Clinton County Connection

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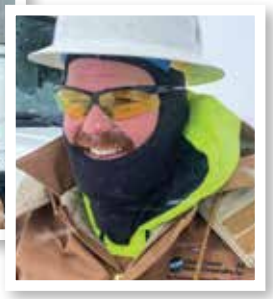

Journeyman Linemen Justin Hubert (bottom right) and Kyle Wiegmann do their best to stay in good spirits while battling the winter storm that brought heavy ice and gusty winds to the area on Feb. 2, 2022.

The power of Mother Nature

On Feb. 2, Mother Nature showed us just how powerful she can be, leaving most of Clinton County Electric Cooperative's service territory "power-less" for hours at a time. With temperatures dipping well below freezing, winds blowing upwards of 20 MPH, and a steady stream of sleet falling from the sky, the CCEC staff and linemen knew they were in for quite a battle. It didn't take long before the CCEC members were also feeling the effects of the extreme winter weather.

At the height of the storm, more than 4,500 CCEC members were without power. Some of those members were without power for hours at a time, numerous different times over a 72-hour time period. Ice and wind were the sole causes for all of those outages. Ice-covered lines and high winds mix like oil and water and make the job of line crews next to impossible.

Accumulating ice on the power lines made them heavy. The ice that formed on the power lines also increased its surface area, which made them easier for gusts of wind to catch. The heavy winds that accompanied this storm made the lines move and sway. Once they gained enough momentum, the lines started to gallop or jump. Once galloping started, the only way to stop it was for the ice to melt or the wind to stop blowing.

After 24 hours, with no relief from Mother Nature and her below freezing temperatures and gusty winds, CCEC requested help from the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperative (AIEC). They sent four linemen from our neighboring cooperative, Egyptian Electric Cooperative in Murphysboro. With their assistance and decreasing wind speeds, the CCEC staff, linemen and members could all breathe a little easier by the end of the day on Friday, Feb. 4. There were a few repairs made the week following the storm, but overall, it was back to business as usual.

Thank You

We want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who weathered February's winter storm with us. To the office staff and management that spent hours fielding thousands of calls and messages, sorting through outage tickets and dispatching crews, thank you. To the CCEC linemen and the linemen from Egyptian Electric Cooperative that spent a couple of days away from their loved ones battling the extreme temperatures, ice, wind and galloping lines, thank you. And finally, to the members of Clinton County Electric Cooperative, your words of gratitude along with your patience during some very trying times means a great deal to all of us, thank you!

Are you ready to serve?

In one of the most notable inaugural speeches given, John F. Kennedy spoke his famous words, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." His inspiring words urged Americans to take actions that benefited the greater good. In essence, Kennedy was saying our country thrives when we all contribute our talents to the common good.

On a smaller scale, the same can be said about our co-op, specifically regarding our board members. Clinton County Electric's board members are community-minded individuals with a variety of skill sets. We rely on their many talents to help us make informed decisions on long-term priorities and investments. Our directors live right here in the co-op's service area, and we consider them the eyes and ears of the community because they provide their perspective on important community issues.

We recognize it takes many people with different skills to create a well-rounded board that can represent the full spectrum of our community. That's why we're seeking local members of our community who can apply their unique talents to benefit all our friends and neighbors. But above all else, we're looking for folks who love our community and want to see it thrive now and in the future.

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What does it mean to serve on the board?

Serving on CCEC's board means you're making a difference locally, using your individual talents and perspective to guide big decisions about the co-op that in turn benefit the larger community. While day-to-day decisions are made by co-op staff, major decisions are made by the board, whose mission is to look out for the vitality of the co-op and the community it serves. On a granular level, CCEC's board members typically provide input and guidance on:

- budgets
- co-op goals and direction
- co-op's community/charitable contributions
- capital investments and upgrades in equipment and technology
- renewable investments and energy mix
- co-op's role and involvement in economic development

The energy industry is undergoing a major transition. Technology advancements and increased consumer preference for more renewable energy is driving change. CCEC is facing big decisions, and board members have an opportunity to help chart a course for our future. To serve the community best, we need input from a wide range of people that represent the broad spectrum of views within community.

