



# Clinton County Connection

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Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

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Mike Johnson

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## Help keep rates affordable

*The key to affordable rates is an “all-of-the-above” energy strategy*

Illinois’ not-for-profit electric cooperatives work very hard to provide their members with electricity that is safe, reliable and affordable. Cooperatives support an “all-of-the-above” energy strategy, one that incorporates clean coal, natural gas, nuclear and renewable energy to generate power. While this strategy was endorsed by President Obama in his January 2012 State of the Union Address, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was subsequently directed to issue-proposed rules that will virtually eliminate coal from this equation for new power plants — resulting in an “all-but-one” policy. And, expected follow-up proposed rules on existing power plants, if adopted, will likely result in substantially increased power costs for our homes and businesses.

The background is as follows: On January 8, 2014, the U.S. EPA formally published proposed rules that would set stringent limits on carbon emissions from new power plants and opened up a 60-day comment period for feedback. While electric cooperatives understand the environmental concern, these rules would rely on the use of carbon capture and storage technology, a technology that is both expensive and unproven at a power plant scale. This essentially eliminates coal as a potential fuel source. Additionally, the rules on new power plants will trigger a legal requirement under the Clean Air Act to set new standards for existing plants as well, a measure that will have a direct economic impact on cooperatives and their member-owners.

Electric cooperatives are dedicated to a cleaner environment as part of their commitment to the communities they serve. Our member generation and transmission cooperatives currently produce power from a wide variety of sources including solar, landfill gas-to-energy, anaerobic digesters, hydro, wind and natural gas power projects. Having said that, the vast majority of our cooperative power production remains coal-fired, traditionally the most cost-effective

and reliable source. New EPA regulations eliminating coal from the mix will mean higher energy costs for rural America.

We’ve seen this “all-but-one” policy before in our country’s recent history. Concerned about natural gas supplies, Congress passed the Fuel Use Act in 1978 which prohibited burning natural gas to generate electricity. As a result, cooperatives invested heavily in coal-based generating plants in the late 1970s and early 1980s to meet growing demand for baseload power. Nine years later Congress repealed that Act.

Cooperatives nationwide have investigated the carbon capture and storage technology (CCS) as a way to reduce carbon emissions. However, as it stands today, it is not economically feasible. A 2012 Congressional Budget Office report estimated CCS would increase the cost of producing electricity from coal-based plants by 75 percent.

In a cooperative there are no stockholders to share the burden of cost increases. While we greatly respect EPA’s objectives, any cost increases our not-for-profit cooperatives incur must be passed on directly to our member-owners.

The EPA is required to take public comments, and I urge you to let the U.S. EPA know that you support a reasonable “all-of-the-above” energy policy to keep electricity affordable. Please visit [www.action.coop](http://www.action.coop) to share your comments and learn more about U.S. EPA’s proposal. This grassroots effort is critical in keeping electricity safe, reliable, and affordable in the future for all of us. It only takes 1 minute to make your voice heard — and to make a difference.

*This article was written by former Illinois State Senator N. Duane Noland who now is the President/CEO of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, Springfield and a member/owner of Shelby Electric Cooperative.*

# Did you know...?

## **The Cooperative sells electric water heaters?**

We sell 50 gallon water heaters for \$100 and 80 gallon water heaters for \$150. These prices include tax. To qualify for this price, the water heater must be installed in a structure that is served by Clinton County Electric Cooperative. Normally we have plenty of water heaters in stock, but it never hurts to call before you come to make sure we haven't just depleted our stock.

## **Our office hours are from 7:00 AM till 4:00 PM?**

Beginning in January of 2012 we changed our office hours to 7 AM-4 PM. Someone is here to serve you during those office hours, even throughout the lunch hours. If you happen to call after hours, our after-hours call center will be happy to help answer your questions.

## **Our power outage phone number is 800-526-7282?**

If you have a power outage, please call 800-526-7282 to report your outage. By adding the 800 in front of our normal office phone number you are bypassing the local toll switch and you have a better chance of getting through to either us or our after-hours call center. This is especially critical in a widespread outage situation.

## **You can text your power outage?**

Visit our website of [www.cceci.com](http://www.cceci.com) to sign up for outage texting. It is easy and convenient for those of you who like to text. There is a link on our website that takes you to the registration process. (It is necessary that we have your cell phone number listed on your account at the cooperative before you can sign up for outage texting, so contact us if you have not provided us your cell number(s) previously.) If you

decide to use outage texting, there will be no more waiting on the phone and you will receive instant verification of receipt of your text if you report an outage!

## **You can pay your bill on our website?**

We accept credit/debit card and e-check payments on our website of [www.cceci.com](http://www.cceci.com). There is no additional fee to use this payment procedure and it is safe and secure. Click on the E-Business Solution tab to register your account. Once registered, you will be able to view payment and consumption history along with the opportunity to pay your bill. Your payment will post to your account within a few minutes and it is quick and convenient. You can even opt to have recurring monthly payments for added convenience!

## **You can update your account information and make inquiries through our website?**

By visiting our website at [www.cceci.com](http://www.cceci.com) and registering for E-Business, you have the opportunity to request address and phone number changes to your account as well as making inquiries. Some examples of these inquiries would be billing questions, request for credit history, questions about Electronic Funds Transfer, high bill complaints, reporting your meter reading, or questions about water heater sales. Our website can be accessed at anytime, so the next time you have a question, feel free to log on to E-Business and send us a request. We will reply to you as soon as we are able and service your account as requested.



