

HS students invited to apply for scholarships

The co-op will offer 28 \$2,000 college scholarships this year to high school seniors.

If you have a son or daughter who is a 12th-grade student and who is planning to attend college this fall, he or she are encouraged to apply for a Clay Electric Youth Scholarship.

The scholarship program is limited to any public, private or homeschooled high school senior whose home is served by Clay Electric and who will graduate at the end of the current school year (May/June 2023).

An application is available on the co-op's website (ClayElectric.com), at each of the co-op's six district offices and at area high schools. Applications must be received by April 3.

Be scam aware, online and off

Scammers often target customers by pretending to be company employees.

These imposters may call, email or text you and threaten to disconnect services if you don't pay immediately. They may also try visiting your home or business. We will never demand payment over the phone, email or in person. If the request seems suspicious, it's probably a scam.

If you're contacted by someone claiming to be a Clay Electric employee and have concerns, call us at 1-800-224-4917.

If an employee visits your home or business for a service-related reason, they will always wear a Clay Electric uniform, arrive in a vehicle with a co-op logo and/or present a photo ID.

HEATER USE

Continued from front

heaters for supplemental warmth can reduce your heating and cooling bills for years to come.

Perhaps your home is energy efficient but you're cold-natured and want a specific room to be cozier than the rest. In this case, a space heater may work for your needs. A good comparison is ceiling fans; we use ceiling fans in the summer to cool people, not rooms.

A space heater can be used in a similar way during winter months. Only use a space heater in small spaces that you're occupying and, if possible, try to shut off other rooms to contain the warmth provided by the space heater. If you decide to use a space heater to heat a small area in your home, make sure the heater is properly sized for the space; most heaters include a general sizing table.

Also consider alternative ways to stay warm like extra layers of clothing or UL-approved electric blankets. If you have hardwood or tile floors, lay down area rugs to provide additional insulation and maintain warmth.

We know it can get cold out there, but we're here to help you manage your energy use. If you're looking for ways to save and increase comfort in your home, visit ClayElectric.com.

Co-op calendars are still available

Clay Electric's 2023 calendars are available at the co-op's six district offices. The 2023 calendar shares highlights of co-op activities throughout the year. The calendar includes important co-op dates and the Barnett Fish & Game Forecast.

Power Line is an informational publication of Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc. It is distributed monthly with members' statements. If you have questions or comments about Power Line, write Kathy Richardson at P.O. Box 308, Keystone Heights, FL 32656; or email: krichardson@clayelectric.com. Clay Electric Cooperative's Board of Trustees will meet at noon Thursday, Jan. 26 and Thursday, Feb. 23 in Keystone Heights.

The Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc. _____

Power Line

January 2023

Space heater use can increase bills

Small space heaters are meant to do exactly as their name says: heat a small space. But unfortunately, many people use portable space heaters to heat their entire home, which can really take a toll on energy bills. The truth is, whether you should use space heaters really depends on your home's efficiency and energy needs.

If you're using a space heater to compensate for problems in your home, like inadequate insulation, drafty windows and exterior doors, or an inefficient heating system, space heaters are not a practical solution. Your best bet is to improve the overall efficiency of your home. If you're on a tight budget, caulking and weather stripping around windows and exterior doors is a low-cost, easy way to save energy. Depending on the size of your home, adding insulation can be a great next step, and the co-op offers rebates and low-interest loans. Taking these proactive energy-saving measures rather than relying on space



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Keep price, safety in mind with power strips

With the proliferation of electronics in our daily lives, there simply are not enough outlets in our homes. This is particularly true for older homes. As a result, we end up with outlet expanders, more commonly known as power strips.

Power strips are generic and perform a simple function. They are inexpensive, and the quality is often on par with price. Keep this in mind when shopping for a power strip or a surge protector — the power strip's more talented cousin.

Before you purchase, make sure you know the amperage rating of the outlet you are connecting the strip and other equipment. A residential circuit can overload if you are not careful.

When buying a power strip:

- Look for power strips with a built-in circuit breaker. If you connect too many electronics and devices, the strip will kick out the circuit breaker rather than causing the breaker in your electric panel to trip.
- Pay attention to the orientation of the outlets. The typical design is along the length of the strip, facing the bottom or end of the strip.
- Get a smart strip, which is becoming more common and less expensive. With smart strips, one outlet serves as a master, receiving power all the time. The other outlets do not receive power until the master device is turned on. This is ideal for home entertainment setups.

• If you are connecting expensive electronics, consider a surge protector. Price is important because a cheap surge protector can be worse than none at all for two reasons. One, they use cheap, small surge-fighting components. Two, these components can fail and when they do, the strip still may provide power without any indication its protective side is gone.

As with power strips, key factors should be considered when buying a surge protector:

- Go for a significant joule rating. This is the measure of how much energy the surge protector can withstand.
- Look for cable and/or internet connection protection for use with your entertainment and



If you are connecting expensive electronics, consider a surge protector.

computer equipment. Surges can enter via any wired connection. Be sure the protector is designed to handle a digital television. Otherwise, pixilation is likely for devices only designed for analog signals.

- Make sure a light shows if protection has burned out.
- Consider the same outlet orientation as was previously mentioned.
- Look for a power conditioning feature, which improves the power quality delivered to electrical load equipment, such as computers.

Power strips and surge protectors are worth the investment when you follow these suggestions. Don't get burned buying cheap, inefficient strips and protectors.

MEMBER SERVICES

ONLINE ACCOUNT INFORMATION

Visit MyClayElectric.com to access your account information:

- View current charges and account balance
- Download the MyClayElectric app
- View past bill statements/account history
- Report a power outage or view outage status
- View energy usage and find ways to save
- Make a one-time payment online
- Sign up for Budget Billing Plan (if eligible)
- Request Paperless Billing
- Sign up for automatic monthly payments

OPERATION ROUND UP — Round Up is a program to generate and collect voluntary donations that are used to benefit organizations in Clay Electric's service area for the purpose of improving the quality of life of our members and their communities. Participating members' electric bills are rounded up to the next dollar amount.

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.

SURGEBLASTER — High quality surge protection equipment at a low price.

CO-OP CONNECTIONS CARD — A national discount card program. It offers 10-60 percent discounts on prescription drugs at participating pharmacies, as well as special discounts and deals!

METER ACCESS — Clay Electric's AMI meters include technology allowing them to be read without physical access to the meter. These meters improve meter reading efficiencies and accuracy, but even with remote reading capabilities, the member is responsible for keeping the meter clear of obstructions and providing the co-op with access to the meter. The meter is Clay Electric's property and we require access. Providing access to the meters allows staff to conduct routine maintenance or obtain a manual reading.