



Tim Stewart, CEO/Manager

Keeping Rates Stable and the Value of Electricity

As indicated in the 2014 Annual Report, Clark Electric Cooperative is not anticipating a change to our base retail electric rates in 2015. It has now been over two years since the last base rate change (March 1, 2013).

This rate stability in recent years is primarily attributable to two factors: kWh sales growth and wholesale power rate stability. In 2013, Clark Electric Cooperative reversed a trend of declining kWh sales as had been the case in the previous five years. The strong kWh sales continued in 2014 (total electric energy sales increased 6.91 percent from the 2013 level). This growth in sales has helped offset overall increasing costs in operating and fixed costs.

The second major driver is the rate our wholesale power supplier charges. As you are all aware, we have experienced significant increases in wholesale power costs since 2006. However, since 2013 we have enjoyed a stable wholesale rate. We are very pleased to report that we are again anticipating a stable rate in 2015.

Electricity Remains a Good Value

All of this got me thinking about what the value of electricity really is. At Clark Electric Cooperative the average rate is approximately 11 cents per kWh. But what is a kWh and how long does it last?

A kWh is a measure of electric use. Kilo stands for 1,000. For example, a kilogram is 1,000 grams. A kilowatt is 1,000 watts of electricity. So a kilowatt-hour

is 1,000 watts of electricity used for one hour of time. An old 100-watt light bulb uses 100 watts of electricity every hour it is on. So, if you left a 100-watt light bulb on for 10 hours it would use 1 kWh. The newer compact florescent light bulbs (CFLs) use less electricity. A 25-watt CFL bulb left on for 40 hours would use 1 kWh.

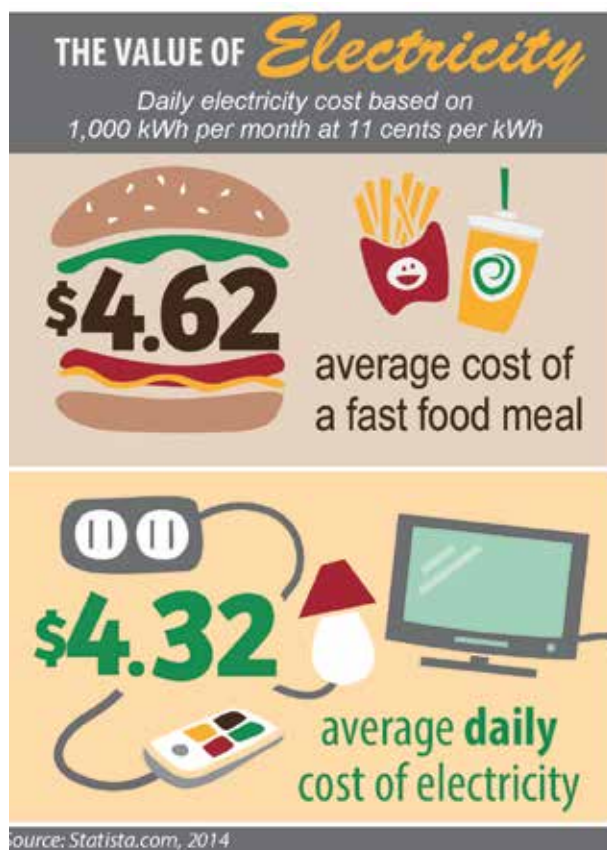
So, for 11 cents you get 40 hours of light if you turn it on four hours a day. That's 10 days of light. That's about a penny a day. What if you had 20 of these in your house? If you turned them all on for four hours a day, that would cost you about 20 cents a day. Twenty cents a day for all that light.

Let's look at some other appliances. A dishwasher uses approximately 2 kWh per day—that's 22 cents per day. A side-by-side refrigerator uses approximately 8 kWh per day—that's only 88 cents per day to keep your food cold/frozen. A coffee maker uses 1–2 kWh per day, again 11 to 22 cents per day. Let's talk about entertainment.

A 42-inch LCD television will use 2 kWh per day. A plasma TV would use 3–4 kWh per day, at a cost of 44 cents per day. An electric water heater for a family of four uses approximately 15 kWh per day. That's about \$1.65 per day for hot water.

Let's take a look at this another way. If an average residential house uses 1,000 kWh per month, that would be approximately \$4.32 per day. (1,000 kWh X 11 cents) + \$24 fixed charge = \$134 / 31 days = \$4.32 cost per day). In today's world, you won't find many items that cost less than \$5.

