



## Evaluating Impacts of EPA Proposal

**Tim Stewart, CEO/Manager**

On June 2, 2014, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) unveiled the proposed carbon dioxide emissions regulations on existing power facilities, which will have an impact on Wisconsin's coal-dominant electric generation portfolio and electric rates.

The proposed rule, which mandates a 30 percent reduction in carbon dioxide emissions from electric generating plants by 2030 (using a nationwide average), was issued in response to a 2013 presidential executive order. The EPA's "Clean Power Plan" calls for existing Wisconsin power plants to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 34.2 percent below 2005 levels.

The EPA proposals on CO<sub>2</sub> reduction have been long anticipated, with much speculation on the impact they could have on electric generation in Wisconsin. That debate continued with a predictable range of concern or support from interest groups. Environmental groups were widely supportive while others voiced concern on economic grounds and on the overreaching impact of the executive order.

Clark Electric Cooperative shares the concerns raised by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) that the EPA, in its proposal, would go further than the Clean Air Act allows in the regulation of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. We also share NRECA's concern that the rule will increase electricity prices and force power plant shutdowns. The proposed regulations could dramatically increase prices and unfairly affect regions of the United States most dependent on coal for electricity (i.e. the Midwest). For example, did you know that Wisconsin relies on coal generation for approximately 60 to 70 percent of our electricity needs? In addition, our power supplier, Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC), is also heavily dependent on coal for its base-load generation, with more than 88 percent being generated from fossil fuel. We are concerned that the costs to operate coal-fueled generation, which is one of our nation's most reliable and cost-effective sources of power, could be significantly increased.

The EPA proposal has a 120-day comment period

running from June through October of this year. It is scheduled to be finalized in June 2015. After it goes final, each state will be required to prepare a State Implementation Plan (SIP) by June 2016 (with a one- or two-year extension possible). Most of the details for compliance will be in the SIP.

NRECA and other industry stakeholders support continued debate and a spirit of working together to develop a sustainable energy future. We are focused on providing affordable and reliable power for our members in an environmentally responsible manner.

### What are we doing and what has been done?

Dairyland Power Cooperative, Clark Electric's power supplier, takes its role as environmental stewards seriously. DPC has been taking actions to reduce emissions and carbon intensity for years. In fact, Dairyland was the first utility in the state to have 10 percent renewable energy, a goal it reached in 2013, two years prior to the state mandate. Dairyland was also identified as having made the most progress in meeting the Wisconsin Renewable Portfolio Standard among utilities in the state, according to a report prepared for and accepted by the Public Service Commission. Currently, renewable resources account for over 12 percent of Dairyland's generation mix.

Acknowledging the importance of reliable base-load generation year-round, Dairyland is also investing \$325 million in environmental controls on its existing coal-fired plants. These controls have reduced nitrogen oxide (NOx) and sulfur dioxide (SOx) by more than 90 percent and particulate matter by 99 percent. This is a significant investment made by Dairyland's members.

In December 2011, Dairyland retired three coal-fired units at the Alma Station (Alma, WI) and will retire the plant's last two units by 2015 because it is not cost effective to add environmental controls to these smaller units. These plant closures will reduce Dairyland's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and are among many steps Dairyland will need to take to meet the goals established by the EPA.

Regardless of your viewpoint on climate change, I encourage all Clark Electric Cooperative members to stay well informed on this topic, especially the EPA's proposed regulations. Decisions are about to be made and rules put in place that will have an impact on you and your neighbors. Your voice counts. Please go to [www.action.coop](http://www.action.coop) to learn more about the issues and to tell EPA your concerns about how important affordable and reliable electricity is. ■

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# Member Satisfaction is Our Priority

Clark Electric Cooperative is a member-owned, not-for-profit, service-oriented electric utility that strives to meet and exceed our members' expectations. With approximately 9,000 meters and services in six counties, we are best able to ensure that we are in fact meeting our service excellence goals by simply asking you, our members, "How are we doing?"

