Clinton County
Connection
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner
Published by Clinton County Electric Cooperative

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Coming soon to a location near you...
Area Meetings

Monday, October 27	7:30 p.m.	Albers American Legion
Wednesday, October 29	1:30 p.m.	Breese Knights of Columbus (basement)
Wednesday, October 29	7:30 p.m.	Carlyle VFW (south of Carlyle Super Valu)

Topics to be Discussed: Rates, Rates, Rates

Light Lunch will be Served

Drawings for Cash Prizes

ATTENDANCE PRIZES given to all members attending!

Across the manager's desk

Once again, this year, CCEC is hosting three Area Meetings. If you've never attended one of our Area Meetings, you are missing a great experience. These meetings are a very informal means of communicating our message to you, the member.

We welcome questions from our members, and we'll listen to all suggestions, comments and ideas that you may have. In fact, we want members to ask questions, so with your invitation to attend the Area Meetings that you will be receiving this month, there is room at the bottom for you to write out your questions and/or comments. You can cut this out and bring it with you to the Area Meeting. We will have a box at the registration table for you to drop in your questions. We are doing this because we understand that some of you may be reluctant, for whatever reason, to stand up and talk before a crowd.

Refreshments will be served and attendance prizes awarded. We look forward to meeting with you and talking with you at the Area Meetings (see dates above).

As a consumer-owner of Clinton County Electric Cooperative, you have a lot of power. You can vote for your board of trustees. You can make your opinions heard at area and annual meetings because you are the owner. And that's a huge advantage over the big companies whose customers have no say in the management of the company. We take the time to listen to our members, to find out what you need and want. Co-ops like Clinton County Electric Cooperative are unique in the business world.

Take advantage of these Area Meetings. Don't miss this opportunity to meet and talk with your co-op's manager, trustees and employees and find out what's happening at your cooperative. Mark your calendars and make plans today to attend one of the Area Meetings listed above.

Rates to Increase with the February 2009 Bills

As we said last time, one of the things that we pride ourselves on most as a member-owned electric cooperative is that we value upfront, honest dialogue with our members. Our concern has been, is and will continue to be good service and rates that are adequate and fair.

As we reflect on the past and present, then look to the future, the effects that the current energy markets and economy are having on the electric rates that we must charge the members of your cooperative continues to be of great concern to your board of directors. Coal costs, diesel costs, material costs, not to mention possible negative legislation, have all added to the cost we pay for the power we sell to you. We all see it and feel it when you drive up to the gas pump, buy a gallon of milk or pay a doctor's bill.

Due to increases in costs that your co-op incurs, your electric rates will be increasing with the February 2009 bills (January 2009 usage). It was a conscious decision to NOT increase your January 2009 bills (right after Christmas). We will be sending a letter to each of you to show the change for the rate(s) you are on. The overall increase is about 9.7 percent. Your actual increase will depend on your rate schedule.

There has not been a general rate increase at your co-op since 1987, more than two decades. Here is an example of what a residential member's bill would be (without taxes) for 1320 KWH a month:

1987	2008	NEW RATE IN 2009
$151.32	$141.32	$153.34

In this example, the increase is 8.51 percent from 2008 to the 2009 rate, but only 1.33 percent from where the residential rate was in 1987.

While it is NEVER easy to increase rates, it is absolutely necessary to do so now to maintain financial integrity, retain loan discounts and meet mortgage requirements.

Also in this member newsletter, please read the article asking you to contact your legislators to insure that, if enacted, reasonable legislation on climate change takes into account:

1. a plan to make sure we have the electricity we'll need in the future;
2. full funding for research required to make emissions free electric plants an affordable reality; and
3. how much all of this is going to increase your electric bill and what will they do to make it affordable.

We all need to continue to work hard to make sure your future electric rates remain as low as possible.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

2009 IEC Memorial Scholarships

Students Encouraged to Apply for 2009 IEC Memorial Scholarships

Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc. Manager Jim Riddle has announced that for the thirteenth consecutive year the Illinois electric cooperatives will award academic scholarships to high school seniors.

Seven scholarships of $1,250 each will be awarded in 2009 to eligible high school seniors through the Illinois Electric Cooperative (IEC) Memorial Scholarship Program.

Four scholarships will be awarded to students who are the sons or daughters of an Illinois electric cooperative member receiving service from the cooperative. A fifth scholarship, the Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship, will be awarded to a student who is the son or daughter of an Illinois electric cooperative employee. The sixth and seventh scholarships are reserved for students enrolling full-time at a two-year Illinois community college who are the sons or daughters of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees or directors.