Opportunity to serve

While you don't need to be an expert in electricity or business to run, you do need to have a passion for the community and a willingness to actively serve and learn. We're looking for individuals who can represent the full gamut of the members we serve. Our board meets on a regular basis, and we offer specialized training opportunities to help board members make informed decisions. Board members gain a deeper understanding of the electric utility industry, the cooperative business model and local economic development efforts.

Ultimately, our board is the community pulse for the co-op and helps keep us on the right track. We love our community and want to help it thrive. If you share the same commitment and want to contribute to the greater good in a tangible way, consider running for a board position.

To learn more about CCEC's director election process and 2022 details, please contact our office Monday through Friday, between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. at 800-526-7282.

Grants awarded

Grants totaling $4,000 were awarded to area teachers through the Touchstone Energy 2021/2022 Classroom Empowerment Grant Program. Clinton County Electric Cooperative awarded checks to the following participants:

All Saints Academy

A $500 check from Clinton County Electric Cooperative was presented by (left to right) Carrie Trame, CCEC customer service representative to All Saints Academy Principal Kahiwalani Goetsch.

Trinity Lutheran School

Carrie Trame, CCEC representative (left) presented a check in the amount of $500 to Trinity Lutheran School on behalf of a grant written by teacher Sara Kuper (right).

Central Community High School

Central Community High School special education teacher Nicole Weh, along with her students, accepted a check for $500 presented by Carrie Trame CCEC customer service representative.

Germantown Elementary

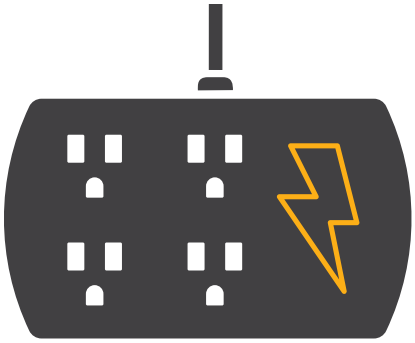
(From left to right) Special education teacher Kristine Beer, kindergarten teacher Cheri Markwell and third grade teacher Dawn Strake accepted a $1,500 check from CCEC representative Carrie Trame.

Wesclin Middle School

A check for $500 was presented to Wesclin Middle School on behalf of a grant written by teacher Julie Boeckman. Pictured left to right is Boeckman and CCEC customer service representative Carrie Trame.

Mater Dei Catholic High School

Carrie Trame, CCEC representative (left) presented a check in the amount of $500 to Mater Dei Catholic High School on behalf of a grant written by science/chemistry teacher Erika Knolhoff (right).



SURGE PROTECTION

Keep your electronic equipment safe.

A power surge is typically caused by lightning, changes in electrical loads, faulty wiring or damaged power lines.

Install power strips with surge protection to protect sensitive equipment.

- **Easy to use (just plug them in)**
- **Protect electronics plugged into the device**
- **Must be replaced over time or after a major surge event**

REMEMBER:
Not all power strips offer surge protection.
Carefully read the packaging labels when purchasing.

Considering Solar? Call us first!

As interest in "green" energy and ways to save money on utility bills continue to grow, some cooperative members may be considering the installation of a solar array.

Since these types of systems have the capability of returning electricity back to the electric grid, there are some major safety considerations to sort through before a system is installed.

Before deciding to buy a solar array, examine the economics to determine if such a system will lower your monthly electricity costs. If you do decide to install a solar array, contact our office as early as possible in the process.

A CCEC representative will provide information on our interconnection process and policies, as well as answer any questions you may have. That way, you and your installer will have the information needed as you progress with your system.

For more information on CCEC policies and requirements, please contact our office Monday through Friday, between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. at 800-526-7282.

Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc.
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