Clinton County Connection

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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Thank a lineworker on April 8

If you were asked to associate an image or a person with Clinton County Electric (CCEC), I bet you would picture a lineworker. One of the most visible employees of the co-op, lineworkers work tirelessly to ensure our community receives uninterrupted power 24/7.

"Lineworker" is listed as one of the top 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S. This is understandable, as they perform detailed tasks near high-voltage power lines. Regardless of the time of day, having to brave stormy weather and other challenging conditions, lineworkers must climb 40 feet in the air, often carrying heaving equipment to get the job done.

Being a lineworker is not a glamorous or easy profession. It takes years of specialized training, ongoing education, dedication and equally important, a sense of service and commitment. How else can you explain the willingness to leave the comfort of your home to tackle a challenging job in difficult conditions, when most are sheltering comfortably at home? This dedication and sense of service to the community is truly what sets them apart. That's why we set aside the second Monday in April to celebrate and recognize the men and women who work around the clock to keep the lights on.

While lineworkers may be the most visible employees at CCEC, it's important to note that there is a team of highly skilled professionals working behind the scenes. Engineers provide ongoing expertise and guidance on the operations side of the co-op. Member service representatives are always standing by to take your calls and questions. Our information technology (IT) experts are continuously monitoring our system to help safeguard sensitive data. And these are just a few of the folks who work together to ensure we can deliver the service and reliability you expect and deserve.

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Help us help you!

Please scan the QR code or visit our website at www.cceci.com to take a short survey about your energy consumption. The information we gather from this survey will help us determine the rate structure most beneficial to our membership. Submit one survey per account to be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a $100 bill credit. Surveys must be received at the cooperative office no later than April 30, 2024, to be entered into the drawing.

Safety matters: Clinton County Electric recognized at Safety and Energy Conference

Safety is of utmost importance, especially in the electric industry. To further safety education, lineworkers, supervisors and warehouse personnel from electric co-ops across Illinois gathered in Springfield to attend the annual Safety and Energy Conference Jan. 31-Feb. 1, hosted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC).

The conference focused on safety and leadership in the energy industry, and attendees received relevant training to keep them informed and safe while on the job. They learned about mental health and dealing with trauma, explored the use of drones for infrastructure inspection, learned about strategies for success in a multigenerational workplace and much more.

CCEC Engineer Jared Kampwerth, Operations Superintendent Brian Taylor and Journeyman Linemen John Schroeder and Kyle Wiegmann accepted the 2023 award for Best Lost Time Rate on CCEC's behalf.

During the conference, safety leadership awards were presented to recognize individual and cooperative-wide commitment to safe work culture. Clinton County Electric Cooperative was recognized with a 2023 award for Best Lost Time Rate.

The AIEC Cooperative Safety Leadership Awards recognize safety awareness and reward cooperatives that demonstrate safety leadership, promote safety culture and go above and beyond normal safety expectations.

"Thank a lineworker" from 18A ▶

Without them, our lineworkers wouldn't be able to "bring the light" to our community.

Our dedicated and beloved lineworkers are proud to represent CCEC, and they deserve all the appreciation and accolades that come their way on Lineworker Appreciation Day.

On April 8, and any time you see a lineworker, take a second to thank them for their exceptional service. Always remember you have a dedicated team of professionals working behind the scenes at the cooperative whose commitment to service runs deep.

Construction work plan

Clinton County Electric Cooperative (CCEC) strives to maintain a level of reliability that keeps service interruptions to a minimum. To help meet this goal, CCEC follows a comprehensive construction work plan. Typically, each work plan is designed to be completed over a four-year period and includes upgrades and maintenance that focus on keeping the system as reliable as possible. A construction work plan is created based on an analysis of the electric system using an engineering model and ensures capital investments are made when and where they are needed. During the four-year timeframe, the work plan takes into account energy growth due to new services being added to the system, as well as increased energy consumption by existing services located in the CCEC service territory.

Construction work plan projects consist of a wide variety of items, including new service line extensions, distribution line installations, conversions and upgrades, new substations or substation upgrades, service upgrades, sectionalizing equipment, regulator equipment, capacitor equipment, pole replacements, transformers and meters. Historically, CCEC's annual budgets have included approximately $1.5 million for projects included in the construction work plan. However, due to recent inflationary pressure, CCEC will need to invest more than $1.5 million in future years in order to accomplish the same amount of work.