I urge you to think about your daily necessities (electricity and gasoline to name a few), and then think about the



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HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS: Youth Leadership Congress Set for July 15–17 at UW–River Falls



Electric cooperatives from across Wisconsin will sponsor local high school students at the 52nd Youth Leadership Congress (YLC) July 15–17 on the campus of UW–River Falls. The YLC is jointly sponsored by UW–River Falls and Wisconsin electric cooperatives, and it's designed to develop the next generation of community leaders.

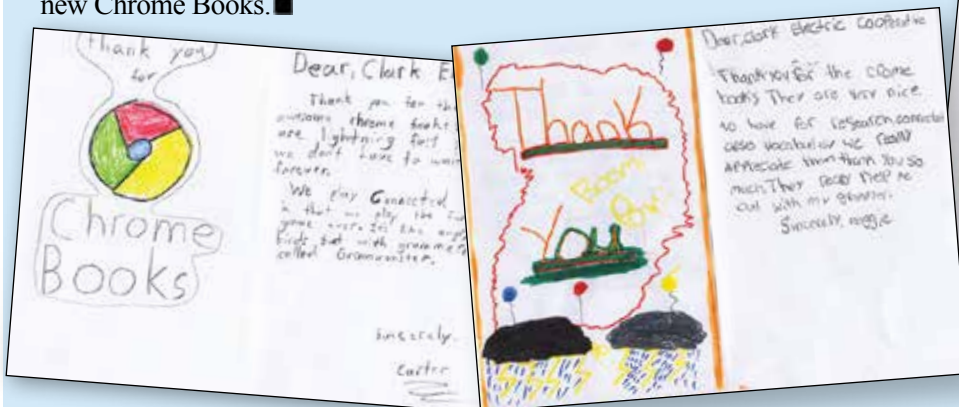
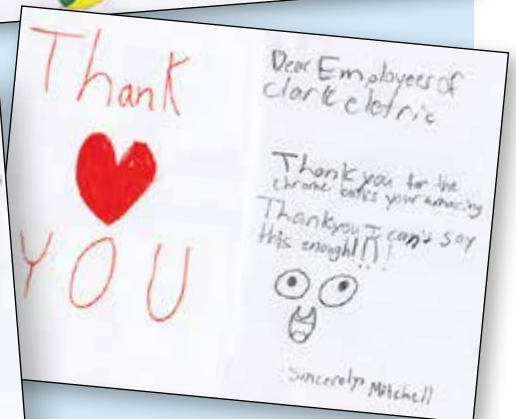
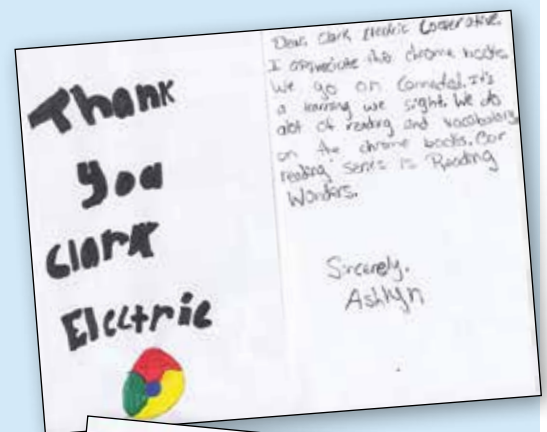
The event will feature leadership seminars led by nationally acclaimed speakers, hands-on activities, team-building exercises, cooperative education, and fun events, all designed to develop and enhance your leadership potential. Clark Electric Cooperative has sponsored students to this event since its inception. We believe in developing the potential of tomorrow's leaders. The YLC is a fun and educational event, designed by students who were elected by their peers at the previous year's conference to serve on the WECA Youth Board.

There is no cost to the student for attending the event. Registration and travel expenses will be covered by the cooperative. If you are going to be a sophomore or a junior in high school this coming fall and would like to be a sponsored representative for Clark Electric Cooperative, contact your FFA or FBLA advisor. ■

ACE Community Commitment Foundation Helps Fund Local Youth Project

The Adler-Clark Electric Community Commitment Foundation awarded \$42,730 to 26 various community-based projects throughout the Clark Electric service area in 2014. One of the many projects that received an award was the Colby Middle School. The school submitted an application for Chrome Books to aide in putting technology in the hands of the children on a daily basis and help close the achievement gap for our rural students.