"We hope to assist electric cooperative youth while honoring past rural electric leaders with this scholarship," says Riddle. "Clinton County Electric Cooperative and the other Illinois electric cooperatives are always seeking ways to make a difference in our communities. One of the best ways we can do that is by helping our youth through programs like this one."

Candidates are judged on the basis of grade point average, college entrance exam scores, work and volunteer experience, school and civic activities, and a short essay that demonstrates their knowledge of electric cooperatives.

For more information contact Ahren Langhauser at Clinton County Electric Cooperative at 618-526-7282 or ask your high school guidance counselor. Deadline to apply – Jan. 1, 2009 or download an application at www.cceci.com.

Youth To Washington Tour and Youth Day in Springfield

Clinton County Electric will again sponsor up to 12 area sophomores or juniors on a day in Springfield to be held on April 1, 2009, sponsored by the co-op and the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives. Of these 12, two will be selected to go to Washington DC in June 2009 for an all-expense paid tour.

WHO MAY ENTER? All applicants must be sons or daughters of Clinton County Electric Cooperative members. If you meet that criterion, then you must be a high school sophomore or junior and attending one of the many high schools in the cooperative service area. Immediate members of the families of Clinton County Electric board of directors or employees are not eligible.

YOUTH TO SPRINGFIELD. A panel of judges will choose up to 12 students who will participate with more than 125 other youths from other Illinois electric cooperatives in Illinois Rural Electric Youth Day in Springfield set for Wednesday, April 1 2008.

The day's activities in Springfield will include touring the state Capitol complex, visiting with legislators and a luncheon. The two Washington tour winners will be selected from these 12 students.

WASHINGTON TOUR. The two local winners will join some 50 other Illinois students, winners of similar contests sponsored by other Illinois electric cooperatives, at Springfield on June 12. They will travel on air-conditioned buses, returning June 19. While in Washington, they will visit such attractions as the White House, U.S. Capitol, Smithsonian Institution, Arlington National Cemetery, Lincoln Monument and many other national monuments and places of interest.

For more information, call Clinton County Electric's Ahren Langhauser, Sue Laux or Jim Riddle at 526-7282. To apply, all you need do is come in and pick up an application or call the co-op and we will mail you one. Applications must be returned to the co-op no later than Jan. 31, 2009.

October is Energy Awareness Month

October is Energy Awareness Month – and a great time to explore new ways to use less energy in your home, office or vehicles, and also to learn how to save money on energy costs.

As we head into fall, here are some simple steps you can take to make your home more energy efficient – and save money on your energy bill.

- Weather-strip your exterior doors;
- Clean or change your furnace filter MONTHLY for better performance;
- Cover single-pane windows with plastic during cold weather;
- Seal gaps around windows and doors with caulk and use caulk or spray foam to seal any holes where pipes or TV/Cable wires enter or exit your home.

Check out the advantages of a geothermal system

- Most efficient system for heating, cooling and domestic hot water
- High comfort level
- Easy control
- Low maintenance
- Completely safe
- Superior humidity control
- No unsightly outdoor equipment
- Increased property value
- Environmentally friendly
- Proven track record
- Qualifies for Clinton County Electric's all-electric heat rate

Blinking lights

Most of the time, blinking lights are a result of momentary outages that occur when lightning strikes, when an automobile hits a pole or when a squirrel or tree branch comes into contact with an energized power line.

Blinking lights are the result of the operation of cooperative equipment that protects the lines and keeps the power from going off for extended periods of time. Clinton County Electric's distribution system includes devices that are called oil circuit reclosers (OCRs). OCRs operate whenever there is a short circuit on the line. If the short circuit is cleared after the first operation of the OCR, the recloser allows power to continue flowing through the lines with only a brief interruption of service. If the short circuit is not cleared after three operations of the OCR, the OCR will open and stop the power from running through the lines. At that point a line crew will be dispatched after the outage is reported. Once the linemen have found the problem and corrected it, a lineman will close the OCR back in and restore service.

Just a single operation of the OCR causes a brief interruption in power and the result is what our members like to call "blinks." Even if you weren't at home when this occurred, you could tell it happened because your digital clocks on the VCR and microwave plus all the other digital clocks in your house are all blinking. Annoying, isn't it? Everyone – the co-op and the members – all agree that blinks can be very frustrating and irritating.

Lightning, automobiles and squirrels, the co-op can't do much about, but when the blinks are caused by trees that come in contact with our power lines, we can do something about that. Not only does tree trimming reduce blinking lights and outages, it also improves access to our right-of-way, making it easier and faster for our crews to complete their repair work.

