



## THE COST OF ELECTRICITY IS RISING WHOLESALE POWER COST IMPACTS PRICES



Tim Stewart,  
CEO/Manager

Electricity. We use it every day, and in today's technological world, we could barely function without it. It seems that prices for just about everything these days are increasing. The cost of rising prices is certainly on everyone's mind. It seems like every month we hear about issues ranging from energy efficiency, renewable standards, smart grid technologies, increasing regulatory compliance requirements, EPA rulemakings, and adding environmental controls to generation facilities. In last month's article I stressed the value of electricity, especially compared to other consumer products. In essence the cost of powering your home increases at a slower pace than many of your typical expenses. Really, the value of electricity shines. This month I would like to discuss the role of the wholesale power market and escalating wholesale power prices that Clark Electric Cooperative is anticipating.

As you are all aware, we have experienced increases in wholesale power costs since 2006. In 2011 we experienced a 2.81 percent increase in rate from the 2010 level. In 2012, we again experienced an increase in the wholesale charges that Clark Electric pays for power of approximately 4.14 percent. Fortunately, in 2013 and 2014 we actually experienced slight declines in wholesale prices. Unfortunately that trend has reversed as we experienced an increase of 3.34 percent in 2015. We are again anticipating an increase of 2.50 percent in wholesale rate in 2016. This increase went into effect May 1, 2016. Wholesale power accounts for approximately 72 percent of the total cost of providing your electric service and is a major cost driver of your bill.

Clark Electric Cooperative's source of power generation, Dairyland Power Cooperative, joined the Midwest Independent Transmission System Operator (MISO) in June 2010. A regional transmission organization, the MISO ensures

safe, cost-effective, reliable power and equal access to electric generation and transmission. As a member of the MISO, Dairyland is able to provide Clark Electric Cooperative and all of its other member distribution cooperatives the benefits of regional grid reliability and flexibility. Now that our energy comes through the MISO system, collectively we experience the greatest demand for electricity from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. in the summer, especially on weekdays. This is why our

retail rates structures encompass seasonality in pricing (summer being more expensive than winter).

The Clark Electric Cooperative Board of Directors has authorized a cost-of-service study to be completed this year. This study is a

detailed analysis that consists of various components such as revenue requirement analysis, cost of providing service analysis, and rate design analysis to ensure that our rates are fair and equitable, financially adequate, reflect cost causation, promote efficient use, are competitive, and are easy to understand. Despite ever increasing costs, wholesale prices as well as plant and fixed costs, Clark Electric Cooperative has not had an increase to our base rates since March 1, 2013.

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### Cool off electric bills with TogetherWeSave.com

Clark Electric Cooperative offers a host of energy-saving incentives at [cecoop.com](http://cecoop.com). There, you can get energy efficiency information, brochures, and incentive rebate forms. You can also visit [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com) for additional savings ideas. Finally, as members of Clark Electric Cooperative, you also have the ability to request rebates from Focus on Energy.

## CELEBRATE SAFELY ON LABOR DAY

Labor Day marks the unofficial close of the summer season. If you're planning to celebrate on the water, keep these safety tips from Safe Electricity in mind:

- Always check the location of nearby power lines before boating or fishing. Cast the line away from power lines to avoid potential contact.
- Do not raise a mast or antenna when your boat is near a power line. Never
- try to move a power line out of the way so a boat can pass underneath.
- If your boat does come in contact with a power line, do not enter the water. Instead, stay in the boat and avoid touching anything metal until help arrives or until your boat is no longer in contact with the line.
- Do not swim around docks with electrical equipment or boats plugged into shore power. If you're in the water and feel a tingle of electric current, shout to let others know, try to stay upright, tuck your legs up to

make yourself smaller, and swim away from anything that could be energized. Do not head to boat or dock ladders to get out.

- Have your boat and dock electrical systems regularly inspected and maintained by a professional familiar with marine electrical codes.

To learn more about electrical safety during the holiday and all year long, please visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

**Clark Electric Cooperative's office will be closed Monday, September 5, for Labor Day.**



# Celebrate the Kick-off to Cooperative Month

## A FREE Pancake & Sausage Breakfast

Activities for kids of all ages



# MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY & Kick-off to Cooperative Month

## Saturday, September 24

7 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Clark Electric headquarters,  
just west of Greenwood on CTH G



### Clark Electric Cooperative

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### “Take Back” Initiative 7–11 a.m.