[www.cceci.com](http://www.cceci.com)

# Grants Awarded

Grants totaling \$4,000 were awarded to area teachers through the Touchstone Energy 2013/2014 Classroom Empowerment Grant Program. Clinton County Electric Cooperative awarded checks to the following participants:



Librarian Kristen Oster from Wesclin Jr.-Sr. High School accepts a \$500.00 check from CCECI representative Carrie Trame.



A check for \$1500.00 was presented to the teachers at Carlyle Community School District. Pictured left to right is Tara Joiner, 7th & 8th Grade Special Education Teacher; LuAlice Kampwerth, Library Media Specialist; 6th Grade Science Teacher Patty Harre; and CCECI Representative Carrie Trame.



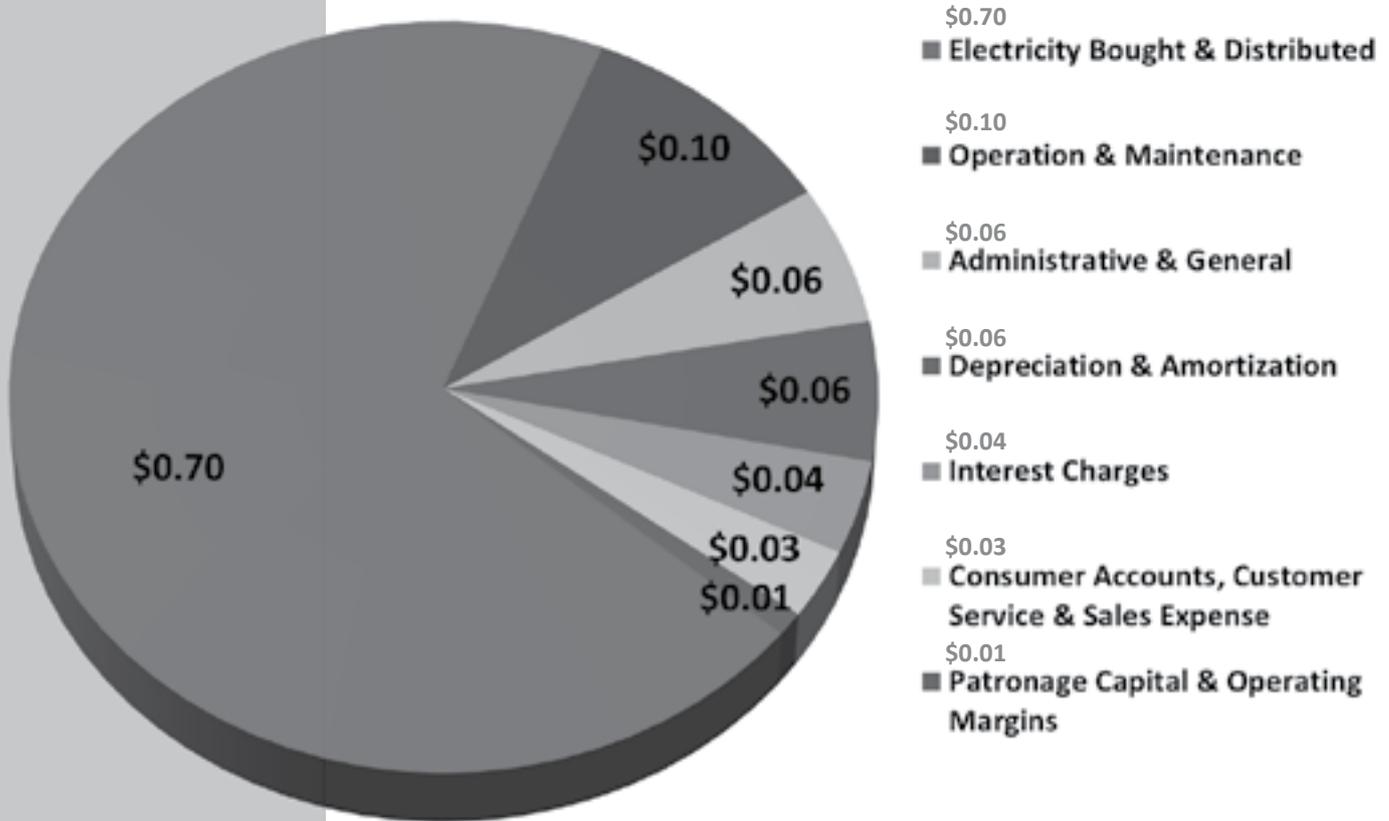
Cooperative employee Carrie Trame presented a check for 500.00 to St. Rose Elementary on behalf of a grant written by Laura Wesselmann, Kindergarten Teacher.



Accepting a \$500.00 check from Carrie Trame of Clinton County Electric Cooperative is Amy Koch, the Music Teacher at Bartelso School.



Carrie Trame presented a check in the amount of \$1,000 to teachers at Germantown Elementary. Pictured left to right is Kaci Lueking, First Grade Teacher; Cheri Markwell, Kindergarten Teacher; and Carrie Trame CCECI Representative.



## Where did a \$1.00 of Revenue Go in 2013

This pie chart demonstrates how Clinton County Electric Cooperative spent each dollar of revenue in 2013. As you can see, 70 cents of every dollar of revenue was spent on the purchase of electricity. That only leaves 30 cents of every dollar to pay for all other utility operating expenses and working capital requirements. Also, please note only 1 cent out of every dollar goes to Patronage Margins (Profits). Depreciation Expense & Interest Expense numbers have risen during the past couple of years. Clinton County Electric Cooperative will continue to make the best decisions possible to provide the members with safe, reliable and reasonably priced electricity.

**In observance of  
Memorial Day, the  
office will be CLOSED  
on Monday, May 26th**