Please contact our office, (800) 526-7282, if you have a tree growing into our lines or if a tree limb is making contact with our line. Hopefully, we can get to it before the next storm hits.

What is a Facility Charge?

A Facility Charge is the cost incurred by your cooperative even if you **do not** use any electricity. It is a cost that does not go up or down based on the amount of power you use.

In November 1996 CCEC made the Facility Charge a separate line item on your bill. Before 1996, you always paid a Facility Charge but it was included with the cost per kilowatt-hour.

The Facility Charge covers construction and day-to-day maintenance of distribution lines, substations, poles, meters, transformers, conductors, guy wires, and upkeep on the wires that carry electricity from the distribution lines to your home.

RECIPES

Cider Stew

3 lg. onions, sliced
2 lbs. beef stew meat, cut into 1-inch cubes
3 T. oil
3 T. flour
1 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
1/2 tsp. thyme
2 C. apple cider
2 T. ketchup
3 lg. potatoes, peeled and cubed
4 med. carrots, sliced

Brown onions and meat in the oil. Gradually add the flour, salt, pepper and thyme to the meat and onions. Stir in the apple cider and ketchup. Add the potatoes and carrots and cook on low for 2-1/2 to 3 hours.

Jack-O-Lantern Jumble

1/4 C. smooth peanut butter
1/4 C. margarine
1/2 tsp. garlic salt
2-1/4 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
4 C. Rice Chex cereal
4 C. Wheat Chex cereal
1 C. cocktail peanuts
9-1/2-oz. candy corn and/or M&M's

Preheat oven to 250°. In the oven, melt margarine and peanut butter in a turkey roaster until soft and shiny. Stir in garlic salt and Worcestershire sauce. Add Rice and Wheat Chex cereals and nuts. Bake uncovered for 1 hour, stirring every 15 minutes. Cool before adding candy corn and/or M&M's. Store in an airtight container. Makes 9 cups.

Advice Through The Ages

A cooperative member, well into his 80s, came in with the following advice. He said his dad told him this when he was in his teen years. Funny, how this advice has withstood the tests of time isn't it?

- Keep skunks, bankers and lawyers at a distance.
- Life is simpler when you plow around the stump.
- A bumble bee is considerably faster than a John Deere tractor.
- When you wallow with pigs, expect to get dirty.
- Don't judge folks by their relatives.
- If you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is stop diggin'.
- Always drink upstream from the herd.

Household Tips

- Ants will not cross a chalk line. Draw a chalk line on the sidewalk where you have ants and just watch their frustration.
- To clean that baked-on mess in your microwave, place a coffee cup half-filled with water inside and cook on high for two minutes. The water steams the inside, loosening the hardened splatters, making it easy to wipe up.
- To keep squirrels from eating your plants, sprinkle your plants with cayenne pepper. The cayenne pepper doesn't hurt the plant and the squirrels won't come near it.
- If you use vinegar to clean your iron or coffee pot, don't toss the liquid when you're done cleaning – take it outside while it's hot and pour it on pesky weeds. White vinegar is an herbicide. That and the heat will kill weeds.
- To keep plastic wrap from sticking to itself, store it in the freezer. When unwrapped, it won't cling to itself and returns to room temp in a matter of seconds.
- Use a meat baster to place pancake batter onto a hot griddle.

Helpful Home Remedies

Many common health care conditions are best treated with simple home remedies. If symptoms linger or worsen, call your doctor.

Allergies

- Rinse itchy eyes with cool, clean water.
- Relieve painful sinus passages by placing a washcloth soaked in warm water over your nose and upper cheek area.
- Don't smoke and avoid all second-hand smoke.

Colds

- Drink at least 8 ounces of fluid every two hours.
- Drape a towel over your head, bend over a pot of very hot water, and breathe.

Clinton County Electric Cooperative

Sample letter to Federal legislators

U.S. House
(depends on co-op member's address as to which one they would write)

The Hon. John Shimkus
Member of Congress
240 Regency Centre
Collinsville, IL 62234

The Hon. Jerry Costello
Member of Congress
144 Lincoln Place Court, Suite 4
Belleville, IL 62221

U.S. Senate

The Hon. Dick Durbin
U.S. Senate
525 South Eighth St.
Springfield, IL 62703

The Hon. Barack Obama
U.S. Senate
607 East Adams St.
Springfield, IL 62703

Dear Senator (or Representative) (last name):

As a member/owner of Clinton County Electric Cooperative, headquartered in Breese, Illinois, I am writing regarding federal climate change legislation. My understanding is that there are at least nine such bills currently pending before the U.S. Congress. Almost all of the electricity I receive from our co-op is generated from a coal-fired plant which utilizes clean coal technology, and I favor cost-effective proposals to lessen greenhouse gas emissions. On the other hand, I strongly oppose -- and urge your opposition -- to any bill that would unnecessarily increase costs significantly, and which would include unrealistic timelines to reduce greenhouse gas emissions since the technology to achieve these carbon reductions is not yet available.