Bring your unused, controlled, non-controlled, and over-the counter medications in their original containers to be dropped off—free, with no questions asked.

*Questions? Contact the Greenwood Police Department at 715-267-6215.*

### Food Drive for Local Food Pantries

Help us demonstrate the 7th Cooperative Principle, Commitment to Community, by bringing a non-perishable, non-expired food item to be donated to your local food pantry.



### Giant Inflatables



### Pumpkins Crafts for Kids



**Greenwood Fire & EMS**  
will provide free blood pressure testing.

**Memorial Medical Center**  
will be here to provide community health information. — free of charge.



## YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONGRESS STUDENTS EXPLORE THE COOPERATIVE DIFFERENCE

Clark Electric Cooperative sponsored three students to the 53rd Youth Leadership Conference (YLC) held at UW–River Falls July 13–15. They joined more than 125 students from Wisconsin to learn about the cooperative business model and improve their leadership skills. Students sponsored by Clark Electric were Haven Tennant and Angela Kowal from Granton High School and Molly Schultz from Abbotsford High School. The YLC is designed to provide today’s youth with strong leadership and team-building skills, as well as a broader understanding of electric cooperatives.

Through a series of challenging team-building activities, participants were exposed to real-life issues and given

the opportunity to identify and explore their leadership potential. They also took part in sessions focused on the importance of setting goals; how determination, hard work, and persistence pay off; and how to step up to be a leader whether you are in a leadership position or not. The students also established relationships with other students from across Wisconsin throughout the three-day event.

- “The conference was a great experience and I learned many new things. I learned how cooperatives work and about safety around electricity. I also learned different ways to be a leader.”
- “The conference was a very fun and educational experience.”
- “I learned a lot about cooperatives



Representing Clark Electric Cooperative at this year’s Youth Leadership Congress were (left to right) Angela Kowal, Molly Schultz, and Haven Tennant.

*and to how get out of my comfort zone and participate in group activities. This will help me to achieve my goals in the future.”*

- “The animated illusionist was amazing and really funny.”

These are a few of the comments received from the students who represented Clark Electric.

Wisconsin’s electric cooperatives and UW–River Falls have co-sponsored this event for 53 years to demonstrate to high school students the basics of cooperatives and how they can apply the ideals and philosophies of cooperation directly to their lives. Students who attend the congress improve their ability to interact with their peers and demonstrate their desire to be leaders.

The delegates left the conference with valuable leadership skills they can use both in school and in their community activities. Each spring Clark Electric Cooperative contacts schools in our service area asking for students to represent the cooperative at the Youth Leadership Congress. This is a great opportunity for students entering 10th or 11th grade.

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MY CO-OP



## LOOK UP FOR HAZARDS DURING HARVEST

Harvest season can yield higher numbers of electrocution, shock, and burns. Clark Electric Cooperative urges farm workers to use caution when completing farm activities that take place around power lines.

To stay safe around overhead power lines, Safe Electricity urges farm operators and workers to

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines.
- Use care when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.

- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from power lines—at all times, in all directions.
- Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Always remember to lower extensions when moving loads.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, call Clark Electric Cooperative.


If contact is made with a power line, stay on the equipment. Make sure to warn others to stay away, and call 911. Do not leave the equipment until the utility crew says it is safe to do so. The only reason to exit is if the equipment is on fire. If this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together, without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

Some additional harvest safety tips from Safe Electricity include:

- Do not use metal poles when breaking up bridged grain inside and around grain bins.
- Always hire qualified electricians for any electrical issues.
- Do not use equipment with frayed cables.



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## IN BRIEF

### Retail electricity costs to climb next year

In its Short-Term Energy Outlook released January 12, 2016, the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) predicts residential electricity prices will climb by about 3 percent in 2017. EIA puts the average price for a residential consumer at 13 cents per kWh in 2017, up from 12.7 cents per kWh. The hike reflects an increase of about 60 cents per thousand cubic feet in the cost of natural gas and more consumption of higher priced renewable energy. Commercial and industrial accounts will also experience average price rises to 11.1 cents per kWh and 7 cents per kWh, respectively.

### Tim Stewart, CEO/Manager

1209 West Dall-Berg Road, P.O. Box 190, Greenwood, WI 54437  
email us at [info@cecoop.com](mailto:info@cecoop.com) or [tnelson01@cecoop.com](mailto:tnelson01@cecoop.com)  
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