the national level to influence energy policies that directly affect reliability, affordability and resilience. While the details of federal regulations can feel distant, they shape our daily operations here at home.

Over the past year, electric cooperatives across the country came together for advocacy efforts on the EPA's Power Plant Rule. As originally written, the rule would have forced a rapid shift away from always-available power generation resources, threatening the accessibility of a diverse fuel supply that keeps electricity reliable. Renewable energy sources are an essential and growing part of our energy future, but we also know that the demand for electricity is rising rapidly, and natural gas, coal and nuclear remain essential for ensuring power is available around the clock. As we collaborated and engaged with policymakers, we pressed for a more balanced approach to generating power — one that supports clean energy innovation while still recognizing the role of traditional resources. Our efforts are helping to shape a more workable path forward that better protects reliability and keeps costs in check for Clay Electric Co-operative members.

Another area of ongoing progress came through advocacy work on federal permitting reform. For too long, outdated rules and lengthy delays have stood in the way of building critical



Our Promise to You

As the demand for electricity continues to grow, our commitment to providing you with reliable power remains steadfast. Looking ahead, we are dedicated to:

- Advocating for energy policies that support our local communities.
- Leveraging innovative technologies to strengthen our grid.
- Listening to your feedback to enhance co-op programs and services.

infrastructure, including new transmission lines and generation projects. Modernizing this process is essential if we are going to strengthen the electric grid and keep pace with growing demand. This year, electric co-ops helped move the needle on permitting reform, advocating for policies that make the process faster, more predictable and more efficient. Investments we make in infrastructure will reach communities sooner, improving reliability and preparing us for the future.

We're also seeing progress with bipartisan support of the FEMA Act of 2025, which would speed up the disaster recovery process for electric cooperatives and the communities they serve. Severe storms are a fact of life, and their impact on the electric system can be devastating.

FEMA is a crucial partner for electric co-ops in efforts to restore power after disaster strikes, but currently, the federal reimbursement process after a major storm is slow and full of red tape. If passed, the bill would make FEMA a stronger, more responsive agency to help strengthen rural resilience, protect taxpayer dollars and ensure essential services are restored as quickly as possible after a natural disaster. **1729-001**

Achievements like these are not just wins in Washington — they are wins for Clay Electric members like you.

In addition to advocacy efforts, we are proactively addressing our communities' needs for the future by investing in new

technologies and programs that improve service for our members. Through advanced systems and tools that improve daily operations, we are better equipped to identify power delivery issues or challenges before they occur.

As we look ahead to a new year, I see both challenges and opportunities on the horizon. The energy industry is undergoing significant change driven by the rising need for more electricity, new tools and technologies, and federal energy policies.

The path forward requires innovative thinking and member-focused solutions. I'm confident that with the dedication of Clay Electric employees and the continued support of our members, we are well positioned to adapt and meet challenges head-on. Through it all, our promise to you remains steadfast: reliable power for today — and tomorrow.



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.



Clay County Water, Inc.

P.O. Box 555
Flora, IL 62839

CLAY COUNTY WATER, INC. ANNUAL MEETING

Tuesday, Dec. 2 @ 6 p.m.

Registration begins at 5:30 p.m.

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

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



Clay Electric
Co-operative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

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

or by mail to

Clay Electric Co-operative, Inc. —
Community Spotlight,
P.O. Box 517, Flora, IL 62839

Bright Lights, Safe Nights

Outdoor holiday lighting safety

- Use outdoor-rated lights with UL safety labels.
- Plug into GFCI outlets for shock protection.
- Stay at least 10 feet from power lines when hanging lights.
- Don't hang lights with tacks, nails or screws — use clips instead.
- Keep cords away from water and snow.
- Inspect for damage like broken sockets or frayed cords.
- Don't overload extension cords or outlets.
- Turn off lights before bed or when away; a timer makes it easy.

Safe
Electricity.org



Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting

Oct. 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 6:56 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 27, 2025.

Trustees present were Bob Pierson, Neil Gould, Bill Croy, Kevin Logan, Frank Herman, Frank Czyzewski, Richard Rudolph, Evan Smith and Josh Schnepfer. Also present were CEO Matt Conklin 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 Frank Herman 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 with the change in #26 that AIEC did have a meeting this month.

HEARD, the Manager's Report on Safety including:

- The Monthly Safety Report;
- Monday Morning Safety meeting held Oct. 21, 2025.

APPROVED, the Consent Agenda including the following:

- **APPROVED**, the prior meeting minutes;
- **APPROVED**, resolution on compensation;
- **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**, CRC Report/From the Board.

At 7:03 p.m. approved entering into Executive Session. At 7:25 p.m. approved exiting Executive Session.

REVIEWED and **APPROVED**, policy reviews to 800-1, 800-3, 800-6, 800-7, 800-9 and 800-11, and policy revisions to 800-2, 800-4, 800-8 and 800-10.

DISCUSSED, CFC Line of Credit. **2002-001**

APPROVED, giving Matt Conklin the authority to zero out the line of credit by February 2026 and roll into a 30-year loan depending on interest rates.

UPDATED, on NRECA issues.

HEARD, a report by Bob Pierson regarding SIPC.

HEARD, a report by Kevin Logan regarding AIEC meeting.

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

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

REVIEWED, the Cybersecurity Report.

REVIEWED and **DISCUSSED**, the 2026 Budget including:

- SIPC Power Cost;
- Capital Credits;
- Advertising and Donations;
- Capital Items;
- 2026 Budget.

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

- Staff Continuing Education Reimbursement;
- New Lineman;

■ New Forestry Position;

■ Non-Union Insurance Discussion;

■ Operations Report;

■ Communications Report;

■ Upcoming meetings.

DISCUSSED, reimbursement for education expenses through continuing education policy.

DISCUSSED, hiring of New Lineman.

DISCUSSED, the new Forestry position.

DISCUSSED, Non-Union insurance.

REVIEWED, the Operations Report.

REVIEWED, the Communications Report.

WERE REMINDED, of upcoming meetings on Nov. 24, 2025, at 3:30 p.m., Dec. 17, 2025, at 3:30 p.m. with the Christmas party to follow, Jan. 26, 2026, at 3:30 p.m. and February 23, 2026, at 3:30 p.m.

REVIEWED, thank-you cards from the Clay County Farm Bureau, Clay City School, Clay County CEO and scholarship winners.

There being no further business to come before the Board, said meeting was declared adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

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