Since 1995, the cooperative has utilized the services of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Market Research Services to help us conduct a statistically valid member survey. Basically, NRECA administers a telephone survey to a randomly selected group of residential members who answer questions on such items as member attitudes, perceptions, demographics, satisfaction, performance standards, and



end-use appliance applications. With this information, we can gain intelligence in such areas as:

- Identifying areas where improvement is needed
- Demographic shifts
- Market penetration levels in electro technologies
- Demand-side management opportunities
- Member needs
- Member attitudes/perceptions
- Member satisfaction
- Overall improvement over time

I am very pleased to report that on the recent survey that was conducted this year, Clark Electric Cooperative received an American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) score of 86, the highest ranking we have ever received. This score ranks well above the electric utility industry average as well as some of the top investor-owned utilities' scores, and it ranks above other Touchstone energy cooperatives' scores nationwide.

While we are generally pleased with the overall ACSI score, be assured that we will continue to strive to meet and exceed your service expectations in the most cost-effective manner possible. Member-owned and not-for-profit operation allows us to focus on you, our members. It truly does make the difference. ■

## Stay Safe After Storms

Severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, and flooding can leave more than damage in their wake—they can leave hidden dangers as well. Safe Electricity advises everyone to be mindful of the electrical hazards that storms and flooding can leave behind.

Stay away from downed power lines, and be aware that tree limbs or debris may hide an electrical hazard. Treat all downed power lines as energized and dangerous. Lines do not have to be arcing or sparking to be live. Warn others to stay away and contact Clark Electric.

Never step in to a flooded basement or other area if water is covering electrical outlets, appliances, or cords. Be alert to any electrical equipment that could be energized and in contact with water. Never touch electrical appliances, cords, or wires while you are wet or standing in water. Never turn off your breaker box if you must stand in water to do so.

If you are cleaning up, do not use electric yard tools if it is raining, the ground is wet, or you are standing in water. Keep all electric tools and equipment at least 10 feet away from wet surfaces.

Do not use water-damaged electronics or appliances until a professional has verified that they are safe.

If you are driving and come across a downed power line, stay in your vehicle, warn others to stay away, and contact Clark Electric. ■

## ATTENTION CONTRACTORS

Market & Johnson invites all local contractors interested in bidding work on Clark Electric Cooperative's new 45,000 square-foot office and vehicle storage building.

**BIDS DUE TO MARKET & JOHNSON  
August 25, 2014, at 2 p.m.**

Plans available on August 6, 2014.

- A hard copy of plans is viewable at Clark Electric Cooperative, 124 N. Main St., Greenwood, WI 54437.
- An electronic copy of plans is available by contacting Market & Johnson at 715-834-1213.



2350 Galloway Street, Eau Claire, WI 54703  
ph. 715-834-1213 • fx. 715-834-2331  
[www.market-johnson.com](http://www.market-johnson.com)

## Providing Reliable Electricity Beyond The Flip Of A Switch

Clark Electric Cooperative has numerous 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 among 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. ■



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### CLARK ELECTRIC APPLIANCE & SATELLITE

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866-279-6544 or 715-267-6544



## FOR SALE BY SEALED BIDS

**2003 Chevy 3500 4x4  
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- 199,000 Miles
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Bids are due in the cooperative of-  
fice by 4 p.m. Friday, August 22,  
2014. Please return your bid in a  
sealed envelope marked:

2003 Chevy 3500  
Attention: Mike Ruff

With bid amount and contact infor-  
mation inside.

The truck can be seen in the park-  
ing lot of the cooperative's office  
at 124 N Main St Greenwood.  
Contact Mike Ruff at 715-267-6188  
Ext.236. Truck is being sold as is  
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We reserve the right to reject any  
or all bids.

TODAY

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Contact Greg Shaw at:

**Clark Electric  
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**Labor Day**

Our offices will be closed  
Monday, September 1, in  
observance of Labor Day.

**Clark Electric  
Cooperative**  
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

**Tim Stewart, CEO/Manager**  
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Greenwood, WI 54437  
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[tnelson01@cecoop.com](mailto:tnelson01@cecoop.com)  
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