Here are just a few of the many handmade thank you notes from students showing their appreciation for the opportunity to work on the new Chrome Books. ■



Give Your Air Conditioner a Spring Tune-Up

Spring is a good time for maintaining your air conditioner. Chances are you welcomed the cooler temperatures when they arrived last fall and turned off your air-conditioning unit without a lot of thought. Now, before you turn it back on again for the season, you'll want to make sure your unit is clean and ready to work properly and efficiently. If you keep the coils of your air conditioner clean, it will improve your comfort and reduce your electricity costs this summer.

Start by inspecting the outdoor condensing unit. The large outdoor coil—it looks like a car radiator—is where heat is dissipated from your home. The fan in the condensing unit has to move a lot of air through the coil, so make sure there are no airflow restrictions around the unit. Cut nearby grass, shrubs, and branches so they are at least 3 feet away at the side and 5 feet away overhead.

Most condenser coils are loaded with pollen and dust even when you can't see it. The longest a condenser should go without cleaning is two or three years, depend-

ing on how much it operates during the summer. If you use your air conditioner for four months or more, annual cleaning is an excellent idea. Turn off the power to the unit and remove any visible grass and lint from the fins and/or louvers with an old hairbrush or whisk broom. Then put on a pair of rubber gloves and spray biodegradable outdoor coil cleaner into the coil. Wait five or 10 minutes and flush the coil with a gentle wash spray.

Your indoor coil might also need cleaning, even though you can't easily see it. If your air conditioner's filter or blower is dirty, then your indoor coil is probably dirty, too. This is usually a job for professionals, unless you have easy access, as with a central heat pump. To help keep your indoor coil clean, make sure your filter fits well, is easy to change, and that you change it regularly. Have your air conditioning contractor make improvements to the filter, if needed, so it is easy to get to. Change the filter often to help keep your indoor air conditioner coil clean and reduce energy consumption.—Source: John Krigger, Saturn Resource Management, www.residential-energy.com ■

Central Air Incentive Program

To help reduce the demand for electric power during the summer season, Clark Electric Cooperative offers an Air Conditioner Load Management Program Incentive.

Each central air conditioner (AC) unit being managed during a period of high demand is shut off for approximately 20 minutes and then allowed to resume cooling for 20 minutes. This means they are still cooling about half of the time. Many members say they don't even realize the cooperative is managing the unit because they don't notice any temperature change inside the home.

If you have a central air conditioning unit and it is not part of the load management program, consider trying it for a summer. You will receive a one-time \$25 bill credit after the load management switch is installed on the AC, and then you will see an \$8 credit on your electric bill for the consumption months of June, July, and August. Call Clark Electric Cooperative at 1-800-272-6188 for questions, or to sign up. Certain restrictions may apply.

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Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Circulate savings! Ceiling fans are a great way to keep cool during summer months and can even allow you to raise your thermostat setting about 4 degrees without affecting your comfort.

Source: energy.gov

Value of Electricity

(Continued from page 4)

cost of some of the other items such as fancy latte coffee drinks or a stop at a fast food restaurant. We often don't question the cost of these items, with many of them costing more for a single item than it costs to purchase an entire day's worth of electricity. If at times it doesn't seem that electricity is affordable, remember—even as demand for electricity grows—annual cost increases still remain low, especially when compared to other consumer goods such as medical care, education, coffee drinks, and even hamburgers from a fast food restaurant.

Remember, electricity cools and heats our homes, cooks our meals, pumps and heats our water, powers our computers, provides lighting, cleans our clothes, milks cows, and offers a host of other labor-saving applications. Talk about entertainment; electricity powers items such as TVs, VCRs, DVDs, stereos, gaming consoles, shopping centers, restaurant, and casinos. When you stop and think about all that electricity does, you can see that electricity provides exceptional value for the cost. Electricity—where would we be without it?

If you would like to trim your energy budget, these websites may be helpful: www.togetherwesave.com, www.energystar.gov, www.energysavers.gov, www.cecoop.com, and www.focusonenergy.com. ■



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*FCC, 2013 Measuring Broadband America



Clark Electric
Cooperative
will be closed
Monday, May 25,
for Memorial Day.



Clark Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



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