Clinton County Connection

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Mike Johnson

Plan to attend your Cooperative's 75th Annual Meeting Thursday March 21, 2013

Infrastructure upgrades

When I began my employment here at Clinton County Electric in the summer of 2009, we implemented two initiatives: (1) Enhancing our Member Communications, and (2) Infrastructure Improvements. Clinton County Electric had been doing those things all along, but generally under a more informal process and approach. This article will concentrate on the Infrastructure Improvement Initiative.

The electric utility industry is extremely capital intensive. That being said, our capital improvement planning cycle tends to be very long and extremely cautious. We cannot afford to make an "oops" along the way, do-overs are extremely costly and time consuming. Clinton County Electric is planning for a major capital improvement to the south eastern side of our service territory over the next three years or so. Let me chronologically list the improvements that have been made, are being made, and will be made in the future.

One component of the Infrastructure Improvement Initiative is to have a reliable, strong "tie" between substations in the case of a substation outage. In other words if we lose a substation due to lighting, wind, animal or Ameren feed, ideally we "switch" that load over to another substation. This process shortens the amount of time that our members are without power. Generally two items are needed for that "switch": (1) adequate substation transformer capacity, and (2) sufficient power line capacity. Currently if the Shattuc substation goes dark, we have a difficult time providing power to those members at peak times. It can be done for now, but with continued load growth it may become impossible to achieve in the future.

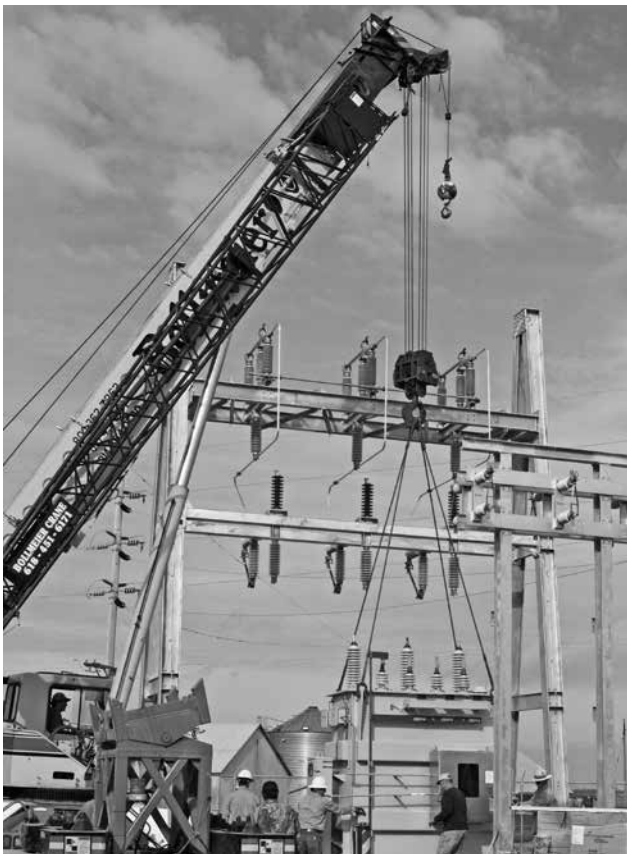
To remedy this situation, we have built a new substation in the Ferrin area. In late 2010 we started this process and the first thing we did was hire a professional substation engineering firm to assist us in the design of the new Ferrin Substation. The most critical piece of equipment within a substation is the transformer itself. A substation transformer can take up to a year to build and ship to a specific location. Specifications for the transformer needed in our new Ferrin Substation were sent to the manufacturer in late 2010 and almost a year later, in November of 2011, the 5000KVA transformer arrived in Breese. With the building of the new Ferrin Substation, we have replaced a 3750 KVA transformer at Ferrin with the new 5000 KVA transformer. We believe this new transformer will give us adequate substation transformer capacity for many, many years to come. (See photos on pages 9 and 16b.) We have to remember that every dollar of capital investment we make today, whether it's setting a pole, stringing a wire or building a substation, isn't just for today's reliability, but also affects reliability for our members for the next 40 years or more.

Our existing Ferrin Substation (May 2012)

(Continued on page 16b)

President's letter *(Continued from page 16a)*

My personal goal for constructing the new Ferrin Substation was to have it energized by Memorial Day of 2012; well that didn't happen. We ran into one problem after another. First it was time constraints of the engineering firm. Just our luck, we were trying to design a substation at the time natural gas exploration and oil production in the states of Oklahoma and North Dakota were BOOMING. The engineering firm had "too many irons in the fire". This caused significant delays for the final substation construction plans. The plans were finally completed and material needs were sent to various suppliers. We learned an important lesson here; the engineering firm selected the lowest cost supplier of materials. Well the "lowest cost supplier" isn't generally the best supplier. There were major delays in getting the materials to us in a timely manner.