CCEC is currently on the second year of a four-year construction work plan that will run from 2023 through 2026. This year we will be working on two projects that are part of a multi-year plan to upgrade the three-phase line between our Albers and Mascoutah substations to larger wire size. The larger wire will help maintain proper voltage whenever we experience an interruption in transmission service or if we need to de-energize a substation to allow our crews to safely tend to maintenance or repairs within a substation and need to backfeed from another substation. The ability to transfer load or "backfeed" between substations greatly increases reliability for the CCEC membership and ensures maintenance and repairs can be done in a safe and timely manner. The larger wire will also perform better under heavy loading conditions such as ice and wind.

CCEC crews will be starting on the first project in April. This will consist of rebuilding and upgrading approximately 2 miles of line from 4A Copperweld conductor to 336 ACSR conductor. The project will begin at the intersection of Highway 160 and Haselhorst Road, continuing 2 miles east to the intersection of Haselhorst Road and Billhartz Road. This section of line is fed from our Mascoutah Substation. The engineering part of this project is scheduled to begin in the next few weeks, followed by material acquisition, then construction.

The second project will be completed later this summer and will consist of rebuilding and upgrading approximately 1 mile of line from #2 Copper conductor to 336 ACSR conductor. The project will begin at our Albers substation, located at the intersection of Wesclin Road and Tank Road and extend south approximately 1 mile to the intersection of Tank Road and Court Road.

In an effort to minimize service interruptions, CCEC crews are trained to work on energized lines. However, there will be times when it will be necessary to disconnect your service to allow crews to perform their work safely and efficiently. We will strive to keep interruptions to a minimum and attempt to provide you with advanced notice whenever possible.

Most of the work on these projects will be completed from the road. Our crews will do their best to impact traffic flow as little as possible. If you see our crews working along the road, please slow down and move over to give them room to work. We appreciate your patience and consideration in keeping our crews safe while we complete projects that improve the reliability of the distribution system for the benefit of the CCEC membership.

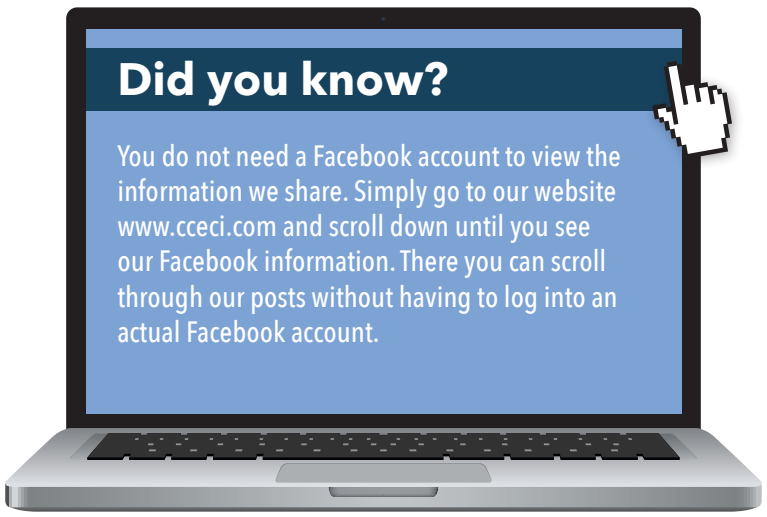
If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call the office at 800-526-7282 or email kroeger@cceci.com.

The 336 ACSR wire (left) will be replacing the 4 A Copperweld (right) in some areas as part of CCEC's construction work plan.

Safe Electricity.org®

Safety Tip

Know how to open your powered garage door manually after a power outage. Refer to manufacturer's instructions and teach other drivers and older kids in your home how to operate an electric garage door during a power outage, especially if there is an emergency.



HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO RESTORE POWER?

Depending on the reason(s) for a power outage, power can be restored relatively quickly, or it can take a few hours or more. Restoring power safely and efficiently is always the goal.

The length of time to get the power restored depends on several factors, including:

- The extent of a storm's destruction.
- The number of outages.
- How much time it takes to troubleshoot the issue(s).
- The exact cause(s) of the outages.
- Whether it is safe for utility crews to get to the damaged areas.

Power Outages in the U.S.

According to the Energy Information Adminisration, in 2021:

- Excluding major storm events, U.S. outages lasted an average of 2 hours.
- Including major storm events, the average outage time was a little more than 7 hours.
- The frequency of outages was 1.42 events per consumer per year.

To stay safe:

- If you are already inside, stay inside until the power is restored.
- Never approach a downed power line, as it could be energized and deadly.
- Do not enter a flooded basement since the water could be energized.
- Keep a portable generator at least 20 feet away from all doors and windows.
- Do not turn off the power or flip a switch if you are standing in water.
- When cleaning up storm damage, look up and look out for overhead power lines.

Learn more at: Safe Electricity.org®