

News Notes

Tips for being energy wise in the summer

Summertime temperatures have occasionally been pushing the 100-degree mark the past few weeks. Have you given much thought to trying to reduce your electric bills during the hottest part of the year?

- 1) Have your HVAC unit serviced annually.
- 2) Change or clean the air filter monthly or as often as needed based on the filter media type.
- 3) Keep the thermostat set on 78 degrees or higher for optimum operating cost.
- 4) Operate ceiling fans only when a room is occupied.
- 5) Use a "solar" clothes line instead of the clothes dryer for drying clothes.
- 6) It might be time to upgrade that older refrigerator. Most refrigerators manufactured prior to 1995 use nearly twice as much electricity as models manufactured today. Eliminate that refrigerator in the garage if possible.
- 7) Replace incandescent light bulbs in your home that remain on for long periods with compact fluorescent lights (CFLs). The CFLs are more energy efficient and produce less heat.

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK - Your Co-op is on Facebook! We are using the social media site to connect with members and others. Fans see current photos, get updates on major outages, and learn about energy efficiency and conservation. If you're on Facebook, you can visit Clay's site at www.facebook.com/ClayElectric



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Got something to sell? Try our two Trading Post options

Clay Electric's Trading Post offers a variety of items for sale or rent by Clay Electric members. The Trading Post is available online and in the Kilowatt newsletter, which is read by more than 165,000 members in North Florida.

Members can post a non-commercial ad in the Trading Post — either online or in the Kilowatt — at no cost, and anyone can shop. If you're shopping, you'll find all kinds of treasures there, but if you see something you like, you'd better act fast. Trading Post ads tend to get quick results.

If you would like to place an ad in the Kilowatt Trading Post, please mail your written ads to P. O. Box 308, Keystone Heights, FL 32656 attn: Trading Post, or drop your ad off at your nearest district office. The Kilowatt newsletter is published six times per year — January, March, May, July, September and November.

To post an item for sale on the online Trading Post, visit www.clayelectric.com/tradingpost.aspx and follow the instructions.

Power Line is an informational publication of Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc. It is distributed monthly with members' billing statements. If you have questions or comments about the Power Line publication, contact Editor Kathy Richardson at P. O. Box 308, Keystone Heights, FL 32656; email: KRichardson@clayelectric.com.

Clay Electric also publishes the Kilowatt six times a year (January, March, May, July, September and November). The Kilowatt is the official voice of Clay Electric and has been published continuously since 1948 as an informational and educational service for co-op members.

Clayelectric.com offers online services such as payments, and information about the co-op's programs and services. Members can also write their own ads online to be published on the website's Trading Post. To enter your ad on the Trading Post, you must use your Clay Electric account number which is printed on your electric bill statement.

Clay Electric's Board of Trustees will meet on August 28 beginning at 12:30 p.m. at the Orange Park District office.

3040-23050

The Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc. _____

Power Line

August 2014

Our discount savings program has nearly 200 local businesses

Members have been using their Co-op Connections Cards for more than two years, and they're enjoying this money-saving tool that connects them with discounts on everything from hotel stays to prescription drugs.

A wide variety of merchants throughout Clay Electric's 14-county service area accept the card. Be sure to present the card at the register to receive your discount! Clay Electric encourages its members to visit local businesses that participate in the Co-op Connections program. These merchants will benefit from increased traffic, so it's a win-win situation. Nearly 200 area businesses are participating in the Co-op Connections discount program.

As a Touchstone Energy co-op, Clay Electric strives to serve its members according to four core values: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.

The cooperative's Co-op Connections Card is one of the ways that Clay lives up to those values. Visit clayelectric.com to learn more about the Co-op Connections card program.

 Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc. _____

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

MEMBER SERVICES

AUTOMATIC MONTHLY PAYMENT PLAN

Allows your monthly electric bill payment to be automatically deducted from your bank account on the due date. Sign up online (clayelectric.com) or call your local district office.

