



Clinton County Connection

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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Clinton County Electric Cooperative annual meeting recap

The 84th Annual Meeting of Members of the Clinton County Electric Cooperative Inc. was held at the Central Community High School, 7740 Old U.S. Highway 50, Breese, Ill., on Thursday, Aug. 17, 2023.

The meeting was called to order by Tim Hanke, chairman of the Clinton County Electric Cooperative (CCEC) board at 7:30 p.m. Secretary-Treasurer Kevin Wiegmann announced that a quorum had been met, and the business meeting continued.

Hanke then recognized the CCEC Board of Trustees, Advisory Board, Association of Illinois Electric Cooperative (AIEC) employees and special guest Southern Illinois Power Cooperative President/CEO Don Gulley.

CCEC's legal counsel then conducted the 2023 election. Three trustees were up for re-election, including Tim Hanke, Kevin Kampwerth and Rodney Timmermann. All candidates ran unopposed and were reelected by acclamation to a 3-year term set to expire in 2026.

Hanke returned to the microphone to give the chairman's report. He spoke briefly about two of the seven Cooperative Principles:

Member Economic Participation, as well as Education, Training and Information. Concerning Member Economic Participation, he stated, "The board was proud to be giving back capital credits to the members. In fact, over the years, we have returned over \$10.2 million." Hanke also discussed the co-op's focus on Education, Training and Information. To embody that principle, Clinton County Electric Co-op performs live line demonstrations, training at the Kaskaskia College Education Center, and board and employee education classes and meetings. He closed his report by giving a brief summary of the results from the 2022 Member Satisfaction Survey. Hanke said, "Overall CCEC performed very well on the survey. CCEC's overall score in the Cooperative Attitude and Performance section was 94. Only one other cooperative out of 15 scored higher, and only one other cooperative received the same score."

Kevin Wiegmann gave the treasurer's report, stating that the co-op is once again financially sound.



He also showed data on revenues, expenses, margins, assets and the effect inflation has on these numbers.

Then, Southern Illinois Power Manager Don Gulley gave an update on what power sources look like now and in the future. He displayed data on reliability problems across the U.S., including the effect closing coal plants will have on the grid. He also informed members that SIPC has been working to diversify their resources to compensate for potential reliability issues and rolling blackouts.

Next, CCEC President/COO Bob Kroeger gave the President's report. He discussed the importance of safety and was proud to report no lost-time accidents have been

"Annual Meeting" continued on 18B

"Annual Meeting" continued from 18A

reported since 2009. In 2022, the co-op focused on reliability programs, including pole replacements and line upgrades. He also followed up on the SIPC report, reiterating the challenges of maintaining a reliable electrical grid. He shared with members how to prepare for rolling blackouts: have a preparedness kit ready, get alternate charging options for phones and other important electronics, keep a small supply of food and water ready, and possibly purchase a generator. His final topic was potential new rate structures for members. More information on the new rate structures will be included in future editions of the Illinois Country Living magazine.



The final portion of the meeting was dedicated to recognizing employees and trustees for their years of service: Jacob Haselhorst (10 years), Justin Hubert (10 years), Carrie Trame (10 years), Ron Deien (15 years) and Craig Benhoff (15 years). Secretary/Treasurer Wiegmann also received an award for 5 years of service on the board

of trustees. Following adjournment, one \$100 and three \$50 cash attendance prizes were given away.

There being no further business to come before the 84th Annual Meeting of Members of the Clinton County Electric Cooperative Inc., the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Hanke.

To hear this type of information firsthand, collect attendance prizes and to have the opportunity to win cash prizes, consider attending next year's annual meeting. The actual minutes of this meeting, including more details, will be posted in the June 2024 Illinois Country Living magazine. As a member/owner of this cooperative, you deserve to be well-informed about all activities.



Classroom grant opportunity!

Does your school or classroom need new materials?

Can your students benefit from new programs and educational resources?

Clinton County Electric Cooperative is again coordinating our grant program with Touchstone Energy for our local private and public Pre-K through 12th grade teachers and administrators. Eight grants of \$500 will be provided for innovative, unfunded projects or materials. Qualifying projects are those that improve the learning environment or increase educational resources for the school.

Grant applications are due by November 6, 2023.

Grant awards will be announced on December 8, 2023.

An objective panel of judges will determine which projects will be awarded the grants.

For grant applications and guidelines, please visit our website at www.cceci.com or contact Carrie Trame at 1-800-526-7282.



