Clinton County Connection

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Rates and the possibility of rolling blackouts

Bob Kroeger
President/COO

By now, you may have heard about the substantial electric rate increases and rolling blackouts that may be impacting the Midwest this summer. While increasing electric rates are inevitable for customers served by Investor-Owned Utilities (IOUs) such as Ameren, Clinton County Electric Cooperative's (CCEC) rates will remain stable. However, CCEC members will be just as susceptible to the possibility of rolling blackouts as those served by an IOU. Since rates and reliability are of the utmost importance here at CCEC, I want to take this opportunity to address the effects the stress on the nation's power grid will have on the CCEC membership.

I will start with the good news. Because of the forward-thinking and careful planning by the management at Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC), our power provider, CCEC's rates will remain stable despite the recent jump in market power prices. Unlike IOUs, SIPC owns and operates most generation resources, including coal, natural gas, wind, solar and hydro, required to meet the load demands of not only CCEC, but of the other six member-owners of SIPC as well. SIPC does rely on the market for a small portion of their electricity, but thankfully the SIPC management had the foresight a few years ago to secure that capacity for 10 years to protect against the volatile market that exists today.

The increase in market prices is the direct result of increasing loads and decreasing effective generation resources. In other words, people are using more power than can be produced. Unfortunately, when the generation cannot keep up with the demand, there is bound to be reliability issues. Despite SIPC having adequate resources to serve their load, Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), the system operator that oversees electric grid operations in 15 U.S. states and the Canadian province of Manitoba, has stated it may be necessary to take steps to maintain reliable service during periods of peak demand.

Peak demand periods will typically occur on hot, humid days when consumers are using more electricity than normal. In emergency situations, MISO will request all available generation resources be deployed and reduce load through voluntary load reduction programs. If these steps are unsuccessful in providing stability to the electric grid, temporary but intentionally engineered electrical power shutdowns, commonly known as "rolling blackouts," will be used. Rolling blackouts are a last resort measure used to avoid a total blackout of the power system. All emergency measures will be directed by MISO and applied to the entire region, regardless of the utility serving a specific area or the utility's ability to serve their own load.

At this point there is no way of knowing when or where these rolling blackouts may occur or how long they

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We want to hear from you

Clinton County Electric Cooperative is participating in the 2022 Illinois Electric Cooperatives Statewide Survey project and we want to hear from you! If you have an email address on file with us, come late June or early July, be on the lookout for an email from CCECI with a link to the survey. If you do not have an email address on file, watch your mailbox. Hard copies of the survey will arrive in an envelope with our logo on the front. This survey will be conducted at random, and not all members will receive a request to participate.

We appreciate your feedback.

"Rates" continued from 18A

will last. Depending on the circumstances, CCEC may or may not receive advanced notification of a rolling blackout event. Please be assured, we will attempt to communicate all details to the membership as soon as they become available to us via phone, email, our website, and Facebook.

It is important to note, if you have solar, you too will be without power in the event a rolling blackout affects your neighborhood. For safety purposes, solar equipment is designed to shut off during power outages. So even though you may have solar installed at your home or business, you will not be able to rely on it during a rolling blackout situation.

In summary, SIPC owning generation assets helps protect our members financially from the unstable energy market. Unfortunately, because we are part of the larger interconnected electric grid, owning generation assets cannot protect members from the possible rolling blackouts. If the grid fails or there is not adequate generation available to meet electricity demand, rolling blackouts will be implemented. This is likely to cause some, or all CCEC members to be without electricity during these times. If rolling blackouts are implemented, CCEC members will not be the only ones affected. The rolling blackouts will affect entire regions at a time, regardless of the electric provider. All of this is not to say we will experience rolling blackouts, but the potential is greater than ever.

We strive to provide safe and reliable service to our members, but sometimes things happen that are completely out of our control. Since we cannot guarantee uninterruptable service 100 percent of the time, now may be the time to invest in battery back-ups or generators for those that cannot be without power for extended periods of time (i.e., those on oxygen or working from home).