ONLINE ACCOUNT INFORMATION

Visit clayelectric.com to access your account information:

- View your bill statement
- Make a one-time payment online
- View current charges
- View account balance
- View billing history
- View estimated meter reading dates
- Request emailed bill statements (Clay eBill)

PROJECT SHARE - Help others by designating a tax-deductible amount to be added to your electric bill or make a one-time donation.

REMOTE METER READING (RMR) - Enables a co-op meter reader to obtain the meter reading without entering the homeowner's property. The monthly charge is \$3.95.

ENERGY SMART REBATE PROGRAM - Offers rebates for members who install additional insulation in their homes, or who install a high efficiency heat pump or solar water heating system.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY LOANS - Available for the purpose of installing certain energy efficiency measures, including metal roofing and solar water heaters.

SURGEBLASTER - High quality surge protection equipment at a low monthly lease.

LONG DISTANCE PHONE SERVICE - Clay has contracted with TransWorld Network Corp. (TWN) to offer members competitively priced long distance phone service. Call (877) 877-CLAY (2529) for more information.

PAYMENT STATIONS - Clay has contracted with Fidelity Express to offer payment stations for paying your electric bill at various businesses in the co-op's service area. Fidelity Express charges \$1.50 for each transaction. A list of payment locations is available online (clayelectric.com) and at your local district office.

Report from the manager **Ricky Davis** General Manager/CEO



Rights-of-way & reliability — the importance of vegetation management

In recent months, our 14-county service territory has been hit by some severe weather. Quite common this time of year, lightning, gusty winds and heavy rains come with the thunderstorms that sweep across our service area. These storms have the power to disrupt your electric service.

Along with thunderstorms, we're also in the middle of hurricane season. So what do we do to lower the chances that bad weather will knock your power out? Our emphasis on properly maintained rights-of-way around our distribution and transmission lines is one reason our service reliability is so high.

Vegetation management (we used to call it right-of-way maintenance) is essential in providing safe and reliable electric service. Clay Electric works hard to ensure that rights-of-way are cleared regularly of trees and brush to help reduce potential outages and hazards. Trees and branches growing in or near power lines can cause interruptions in service. Uncontrolled brush can impede access to utility structures.

Keeping safety first

Trees and branches pose significant safety concerns when they are too close to power lines. Children climbing trees whose branches can contact energized lines could be severely injured or killed. Adults are also at risk. Pruning trees near power lines should be left to qualified vegetation management professionals.

Additionally, trees and branches can break and fall across power lines during strong winds

and inclement weather. Not only can power lines be damaged, but power poles and towers can also be damaged and broken by falling trees. Although weather-related outages are not always preventable, successful vegetation management minimizes damage, injury and outages.

Reducing the likelihood for power outages

In August 2003, there was a startling example of how a lack of proper right-of-way maintenance can plunge millions of folks into the dark. Approximately 40 million people lost power for roughly two days in the northeastern United States. The cause for this massive blackout: overgrown trees that contacted high-voltage power lines. Proper vegetation maintenance is so important to utilities that the North American Electric Reliability Council (NERC) established mandatory requirements for transmission vegetation management.

Our power supplier, Seminole Electric, also knows the importance of properly maintained rights-of-way. James Frauen, Seminole's vice president of energy delivery, says that regular vegetation maintenance increases electric reliability and decreases service interruptions.

Clay Electric is committed to providing safe, reliable and affordable power, and our vegetation maintenance program is key to fulfilling that promise.

In addition to safety concerns and outage prevention, good vegetation management practices also enable our crews to restore power more quickly. Part of our vegetation management program focuses on removing dead or dying trees located close enough to our rights-of-way to present hazards if they fall. These trees are removed before they come down and cause damage and outages.

To learn more about Clay Electric's Vegetation Management program, please visit clayelectric.com. Topics include Notifications, Methods of Tree Pruning, Tree Removal, and Tree Planting and Power Lines.