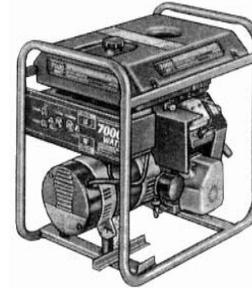


## Portable generators offer convenience, but they can be deadly if improperly used during a power outage



**I**t's hurricane season, and while the tropics have been quiet so far, there's a good chance a hurricane will threaten our area sometime during the coming months.

The prospect of going without electricity for a week or more due to hurricane damage prompts some families to buy portable generators. Every time a storm threatens Florida, news accounts show folks snapping up portable generators.

Clay Electric wants to remind owners of portable generators that the improper use of these devices can create an extremely dangerous situation if they backfeed electricity into the cooperative's distribution system. This situation could result in serious injury or death to an unsuspecting serviceman, neighbor or family member.

Portable generators should never be wired directly into a home's distribution (breaker) panel or into a receptacle that's connected to a home's electrical panel. Appliances should be plugged directly into the portable generator's outlets, or connected to a heavy-duty extension cord that plugs into the generator. It's a good idea to familiarize yourself with the generator's safety and operating guidelines before using it at your home.

Some co-op members choose to have a permanent stand-by generator installed in their home. County electrical codes require that stand-by generators that are permanently installed must be wired to a transfer switch which separates the generator from the outside power source when it's operating.

More information about the safe use of portable generators is included in the July issue of the Kilowatt newsletter (special Hurricane Section).

Clay Electric also offers an 8-minute video program, *PORTABLE AND STAND-BY GENERATOR SAFETY*, for viewing. If your club or civic group would like to schedule a presentation on generator safety, contact the member relations representative at your local district office.

## News Notes

**FIDELITY EXPRESS FEE INCREASES** - The co-op contracts with Fidelity Express to provide payment stations for paying your electric bill at various businesses (such as convenience stores) in the co-op's service area. Beginning June 1, Fidelity Express will increase the fee it charges from \$1 to \$1.50 for each transaction. A list of payment locations is available at your local district office and on Clay Electric's website.

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; e-mail: 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.

Clay Electric's website (<http://www.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 customer number which is printed on your electric bill statement.

Clay Electric's Board of Trustees will meet on June 27 beginning at 12:30 p.m. in Keystone Heights.

The Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc. \_\_\_\_\_

# Power Line

June 2011

## How to report a problem with an outdoor light

**I**f you are aware of an inoperative or malfunctioning outdoor light on Clay Electric Cooperative's lines, call 1-800-224-4917 to report the problem, or visit [www.clayelectric.com](http://www.clayelectric.com) and fill out the online form.

When reporting the problem, you will need to provide the following information so the co-op can make the appropriate repair, and contact you should there be any questions:

- (1) Specific street address where the outdoor light is located.
- (2) A description of where the outdoor light is located on the property.
- (3) A description of the nature of the malfunction or failure of illumination of the outdoor light.
- (4) Sufficient contact information to include your name, address, telephone number, customer number (if a Clay Electric Cooperative member) and email address (if using the online form).



This information is printed in compliance with Florida Statute 768.1382.

 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](http://clayelectric.com)) or call your local district office.

### ONLINE ACCOUNT INFORMATION

Visit the Clay Electric website ([clayelectric.com](http://clayelectric.com)) and 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](http://clayelectric.com)) and at your local district office.

## Report from the manager

**Ricky Davis**  
General Manager/CEO



## Steps we take to restore power after a major outage

Recently a line of thunderstorms crossed our area and caused scattered outages. Several members asked district personnel about our restoration process.

With June 1 marking the beginning of the 2011 hurricane season, and afternoon thunderstorms more likely, it's a good time to share information about what our restoration priorities are when a widespread outage does occur. Our main emphasis is to work quickly and safely to get your power back on. One of our first priorities is doing an assessment of the system damage. This helps us concentrate our efforts in areas where we can do the most good.

Our power restoration efforts typically involve five steps:

**1** Transmission towers and lines supply power to one or more transmission substations. Many thousands of people could be served by one high-voltage transmission line, so if there is damage here, it gets attention first.

**2** Substations serve thousands of accounts, so when a major outage occurs, the local distribution substations are a priority. A problem here could be caused by failure in the transmission system supplying the substation. If the problem can be corrected here, power may be restored to a large number of people. Efforts are also made to restore service to priority accounts like hospitals, law enforcement facilities and key commercial accounts, since these are critical to health

services, maintaining order and supplying food and other essential items needed by the public.

**3** Main distribution feeder lines are addressed next. These feeder lines carry electricity away from the substations to a group of consumers, such as a town or housing development. When power is restored at this stage, all consumers served by these feeder lines could see their lights come on, as long as there is no problem farther down the line.

**4** Branching out from the feeder lines are tap lines which carry power to the utility poles or underground transformers outside houses or other buildings. Line crews fix the remaining outages based on restoring service to the greatest number of consumers.

**5** Sometimes damage will occur on the service line between your house and the transformer on the nearby pole. This can explain why you have no power when your neighbor does. Your co-op needs to know you have an outage here, so a service crew can repair it. If there is damage to the service installation on the home or building, you will need to call a licensed electrician to have these repairs made.

We also have restoration information on our website, including an outage map, at <http://outagemap.clayelectric.com/>

This map shows where outages are currently occurring in our service area. If you click on the "show" button at the bottom of the screen, a box will pop up that shows how many members are without power system-wide and county-by-county.

The phone number to report a power outage is **1-888-434-9844**.

Understand that if a major outage event occurs, we pledge to do our best to get your power back on as safely and efficiently as possible.