If you have any questions or would like more information on rates or rolling blackouts, do not hesitate to call the cooperative office Monday through Friday between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. at 800-526-7282 or email me at kroeger@cceci.com.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Clinton County Electric Cooperative's Annual Meeting of the Membership will be held on Thursday, August 18, 2022, at Central Community High School in Breese, IL. Registration will begin at 6:30 p.m. and the business meeting, including trustee elections, will begin at 7:30 p.m.

$2,000 Thomas H. Moore Scholarship awarded

Clinton County Electric Cooperative (CCEC) is proud to announce that Ian Henderson of Wesclin High School is one of 14 winners of this year's Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship. He is the child of Hank and Laurie Henderson of Trenton. Ian competed for the scholarship with 222 other students from across the state. The $2,000 awards are given each year to 13 sons or daughters of electric co-op members, employees or directors. A 14th scholarship is reserved for a student interested in lineworker's college and will be announced at a later date. Ian will be recognized during the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives' Annual Meeting on July 28, 2022, in Springfield.

Candidates were judged on grade-point average, college entrance exam scores, work and volunteer experience, school and civic activities, and a short essay demonstrating their knowledge of electric cooperatives.

Come this fall, Ian will attend University of Tennessee in Knoxville. CCEC is honored to have a scholarship recipient and is excited to see how he will represent the community.

Clinton County Electric Cooperative President Bob Kroeger (left) presented the Thomas H. Moore IEC Memorial Scholarship to Ian Henderson (right) on May 17 at Wesclin High School's annual awards banquet.

To learn more about this scholarship, please contact Carrie Trame at trame@cceci.com.

CCCE awards scholarships

Clinton County Electric Cooperative (CCEC) proudly offers two $500 scholarships to senior students from Carlyle, Central, Christ Our Rock, Mascoutah, Mater Dei, and Wesclin High Schools. The following students, whose primary residence is served by CCEC, were awarded $500 scholarships this past May:

Carlyle High School:

- **Hayden Hoffmann,** son of Steve and Cindy Hoffmann

Central High School:

- **Adam Heimann,** son of Kevin and Connie Heimann
- **Reagan MacCauley,** daughter of Dana Hall and Terry MacCauley

Christ Our Rock Lutheran High School:

- **Anna Childress,** daughter of David and Heather Childress
- **Kara Guetersloh,** daughter of Kevin and Margo Guetersloh

Mascoutah High School:

- **Tiffanie Hunt,** daughter of Michael and Ammie Hunt
- **Lance Funk,** son of Brian and Stacie Funk

Mater Dei Catholic High School:

- **Lance Goebel,** son of Brent and Donna Goebel
- **Emma Huelskamp,** daughter of Mark and Karen Huelskamp

Wesclin High School:

- **Andrew Litteken,** son of Kurt and Tina Litteken
- **Ian Henderson,** son of Hank and Laurie Henderson

Congratulations to all CCEC's 2022 scholarship recipients.

DID YOU KNOW?

You do not need a Facebook account to view the information we post. Simply go to our website www.cceci.com and scroll down until you see our Facebook information. There you can look through our posts without having to log into an actual Facebook account.

10 EASY WAYS TO $AVE

Here are 10 habits you can tweak to save energy:

1. Use cold water to wash your clothes.
2. Unplug battery chargers when not in use.
3. Skip the heat-dry setting on your dishwasher.
4. Unplug appliances and electronics not in use.
5. Run full loads of laundry instead of several smaller ones.

6. When drying clothes, include a dry towel for the first 20 minutes.
7. Keep your refrigerator at 35° to 38°F and your freezer at 0°F.
8. Reduce the setting on your hot water heater.
9. Use smart power strips that shut off power to items not in use.
10. When buying new appliances, consider ENERGY STAR versions.

Learn more at:

SafeElectricity.org®

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.

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