

CLARK ENERGY LINES

A publication of Clark Energy Cooperative, Inc., proudly serving our members since 1938.

The push for power in rural Kentucky

In 1924, wealthy New Yorker Franklin D. Roosevelt traveled to rural Warm Springs, Georgia, in search of healing waters for his polio-crippled body. His experiences there inspired actions leading to the establishment of Clark Energy and the nation's more than 900 rural electric cooperatives.

Roosevelt enjoyed country life, with one exception: the cost of his electricity.

"I found that the charge was 18 cents a kilowatt-hour—about four times as much as I paid in Hyde Park, New York," he said, explaining how his long-term interest in reliable, affordable electricity began.

At any price, most of his rural neighbors didn't have access to electricity. Roosevelt learned this as he drove his handicap-equipped Ford throughout the countryside, making friends with local farmers and country store operators like O.R. Caudle.

One warm spring day, the future president pulled up to Caudle's store and asked for a cold Coca-Cola and help

repairing a low tire. "He noticed we were pumping the tire with a hand pump and asked if we had ever tried to get electricity," said Caudle. The question sparked a longtime

conversation about the need for rural electrification that continued each time Roosevelt stopped by the store for a drink.

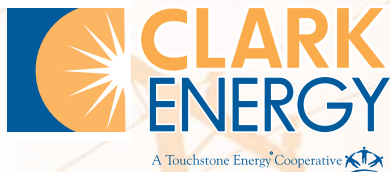
Nine out of 10 U.S. farm homes were still without electricity when Roosevelt's first push for power occurred soon after he moved into the Oval Office. The passage of the Tennessee Valley Authority Act in May 1933 authorized the construction of transmission lines to serve "farms and small villages that are not otherwise supplied with electricity at reasonable rates."

In 1935, Roosevelt established the Rural Electrification Administration. A year later, the Rural Electrification Act was passed, clearing the way for O.R. Caudle and others like him to form member-owned electric cooperatives.

Through Roosevelt's advocacy—spurred by a high electric bill and, perhaps, the love of a cold Coca-Cola—the power eventually flowed, illuminating farmhouses, energizing businesses and powering progress throughout the nation.



CHRIS DORNEY/ADOBESTOCK



From the President's Desk

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A return to normal

Twenty-five years ago, a classic commercial debuted on television screens showing moping children and an excited father buying school supplies all while the Christmas song, *It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year* gleefully ushered in the back-to-school season.

In 2021, the beginning of a new school year comes with a tremendous sense of relief and hope as the schoolchildren in our community look forward to a return to "normal," without masks, social distancing and other pandemic restrictions which affected parts of the last two school years.

Though safety is paramount at Clark Energy, and we adjusted our operations to adhere to all health directives, we share in the enthusiasm for normalcy. Regular readers of Clark Energy updates in *Kentucky Living* understand our unique connection with and commitment to community. Because we are a cooperative, Clark Energy is led by, belongs to and was built by members of the communities we serve. In other words, our co-op employees and board members are your neighbors, so we share in the successes and challenges of our communities.

A common refrain throughout the pandemic was "we're all in this together." Well, it didn't take a pandemic for Clark Energy to embrace that concept, so "a return to normal" in these parts doesn't negate this community connection.

Meanwhile, we are also proud to report that before, during and after the pandemic, our commitment to



WASY/ADOBE STOCK

and ability to provide safe and reliable electricity at competitive rates never wavered. Clark Energy works every day to guard against threats to our reliable service, whether from natural disasters or harmful policies.

As schools reopen, please be mindful of school buses and crosswalks. Perhaps the next time we find ourselves waiting behind a school bus with its stop sign arm extended, we can take that as a cue to also stop to be thankful for a return to normal in this most wonderful time of the year.



Chris Brewer, President & CEO

JUPITERIMAGES

Make up for high pandemic bills with wise energy use

You Zoomed, you teleworked, you ate dinner at home every night and you stayed in on weekends. And you have your energy bill as proof.

Americans spent 10% more on energy at home from April to July 2020 than they did during those months during pre-pandemic years, according to *Power Work from Home*, a report from the National Bureau of Economic Research. That trend remained fairly steady through the lockdown months.

