



Clark Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 



Tim Stewart,
CEO/Manager

CAPITAL CREDIT RETIREMENT

53rd Consecutive Year – Benefits From Your Cooperative
Demonstrating the 3rd Cooperative Principle

It is my privilege to announce

that the Clark Electric Cooperative Board of Directors approved a \$788,306 capital credit general retirement to be made this year. This marks the 53rd consecutive year that a capital credit retirement has been made totaling in excess of \$22,559,305 being returned to the membership since inception.

As a rural electric cooperative member, you are part owner of Clark Electric Cooperative. Basically, you've pooled your money with thousands of other members and created equity for your rural electric cooperative to deliver you electricity and to provide services at an affordable cost.

As a locally owned business, Clark Electric Cooperative is committed to the people, businesses, and communities we serve. Because we are member owned and operated, one of the fundamental principles we follow is a commitment to returning your investment. This is done in the form of capital credits. Since Clark Electric Cooperative operates on a not-for-profit basis, we return margins to members and former members through the capital credit allocation and retirement process. The amount returned is in relation to the individual member's transactions with the cooperative. Capital credits are returned to cooperative members on a



rotating schedule. Currently the cooperative is retiring 4 percent of our allocated capital and applying that amount against the oldest capital credits assigned to the members. This retirement will affect the cooperative's capital credits assigned in 1993, 1994, and the Dairyland Power Cooperative capital credits assigned for 1988 and 1989.

Our goal is to provide you with electricity at a price that is as close to cost as possible. We don't aim to maximize profits like investor-owned utilities do. This way, more of your money stays in your pocket—up front. In short, you are receiving a vital resource, electricity, from a business owned and operated by you, your friends, and neighbors. Working together, we provide you with the highest level of service we can while striving to keep your electric bills affordable.

And that's the cooperative difference!

Clark Electric Cooperative Offers Easy, Affordable Way to Invest in Solar Energy

As I have reported in past articles, the Clark Electric Cooperative Board of Directors approved the construction of a 53.3 kW solar garden, which is

Capital Credit Cycle



MY CO-OP



(Continued from page 15)

located adjacent to the cooperative's new headquarters facility just west of Greenwood. The solar garden became operational in July, and I am pleased to report that on a year-to-date basis, the output of the array is exceeding projections.

This community solar project provides members the opportunity to purchase local renewable energy through a cooperative program. This in turn allows members to take more control of their power choices. Through aggregation, we are able to offer a highly competitive solar product to our membership.

The community garden is designed for those members interested in an affordable option to purchase renewable solar energy. Members have the opportunity to purchase a subscription unit and receive credit equal to their share of the array's output on their electric bill.

By utilizing a solar garden approach, issues such as inadequate space for solar panels near your home, too many

trees that would block the sun at your residence, cost of a small PV array, installing panels on your rooftop, insurance, interconnection of the PV system to the grid, and unsightly panels at your residence all go away. In addition, all operations and maintenance issues would be handled by Clark Electric Cooperative. Any residential/seasonal member, regardless of whether you own or rent your home and where you live, who pays a monthly electric bill to Clark Electric Cooperative could be a potential candidate for participating in the community solar project.

How do I Participate?

It's easy. Just give us a call and request a Subscription Agreement and a listing of Frequently Asked Questions. Sign and indicate how many participation units you would like to buy. Return the signed agreement, along with a payment of \$940 per subscription unit. Once the unit(s) are paid for, there are no fees assessed to you during the life of the agreement (25 years). You will



start getting credits to offset your electric bill beginning with the month after you sign up. We still have a limited number of subscription units left but when they are gone, they're gone. You can also go to our website, www.cecoop.com, for information on the Solar Garden Project and see the actual array in real time.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Clark Electric Cooperative is once again offering a scholarship opportunity to graduating students from participating high schools in our service area. One \$750 scholarship will be available for a student from each school or group of schools in our service area.

To be considered for the scholarship, the student's parent or legal guardian must be a member of Clark Electric Cooperative and currently receive electric service from Clark Electric Cooperative.

The Clark Electric Cooperative scholarship program began in 1995, and since its inception we have provided more than \$192,000 in scholarships to area students. An independent scholarship committee judges the applicants based upon merit.

Giving back to the community is one of the cooperative principals; furthering the education of our area youth is another. Clark Electric is proud to help these fine young people meet their educational goals.

Applications are available from your high school counselor, online at www.cecoop.com, and at our office located at 124 N Main St., Greenwood.

All applications must be returned to the cooperative office by 5 p.m. Monday, March 7, 2016.

Schools Eligible for Scholarship Consideration

Abbotsford High School, Colby High School, Granton High School, Greenwood High School, Loyal High School, Neillsville High School, Owen-Withee High School, Spencer High School, Thorp High School, Stanley High School.

One Scholarship Between These Grouped Schools:

Stratford High School, Columbus High School, Osseo-Fairchild High School, Abbotsford Christian Academy, Marshfield Senior High School, Medford High School, Gilman High School, Pittsville High School, Home School Student

If you have any questions, please contact Tracy Nelson, administrative assistant, at 715-267-7958 or 1-800-272-6188.