It makes sense that climate change legislation should focus on developing and using new technologies, and give appropriate incentives to co-ops and other utilities. In addition, I think legislation should cover the entire economy and not simply electric generation, and also address emissions from other nations. And, it is critical that any proposal also consider the economic costs of the plan and not cause significant negative impacts -- I have heard that some of the pending climate change legislation proposals would have exorbitant price tags. Cost is of particular concern to me as a member-owner of a not-for-profit rural electric cooperative, as any increased costs to our co-op flow directly to my neighbors and me in the form of higher electric rates.

Thank you in advance for your consideration on this important issue. I urge you to only support legislation that addresses the above concerns and which will protect our electric co-op from having to dramatically raise rates.

Sincerely,

Our Energy, Our Future

A Dialogue With America

Productive dialogue begins by asking tough questions and requiring straight answers. Start by asking your elected officials these questions to get the dialogue headed in the right direction.

- Experts say that our nation's growing electricity needs will soon go well beyond what renewables, conservation and efficiency can provide; What is your plan to make sure we have the electricity we'll need in the future?
- What are you doing to fully fund the research required to make emissions free electric plants an affordable reality?
- Balancing electricity needs and environmental goals will be difficult. How much is all this going to increase my electric bill and what will you do to make it affordable?

Start The Dialogue

NAME _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

HOME PHONE (_____) _____

EMAIL _____

I AM A MEMBER OF _____ CO-OP

SIGNATURE _____

America's Electric Cooperatives

For more information visit www.ourenergy.coop

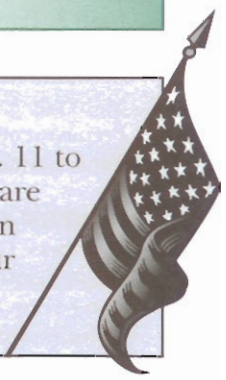
Start the conversation with your elected officials now @ www.ourenergy.coop

Don't miss your opportunity to voice your opinion! Come to the Area Meetings! See the front page article for times and dates.

Office Closing

The cooperative will be closed Thursday, Nov. 27 and Friday, Nov. 28 for the Thanksgiving holiday. Our telephones are manned 24/seven in case of emergency. Please drive safely and have a great Thanksgiving.

Office Closed



The cooperative will be closed Nov. 11 to honor all our veterans. Fallen heroes are never forgotten. We will again be open for business on Nov. 12. As always, our linemen are on 24-hour call for any emergencies.

2009 IEC Memorial Scholarships

Applications are due Jan. 1.

Scholarships are for $1,250 each

Keep Meters Clear

Our meter readers are reporting that more and more meters are blocked with debris and weeds and some of you even tie your dogs near them. Please clean up around your meter and make them more accessible so our meter readers can get an accurate reading every month. ***Thank you!***

Please report security lights that burn all of the time or stay on too long in the morning, not only those that don't work. Security lights that burn constantly are costly to members.

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I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions and/or civil sanctions.

/s/ Susan M. Laux, Editor

Financial Information

Balance Sheet

As of August 31, 2008

ASSETS (What We Own):	
Total Utility Plant	$ 21,523,024
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	8,210,622
Net Utility Plant	13,312,402
Cash & Temporary Investments	0
Investments in Associated Organizations	1,195,735
Accounts Receivable	108,757
Materials & Supplies	523,430
Prepayments & Other Deferred Expenses	58,322
Total Assets	**$ 15,198,646**
MEMBERS' EQUITY & LIABILITIES (What We Owe):	
Members' Capital Credits	$ 6,937,913
Other Equities	240,939
Long-Term Debt	6,938,599
Consumer Deposits	117,894
Other Liabilities & Deferred Income	963,301
Total Members' Equity & Liabilities	**$ 15,198,646**

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

For the Eight Months Ended August 31, 2008

INCOME:	
Sale of Electricity & Other Services	$ 7,986,351
Other Income	308,956
Total Income	**$ 8,295,307**
EXPENSES:	
Cost of Electric Power	$ 6,013,029
Operations & Maintenance Expenses	756,940
General & Administrative Expenses	670,296
System Depreciation	429,934
Interest Expense	322,820
Total Expenses	**$ 8,193,019**
NET MARGINS	**$ 102,288**

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