Share information that saves lives during Teen Driver Safety Week

Eight people die in distracted-related crashes on American roads each day, according to the National Safety Council (NSC). National Teen Driver Safety Week is observed the third week of each October (Oct. 15-21, 2023), which is a good time to talk to the teens in your life about safety on the open road, including the hazards of distracted driving and downed power lines.

Distracted driving

There were 3,522 people killed by distracted driving in 2021*, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Lead by example and, as the NSC touts, “Just Drive.”

Texting while driving is the most alarming distraction behind the wheel, since sending or reading a text takes your eyes off the road for approximately 5 seconds. Other distractions include sifting through music, checking social media, using navigation, eating, talking on the phone, taking selfies, drinking a beverage or using an app.

Distracted driving is preventable. Teens and adults alike can follow these five easy tips to help them concentrate on just driving:

1. That text can wait. Do not text while driving.
 2. Make responding less tempting by blocking texts while behind the wheel.
 3. Do not eat while you drive.
 4. Rely on playlists instead of searching for music.
 5. Set up navigation before you leave or have a passenger navigate.
- If you touch something at one voltage and step on or touch something at a different voltage, your hands (or your hand and foot) experience a difference in voltage (called touch potential).
 - Your body becomes electricity’s path to ground when electrical current enters your body at one point and exits at another.

Downed power lines

Although no one wants to think about teens being in car accidents, it does happen. Severe storms can damage utility equipment, such as power lines/poles and padmount transformers (green boxes). Have discussions with teens about what to do if there is a downed power line or damaged equipment.

Here is how the ground or objects can become energized without any visual indication:

- The energy spreads like ripples on a pond.
- If you walk or run from one voltage “ripple” to another, your feet experience a difference in voltage (this is called step potential).

What to do

If you are in a car accident, stay inside your vehicle, call 911 and report that there is damaged electric utility equipment. If you are a bystander, do not approach the scene to help. Stay at least 50 feet away and do not lean on or touch anything.

Downed lines or other damaged utility equipment can look lifeless and harmless and still be live. Downed lines and other damaged electrical apparatuses do not have to be sparking, moving, sizzling or giving off flames to be energized.

Learn other electrical safety tips at [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org).

**2022 statistics not available as of the writing of this article.*

Celebrating membership

October is National Co-op Month

Fall is a busy time, and October is a particularly eventful month with school, community and sports activities in full swing. It's also when all cooperatives celebrate National Co-op Month.

When we say Clinton County Electric Cooperative (CCEC) celebrates Co-op Month, it really means we are celebrating you! After all, our co-op wouldn't exist without you, our members.

Our core business purpose is to serve as your electricity provider, but the larger mission of the co-op is to help make our corner of the world a better place. "Concern for community" is one of seven guiding principles that all co-ops share.

Similar to how our wires run through our service territory, our concern for community flows through all of our decisions—because being a co-op means being a responsible partner and good neighbor.

CCEC works to help our community thrive through initiatives led by our employees and local board that's comprised of neighbors who live right here in our community. Because we're local, we understand our community's unique

needs and strive to help meet them. We're proud to support local youth through our Youth Tour and scholarship programs.

The word "cooperative" is close to "cooperation," meaning people working together towards a common goal—mutually benefitting one another and the larger community. That's the essence of the cooperative spirit. Our employees and member-elected board members are invested in the community in which they live and serve.

Above all, as a co-op we put our members' priorities first. As your trusted energy partner, we know that saving energy and money is important to you.

We want to empower you to manage energy use at home. If you haven't already, I encourage you take a moment and download our app, SmartHub. Through the app, you can conveniently monitor and manage your energy use. And we're of course here to help, so give us a call if you have questions about your energy bills.

CCEC is continuously examining ways to operate more efficiently while continuing to provide the

highest level of friendly, reliable service you expect and deserve. After all, we're your local co-op. We were built by the members we serve.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Did you know using your dishwasher is more energy efficient than washing a load of dishes by hand? To maximize efficiency, wash full loads in the dishwasher and don't block the arms or other parts that move while the appliance is in use.

For additional savings, turn on the "air dry" setting instead of using the "heat dry" setting and use a rinse aid to help dishes dry faster without spotting and streaking.

Source: Dept. of Energy

In observance of Veteran's Day, the office will be closed Friday, Nov. 10, 2023.

In observance of Thanksgiving, the office will be closed Thursday, Nov. 23 and Friday, Nov. 24, 2023.

Although the office will be closed, obtain your account information and pay your bill 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by visiting our website at www.cceci.com or by calling 800-526-7282.