



Clinton County Connection

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Better response to outage situation

I am sure most of the members living east of Breese remember the ice storm that hit us on February 1st and 2nd of 2011. Our crews, along with a contractor, did a fantastic job restoring power to our members. As I remember, the main problem we encountered during that storm was the membership's inability to inform us that their power was out. Basically, we had severe phone issues. As I have discussed with you before, we analyzed the situation and discovered that the problem was with our local phone switch. It was overloaded and overwhelmed. And, as I have previously informed you, we implemented a solution to that problem.

We have asked the membership to call 1-800-526-7282 in the event their power goes out. That number should be used 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. During normal business hours those calls are routed to our facility and during all other hours they are routed to our afterhours call center. This solution avoids our local phone switch and puts the call through over the telephone toll system. There is no cost to you, the member, for using this number.

I continue to hear every now and then that a member is getting a busy signal or "all circuits are busy" message when they are reporting an outage. We had our afterhours call center run a test one night to test the effectiveness of the "800" solution. The call center 'blasted' 48 calls at the same time to 526-7282 and only 5 calls were able to be answered with the remaining receiving a busy signal. About 15 minutes later, the call center 'blasted' 48 calls at the same time to 800-526-7282 and 23 calls were answered. This amounted to a difference of 18 additional calls being answered when using the 800-526-7282 number. We are in the process of trying to get

that number to 48 calls answered when using the "800" solution.

The solution of calling 800-526-7282 does work; please try to use it in the future. This will greatly enhance the probability of your call being answered. Please program that number into your cell/smart phone. You might consider labeling it "Power Outage". We have outage phone number reminder magnets available at the office. Please pick one up the next time you visit our facility.

I am writing this article at the end of May. As of today, we are experiencing some annoying blinks or momentary outages in various parts of our system. Those areas that are currently experiencing problems are in the Shattuc/Ferrin area as well as the Mascoutah area. If you come home and notice your digital clocks are blinking, please give us a call. The more information from the membership we have, the better it will aid us in determining where the problem is and what it may be. We resolved an issue in the Trenton area (we think) and it took a couple of weeks to find. Last year we had an issue in the Albers area that took nearly a month to resolve. We know these blinks/momentary outages are annoying, but trust we are doing our best to resolve them in a timely manner. Generally these blinks/momentary outages will not cause any damage to your appliances.

Please remember, all initiatives we embark upon always have our members' best interest in mind. Providing our members with safe, affordable, reliable electricity and restoring electrical service as quickly and safely as possible continues to be our goal. As always, if you have any comments or suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact me at Johnson@cceci.com.

“Like” Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc. on Facebook



Do you have a Facebook account? If so, have you taken the time to “Like” Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc.? If not, consider doing so. To keep up with technology and to communicate effectively with certain age groups, CCEC has its own Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/ClintonCountyElectric. We use our Facebook page to relay late breaking and time sensitive information to you, our membership. If you visit the page, you will see that we have posted information about paying your electric bill online and calling JULIE before you dig; but, more importantly, we have communicated with our members about large power outages. If we are hit by a severe storm, natural disaster, or other occurrence that knocks out power to one or more substations, we post related information as soon as we are able on our Facebook page. This enables our membership to find the information via smartphone when their power/internet is out, or when they are away from their home. This can be very helpful during storms or widespread outages, especially if the phone lines are jam-packed and you

can't get through to the cooperative. In the event of an emergency, you'll find we may also pass on information from other organizations that we feel is important to our membership. We will not be like some “Facebookers” and post worthless and useless information. All of our posts will be informative and concise.

If you have a Facebook account, just “Like” our page to find updates in your news feed from the Cooperative. You'll be glad you did! Also, feel free to communicate with us. Remember, for security reasons, please do not use any personal information like addresses, phone numbers, account numbers and such. Once it is posted, everyone can have access to it. **If you do not have a Facebook account, you can still view**



our updates! Just visit www.facebook.com/ClintonCountyElectric at your leisure to find out what is currently going on at Clinton County Electric.

We would appreciate any comments, concerns or questions concerning our communication to you, the member, using Facebook.



In observance of Labor Day, the office will be CLOSED on Monday, September 3rd.



Keep the fun in your summer pool time

Before you jump in the pool this summer, you need to take the necessary steps to make sure everything is safe and you are ready for any possible emergency so that you can concentrate on having fun!

Homeowners should make sure that the National Electric Code (NEC) has been followed for wiring and that ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) are properly installed on equipment in areas around pools, spas, and hot tubs.

Other recommendations from the Consumer Protection Safety Council (CSPC) involve:

- Knowing where electrical switches and circuit breakers are for pool, hot tub, and spa equipment and know how to operate them.
- Refraining from swimming before, during, and after thunderstorms.

- Having an electrician who is qualified in pool, spa, and hot tub repairs inspect and upgrade your pool, spa, or hot tub in accordance with local codes and the NEC.
- Making sure all electrical wires and junction boxes are at least five feet away from water as required by the NEC.
- Ensuring that overhead power lines and junction boxes are safely positioned and have the proper clearance according to the NEC when installing a new pool, hot tub, or spa.
- When cleaning the pool, knowing where any overhead power lines are to avoid making contact with them while using long-handled tools.
- Purchasing a fiberglass Shepherd's crook/rescue hook for emergencies.

Other steps to take to ensure the swimming season is a safe one include using battery-powered appliances and electronics around the pool instead of connecting them to an extension cord. Pool owners should have an emergency plan posted in plain view in the pool area with instructions on how to assist someone who is suffering an electrical shock. One such emergency plan is available from CSPC at <http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PREREL/prhtml03/03125.pdf>.

For more information on electrical safety around water, go to SafeElectricity.org.



Did you know you can pay your electric bill through our website?

It is easy to pay your Clinton County Electric bill through our website. To pay online, simply visit our website at www.cceci.com, click on **E-Business Solution** on the upper left side of the page and follow the



prompts for your initial set-up. To accomplish this, the only thing you will need is a copy of your electric statement in front of you.

Once you are set-up, you will be able to pay your bill via credit card, debit card or from your checking account. You will also have the ability to set your electric bill up for recurring payment each month giving you peace of mind knowing your bill is paid on time! Also, once registered, a notification will be sent to you via email each month letting you know your bill is available on-line for viewing.

You will continue to receive your paper bill in the mail unless you opt for “paperless” billing on our website. By logging into your personal account on our website, you also gain access to valuable information about your account history. Do not hesitate to contact us at 526-7282 or via email at billing@cceci.com with any questions. Paying online through our website is safe and convenient. And signing up for recurring payment helps you to rest assured you will not be late, preventing a 5% late fee. Visit our website today!

Trustee Spotlight

Cary Dickinson has served on the Board of Trustees at Clinton County Electric Cooperative since 1996. Cary currently serves as Chairman of the Cooperative and has served as CCEC’s representative on the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) Board of Directors, where he served as treasurer. He presently serves as a Director at Southern Illinois Power Cooperative in Marion, Illinois.

With many hours of training, Cary has achieved his Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate as well as The Board Leadership Certificate.

Cary and his wife, Sharon, live in Hoffman. They are the parents of two



sons, Kyle of Nashville, TN and Brett of Hoffman, IL. They have 2 grandsons and 2 granddaughters.

Cary is sales manager for Monken Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram and Nissan in Centralia.