On the other hand, energy use by businesses and industries plummeted by 16%. And chances are good that your family drove less and therefore spent less on gasoline.

That's about to change. With businesses reopening and teleworkers returning to their offices, energy use could gradually shift back to normal.

That means homeowners have an opportunity to make up for some of the energy-heavy months they spent at home.



MONKEY BUSINESS/ADOBEE STOCK

This summer, while you're spending more time outdoors and away from home, turn the air conditioner up a few degrees to save a little energy while the house is empty. Draw the blinds on especially hot, sunny days to stop the sun's heat from warming up your rooms.

Run appliances that produce heat, like the dishwasher and clothes dryer, after dark.

Those small energy-saving steps could help your "back-to-normal" energy bill drop even more once your family returns to its regular routine.

Electrical safety basics for back to school

As children head back to school, parents can teach them a valuable, potentially life-saving lesson: to respect electricity.

Following are five electrical safety basics that every child should be taught:

- Mixing water and electricity can harm you. Teach children not to use electrical toys or other devices near water or in the rain.
- Electrical outlets have limits. Plugging multiple devices into a single outlet or power strip can create sparks and even cause a fire if that outlet can't handle the load. Teach kids to plug into surge-protected power strips or to use one device at a time and unplug the rest.
- Teach children to unplug devices by the plug, not the cord. Yanking a cord out of an electrical outlet can damage the appliance, the outlet or the plug, leaving the appliance or toy unable to operate safely.
- Climbing trees and flying kites or other remote-controlled toys or drones are never safe activities near power lines. If a tree has a power line running through it—or if it's even within reach of the line—that's not a safe place to play. If a kite gets caught in a power line, the child should not tug on it to get it loose. The string could conduct electricity and seriously hurt the child.
- Electrical substations are fenced off to keep children and pets out. If a toy or small pet gets inside of the fence, the child should tell a parent or teacher, who can call a trained worker to come and retrieve it.

Your Safety Matters

Avoid power lines when flying kites or drones

With summer in full swing, remember to use caution near electrical equipment as you explore the great outdoors. If you are flying a kite or drone, always remember the importance of safety.

Flying kites or drones near power lines can be dangerous and could disrupt electrical service to fellow members and businesses.

If the wind pushes your kite near a power line or electrical facility, let go of it. Your safety is never worth chasing a kite into a dangerous environment. Keep your kite in an open area far away from electric equipment.

Never fly kites using wire, metallic thread or wire-reinforced string. Use paper, plastic or wood to build a kite, and only fly during dry weather. Children should always

have adult supervision when flying kites.

Flying a drone near a power line may affect your drone's signal, causing it to fly into the line. Remember, dark and windy conditions are bad for safe flight.

Check local laws before flying a drone near power lines, power plants, substations and other power equipment. Flying a drone near electric infrastructure may violate local laws.

If you are operating a drone that contacts and gets caught in a power line, call us right way and don't try to remove it yourself.

Clark Energy wants you to stay safe, always!



Keep cool during August heat

Unless you keep your thermostat so low that you send your cooling bill through the roof in August, it's a good idea to find some energy-friendly ways to keep your cool during the hottest month of the year. Here are five tips:

■ **Take cool showers.** If your house isn't cold—and there's no reason it should be, even with the A/C on—ease up on the hot showers. A cool shower will lower your body temperature and get you just as clean.

■ **Chill the meal plan.** Instead of baking, broiling, sauteing and frying every night, how about chopping fresh veggies, making colorful salads and satisfying your family's hunger with healthy raw foods that will fill them up and give your stove and oven a break? Cold desserts? That's the easy part.

■ **Filter the sun.** Install solar screens or window films on east- and west-facing windows so you can keep the heat out while allowing the light to come in.

■ **Seal leaks and cracks.** You'll find them all over your home—around windows, doors and electrical and cable outlets. It's easy to caulk and weatherstrip, and it's an activity you can do with your kids and teach them to use energy responsibly.

■ **Schedule a check-up.** Even if you skipped your A/C's spring maintenance, go ahead and schedule it now. Your HVAC technician can tell you if your air conditioning unit is running



efficiently—and can tweak it so it does. It's important to raise the thermostat a bit during the summer—but also make sure the cool air that does come into the home gets there efficiently.