These scholarships are financed through the Federated Youth Foundation Scholarship Program, which is funded from unclaimed capital credits. Federated Youth Foundation (FYF) is a non-profit charitable foundation serving cooperatives across Wisconsin.





PROVIDING RELIABLE ELECTRICITY Beyond the Flip of a Switch

Clark Electric Cooperative has many maintenance programs that help provide safe, reliable electricity. One of the most important programs the cooperative performs is our vegetation management program. This program is twofold. First, trees are cut and trimmed from within the right-of-way. Once the trimming and clearing process has been completed, a herbicide application is applied to help reduce regrowth within the right-of-way.

In today's high-tech electronic world that we live in, it's more important than ever to provide safe, reliable electricity to our members. Trees continue to be one of the leading causes of blinking lights and power outages. The cooperative has an extensive tree-clearing program that is performed on a five-year rotation by professional tree-clearing contractors. The contractors are instructed to cut, clear, and mow the right-of-way to provide 15 feet of clearance to the primary power lines. Clearance of 3 to 6 feet is required on overhead secondary service wires, depending on the type of service you have.

The cooperative also has a herbicide program that is completed on a two-year rotation. This program is also completed by professional contractors who are all state certified and licensed through the Department of Agriculture. The use of herbicides to control small trees and brush is far more economical compared to the use of heavy machinery such as bucket trucks, chippers, and mowers.



It's important to remember that a single tree can cause blinking lights and power outages that can affect hundreds of customers for miles around. A tree-clearing program in combination with herbicide treatments is the most economical way to maintain a clear right-of-way corridor.

These very important maintenance programs are just two of many that are needed to help keep the lights on when you, the member, flips the switch.

WELCOME, KOLE HINKER

Kole Hinker joined the Clark Electric Cooperative workforce as an apprentice linemen on December 2, 2015. Kole is from the Greenwood area and he graduated from CVTC with a degree in Electrical Power Distribution in 2014. He worked two summers as a 1,000-hour employee for Clark Electric. He also worked for a contractor in North Dakota during the winter/spring months of 2014–2015.

Kole enjoys hunting, fishing, playing softball, and spending time with his family in his free time.



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TOP FIVE ENERGY USERS IN YOUR HOME

A starting point for savings

By Anne Prince, NRECA

While most homeowners would like to be more energy efficient and save money, often it feels overwhelming because many people don't know where to start. To help jumpstart your effort, it is useful to know what the top energy users are in your home. With this knowledge, you can choose a path that works best for your family.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Agency, the top five energy users in U.S. homes are, in order: space cooling, space heating, water heating, lighting, and refrigeration.

Adjust the temperature. Together, home heating and cooling use the most energy and take the biggest bite out of your energy budget. However, there are simple low-cost or no-cost ways you can achieve at least 10 percent savings.

- During cold weather, set your thermostat to 68 degrees Fahrenheit.
- During warm weather, the recommended indoor temperature is 78 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Cleaning the filters of your HVAC system can cut costs from 5 to 15 percent.
- Clean the coils around your electric baseboard heater to maintain maximum efficiency.
- Caulk and weather-strip around windows and doors to prevent heat from escaping to the outdoors.
- Proper use of a programmable thermostat can save you 10 percent on your monthly utility bill.

Shine the light on savings. Take a fresh look at the lighting in your home. If you still use incandescent lighting, your light bulbs are operating at only 25 percent energy efficiency. Replacing your home's five most frequently used bulbs with Energy Star-certified LEDs can save you \$75 per year. Always turn lights off in rooms that are not being used.

Water heating efficiency. Just as it is energy-wise to insulate your roof, wall, or floor, it also pays to wrap your hot water heater with an insulating blanket. This is more critical if you have an older unit. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions. For additional efficiency, insulate exposed hot water lines and drain one to two gallons of water from the bottom of your tank annually to prevent sediment build-up.

Be an Energy Star. If your refrigerator was purchased before 2001, chances are it uses 40 percent more energy than a new Energy Star model. If you are considering an appliance update, a new Energy Star refrigerator uses at least 15 percent less energy than non-qualified models and 20 percent less energy than required by current federal standards.



Best wishes for the New Year! Clark Electric Cooperative and Clark Electric Appliance & Satellite will be closed Friday, January 1.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Save energy and money by lowering your water heater thermostat to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. This will also slow mineral buildup and corrosion in your water heater and pipes.

Source: energy.gov



FIRSTCALL
Medical Monitoring

Independent living without leaving the comfort of your home. That is what we provide. Call us today to have your 24/7 personal emergency response system installed in your home.

CLARK ELECTRIC APPLIANCE & SATELLITE INC.

1209 West Dall-Berg Road, Greenwood

From Greenwood, west on CTH G, south on River Road, and West on Dall-Berg Road
866-279-6544 or 715-267-6544 • Hours: M-F 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Tim Stewart, CEO/Manager

1209 West Dall-Berg Road, P.O. Box 190, Greenwood, WI 54437
email us at info@cecoop.com or tnelson01@cecoop.com
www.cecoop.com



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