Clinton County Connection

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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# Construction work plan

**Bob Kroeger,**
*President/COO*

Clinton County Electric Cooperative 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 4-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 4-year time frame, 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 first year of a 4-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 load conditions such as ice and wind.

CCEC crews will be starting on the first project in early April. This will consist of rebuilding and upgrading approximately 3.5 miles of line from 4A Copperweld conductor to 336 ACSR conductor. The project will begin at our Mascoutah Substation, located at the intersection of Summerfield South Road and Fuesser Road, extending east approximately 2.5 miles to County Line Road then north approximately 1 mile to the intersection of County Line Road and Haselhorst Road. At this time, the engineering

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

Continued on 18B ▶

*Construction continued from 18A*

part of the project has been completed, and we are waiting for material to be delivered.

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 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 advance 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 contact me at 800-526-7282 or kroeger@cceci.com.

# Lineworker Appreciation Day

## *April 10*

Electric lineworkers provide an essential service: They install and maintain overhead and underground power lines that keep electricity flowing. These specialized workers are on call 24/7 in case severe storms or other circumstances cause the power to go out.

Lineworkers work with high-voltage electricity, often at great heights, in all kinds of weather conditions. Maintaining the power grid is physically demanding. To become proficient, most lineworkers go through a technical training program and first learn on the job as apprentices under the careful eye of seasoned lineworkers who have earned journeyman status.

Electric power line installers and repairers held approximately 126,600 jobs in 2021, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Nearly half of these employees worked for electric power generation, transmission and distribution utilities.

### Safety comes first

Lineworkers spend numerous hours in safety training each year and must understand and apply crucial safety regulations.

Protective clothing is required to shield lineworkers since they work around high voltages. Collectively, gear components can weigh up to 45 pounds.

According to the U.S. BLS, electric power line installers and repairers typically:

- Install, maintain or repair the power lines that move electricity.
- Identify defective devices, voltage regulators, transformers and switches.
- Inspect and test power lines and auxiliary equipment.
- String (install) power lines between poles, towers and buildings.
- Climb poles and transmission towers and use truck-mounted buckets to access equipment.
- Operate power equipment when installing and repairing poles, towers and lines.
- Know and implement safety standards and procedures.

When a problem is reported, lineworkers must identify the cause and fix it. This usually involves diagnostic testing using specialized equipment and repair work. To work on poles, they usually use bucket trucks to raise themselves to the top of the structure, although all lineworkers must be adept at climbing poles and towers when necessary. Workers use specialized safety equipment to keep them from falling when climbing utility poles and towers.

Storms and other natural disasters can cause extensive damage to power lines. When power is lost, line repairers must work safely and efficiently to restore service. We salute our lineworkers who work around the clock to keep the power on. Their safety, as well as yours, is our top priority.

# Work Zone Awareness Week sheds light on safety

National Work Zone Awareness Week, April 17-21, 2023, is a good time to learn more about work zone safety; however, work zone safety should be observed 365 days a year to save lives.

Cars or trucks that speed through a work zone not only endanger workers on the ground. Driving too fast or too close to a work truck can also put an elevated worker in danger by causing their raised bucket to move or sway.

Streets and highways are lined with power poles and electrical equipment, and narrow roadways often require crews like ours to place their equipment in or near traffic lanes. Be alert to utility and other work zone crews for their safety and yours. Besides our crews, you might encounter road workers, other utility crews, tree trimmers or first responders working in or on the side of the road.

According to the National Work Zone Safety Information Clearinghouse, 774 fatal crashes and 857 deaths occurred in work zone crashes in 2020 (at the writing of this article, data was not available for 2021). Many other work zone crashes result in injuries. In 2020, 102,000 work zone crashes occurred.

