

## Watch for solar scams

Members are reporting they have been approached by individuals selling solar and representing themselves as co-op employees. The co-op does not sell solar or endorse a particular solar installer. We do help members who are considering going solar.

As attractive and popular as rooftop solar may appear, it is important to fully understand its true costs, the operational reality of this form of energy and actual energy savings. To determine whether rooftop solar is right for their particular situation, homeowners must undertake their due diligence.

As your trusted energy adviser, Clay Electric can offer a candid assessment of your specific situation. Unlike a solar company that has one objective — to sell their products and services — we will look at the total energy picture and help you determine the best options for your home.

### Is rooftop solar right for you?

Clay Electric's energy analysts will look at the:

- Overall energy efficiency of the home/building
- Age and pitch of the roof
- Orientation of the sun in relation to the home/building
- Tree coverage near the home/building
- Weather patterns

When helping members determine whether rooftop solar is right for them, the energy analyst will also discuss the many financial considerations with the system.

We recognize consumer interest in green energy sources and renewables is at an all-time high, and we stand ready to help you determine your best options.

## BILL INCREASE

Continued from front

costs more than \$42.5 million for 2022. This increase will not fully recover the estimated year-end increase in generation costs due to a 14-year high in natural gas prices.

"We work hard to maintain our costs and provide affordable electricity, but these large fuel increases to generate power make this rate change unavoidable," Davis said. "As soon as prices to generate power go down, your co-op will lower the PCA."

The PCA is a separate line item on each Clay Electric statement, which reflects the increases/decreases in the co-op's cost of power. The co-op's cost of wholesale power is now more than 70 percent of Clay's total expenses, so it's critical the co-op makes sure it recovers all of its wholesale power costs in its retail sales.

When the cost of power is greater than the amount included in the base rate, the PCA is a charge. When the cost is less, the PCA is a credit.

For more information, visit [ClayElectric.com](http://ClayElectric.com).

## Behind on your account? Help is available

Members who are behind on their account are encouraged to apply for bill payment assistance with the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). LIHEAP is a federally-funded program administered by states and it provides critical home heating and cooling help to millions of vulnerable American families every year.

Local organizations that can help members is located on the "Billing and Payment" page under the "Member Information" tab of Clay Electric.com.

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 Justin Caudell at P.O. Box 308, Keystone Heights, FL 32656; or email: [Jcaudell@clayelectric.com](mailto:Jcaudell@clayelectric.com). Clay Electric Cooperative's Board of Trustees will meet at noon Thursday, July 28 and Thursday, Aug. 25 in Keystone Heights.

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

# Power Line

July 2022

## Higher price of fuel forces bill increase

Third this year; natural gas to blame

Due to rising fuel costs to generate power, Clay Electric Cooperative will implement an increase in its rates, beginning with July billing cycles. Members using the industry household average of 1,000 kWh of power will pay \$134.90, a \$5 increase.

The higher cost will be reflected in the Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) on members' power bills. The additional amount each member pays each month will vary based on how much electricity is used.

The PCA is increasing as a result of higher natural gas prices, which is making the power the co-op purchases from its wholesale power provider, Seminole Electric, more expensive. Natural gas has increased from \$2.73/MMBtu in April 2021 to more than \$9/MMBtu in June of this year.

Clay Electric has been forced to raise its rates 17 percent this year while natural gas prices have increased more than 300 percent in the past 12 months.

General Manager/CEO Ricky Davis said the increase in fuel and commodity prices are projected to increase electric generation

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Clay Electric Cooperative was rated by our customers

**#1 in Customer Satisfaction  
with Residential Electric Service  
Among Cooperatives**

For J.D. Power 2021 award information, visit [jdpower.com/awards](http://jdpower.com/awards)

# Prepare, know what do when storms strike

Hurricane and storm season are in full swing. Summer storms have the potential to produce tornadoes — they can happen anytime, anywhere, and can bring winds over 200 miles per hour.

In April, a video of NBC Washington chief meteorologist Doug Kammerer went viral. During a live broadcast, Kammerer called his teenage son to warn him of a tornado that was headed straight for their home. Knowing his kids were likely playing video games and not paying attention to the weather, he told them to head straight to the basement. Kammerer debated if he should call his family on-air, but he knew it was the right thing to do. Luckily, the kids made it safely through the storm.

As adults, we understand the importance of storm safety, but younger children and teens may not realize the dangers storms pose. That's why it's so important to talk to your family and have a storm plan in place. Here are several tips you can share with your loved ones.

## Before the storm

- Talk to your family about what to do in the event of a severe storm or tornado. Point out the safest location to shelter, such as a small, interior, windowless room on the lowest level of your home. Discuss the dangers of thunderstorms; lightning can strike 10 miles outside of a storm. Remember: when you hear thunder roar, head indoors.
- Make a storm kit. It doesn't have to be elaborate — having a few items on hand is better than nothing at all. Try to include items like water, non-perishable foods, a manual can opener, a First-Aid kit, flashlights and extra batteries, prescriptions, baby supplies and pet supplies. Keep all the items in one place for easy access if the power goes out.

## During the storm

- Pay attention to local weather alerts — either on the TV, your smartphone or weather radio — and understand the types of alerts. A thunderstorm or tornado watch means these events are possible and you should be prepared; a warning



Stay away from downed power lines and poles. Lines and equipment could still be energized, posing life-threatening risks to anyone who gets too close.

means a thunderstorm or tornado has been spotted in your area and it's time to take action.

- If you find yourself in the path of a tornado, head to your safe place to shelter, and protect yourself by covering your head with your arms or materials like blankets and pillows.
- If you're driving during a severe storm or tornado, do not try to outrun it. Pull over and cover your body with a coat or blanket if possible.

## After the storm

- If the power is out, conserve your cell phone battery as much as possible, limiting calls and texts to let others know you are safe or for emergencies only.
- Stay off the roads if trees, power lines or utility poles are down. Lines and equipment could still be energized, posing life-threatening risks to anyone who gets too close.
- Wear appropriate gear if you're cleaning up storm debris on your property. Thick-soled shoes, long pants and work gloves will help protect you from sharp or dangerous debris left behind.

# Call before you dig to avoid costly mistakes

Planning to work on an outdoor project? Careless digging poses a threat to people, pipelines and underground facilities.

Here are five easy steps for safe digging:

**1. NOTIFY:** Call 8-1-1 or make a request online at [www.sunshine811.com](http://www.sunshine811.com) two to three days before your work begins. The operator will notify the utilities affected by your project.

**2. WAIT:** Wait two to three days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.

**3. CONFIRM:** Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.

**4. RESPECT:** Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.

**5. DIG CAREFULLY:** If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project location.