The transformer is carefully guided into place and strategically set onto its concrete foundation

Finally by mid-November all of our materials arrived. We contracted with Big "D" Electric, Inc. to do the physical work of constructing the substation. They have done an amazing job. Due to their efforts we believe that we will be able to energize the new Ferrin Substation by January 31, 2013. The estimated final cost of the new Ferrin Substation will be around $900,000. The original Ferrin Substation was first energized in the 1940's era. The transformers have been upgraded since then, but very little incremental investment has been put into that site over the years. So, for over 73 years of service, virtually 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 52 weeks a year, the Ferrin Substation has been "humming" along. I would say we definitely got our money's worth out of the original substation.

Now that we will have "adequate substation transformer capacity" at the Ferrin Substation we now have to start work on "sufficient power line capacity" to the Shattuc Substation.

The distance between the substations is around seven miles. Rebuilding/converting those seven miles of line will take us about three years to complete.

To accomplish this, in 2013 we plan on converting about two miles of the Ferrin South Feeder to a double circuit line which will substantially increase the power line capacity for that section. This line runs along Creek Road and the rebuild will stop where the line crosses College Road. Some of this existing line was originally constructed in 1947 and another part of it was constructed in 1965. The estimated cost of this conversion is $300,000.

Then, in 2014 we are planning on continuing south on Creek Road for about 2 miles to where the current line crosses State Route 161. This original line was constructed in 1965. The cost of converting and rebuilding this line is estimated to be $250,000.

Finally, in 2015 we are planning on completing the "tie" between Ferrin and Shattuc Substations by rebuilding 3 miles of line that runs east and west along State Route 161. This original line was constructed in 1939 and the estimated cost of this conversion is $325,000.

In a nutshell, this is our plan for increasing the reliability for the south eastern area of our service territory. As I mentioned earlier, our planning cycle tends to be very long and extremely cautious. The total estimated cost of this increase in reliability is somewhere near $1,800,000 and as you can see it will take us over 4 years to complete. You may ask, "why not do it more quickly?" The answer is pretty simple, "Electric Rates". As I talked earlier, every dollar of investment we make affects today's and tomorrow's members. Our current rates that we charge the membership allows for a certain number of capital improvements to be made each year. It is a balancing act to provide members the reliable service they expect while also maintaining reasonable and affordable electric rates.

I hope this rather long story helps the membership understand our long range capital improvement planning process.

Once again, please visit our website, www.cceci.com and go to the button that looks like a calculator to see how the 2013 rate change impacts your account. Please remember, all initiatives we embark on always have our members' best interest in mind. Providing our members with affordable electricity and excellent service will continue to be our goal in the future. As always, if you have any comments or questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at johnson@cceci.com.

Applications are still being accepted for 2013 Youth Day and Youth Tour

There is still time left for high school sophomores and juniors to apply to attend Youth Day in Springfield to be held on April 17, 2013, sponsored by the cooperative and the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. Please visit our website or see your high school counselor for an application and more information about Youth Day 2013. Deadline to apply is Friday, February 15, 2013.

This program may be suspended at any time due to inadequate funding or participation. There will be a maximum number of 12 participants chosen. Notifications will only be made to those chosen to participate in the program.

Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc. annual scholarship program

For many years, Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc. has granted scholarships to students of cooperative member families. We are proud to announce that we will again carry on the tradition by proudly sponsoring fourteen - $500 scholarships this spring amounting to a total of $7,000 to benefit students from our service territory. Two - $500 scholarships will be awarded to two students at each of these seven area schools: Carlyle High School, Central High School, Christ Our Rock Lutheran High School, Mater Dei Catholic High School, Mascoutah High School, Wesclin High School and Kaskaskia College. The scholarships are awarded based upon criteria set forth by the school they are attending. Please contact the guidance department at the schools mentioned above for an application and more details.

Trustee spotlight on Vernon Mohesky

Vernon Mohesky is a Trustee for Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc representing District No. 2. Vernon has earned his NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director Certificate and Board Leadership Certificate. He is a graduate of Mater Dei High School and United Electronics Institute in Louisville, Kentucky. Vernon and his wife Ann have four married children and ten grandchildren. Vernon is retired from AT&T and is a USA Army Veteran having served from 1966-1968. He is actively involved in St Dominic Parish, a member of the Vietnam Veterans Association, the Knights of Columbus and American Legion.

Vernon Mohesky

Vernon's pastime is showing his restored antique tractors which he enters in approximately 10 parades each year. He is also an avid bicycle rider, riding daily and hosting two 42 mile bike rides a year.

Mark your calendar - CCECI 75th Annual Meeting date is March 21, 2013

Make plans to attend YOUR 2013 Annual Meeting on Thursday, March 21, 2013 to be held at Central High School in Breese. Registration will start at 6:30 p.m. with the meeting beginning at 7:30 p.m. Many topics concerning the cooperative, including the recent rate change, will be discussed. Take the opportunity to meet your trustees along with the cooperative employees.