### To help keep roadside crews safe:

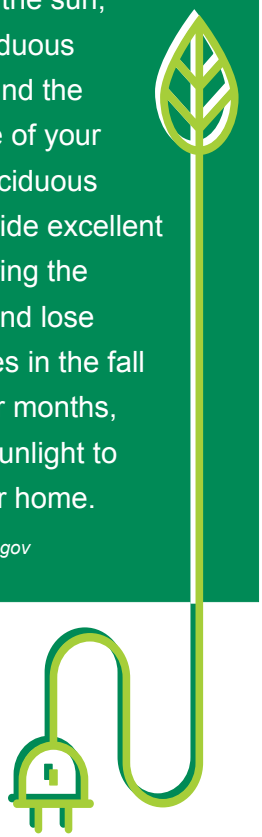
- Keep a safe distance between your vehicle and traffic barriers, trucks, construction equipment and workers.
- Be patient. Traffic delays are sometimes unavoidable, so allow time for unexpected setbacks.
- Obey all signs and road crew flag instructions.
- Merge early and be courteous to other drivers.
- Use your headlights at dusk and during inclement weather.
- Minimize distractions. Avoid activities such as texting, operating a radio, applying makeup and eating.

Remember, slow down when approaching a work zone and move over for first responders and work crews. Do your part to help everyone return home safely at the end of the day.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

This planting season, include energy efficiency in your landscaping plans. Adding shade trees around your home can reduce surrounding air temperatures as much as 6 degrees. To block heat from the sun, plant deciduous trees around the south side of your home. Deciduous trees provide excellent shade during the summer and lose their leaves in the fall and winter months, allowing sunlight to warm your home.

*Source: energy.gov*



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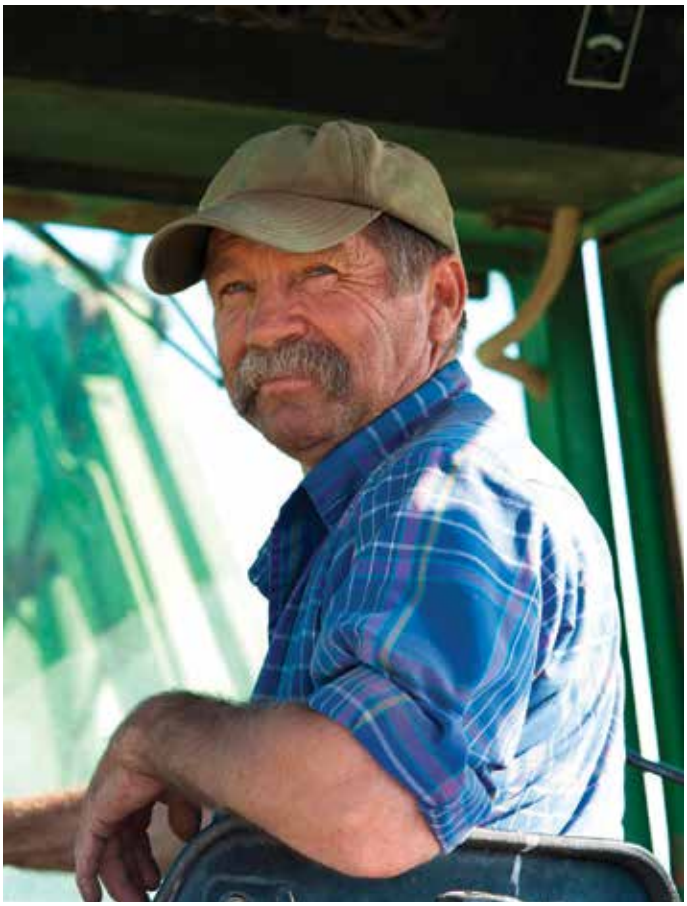
REMEMBER TO LOOK UP

# When Operating Large Equipment



Millions of workers operate large equipment every day. Examples include cranes, dump trucks, farm equipment, bucket trucks, hydraulic lifts and cement trucks. If the equipment you are operating raises or extends, make sure you follow OSHA's rules for the minimum approach distance to power lines.

If you are planning to work within 20 feet of a power line, most situations require you to contact the electric utility (in advance) to deenergize the line. On the farm, examples include loading, unloading or moving/relocating a grain bin within 20 feet of an overhead line.

Always use a spotter when equipment could come near overhead power lines. A spotter's view from the ground provides a much better vantage point than what you can see from the cab. Additional safety steps may be required to prevent encroaching on a power line.

If your equipment brushes or contacts a power line or utility pole, knowing what to do saves lives. Unless there is a fire, stay in the cab and alert others to stay far away. Call for help and stay in the cab until utility crews arrive to deenergize the power.

Do not operate a hydraulic/scissor lift near an overhead power line.

**Learn more at SafeElectricity.org**