

New year, new decade

This month, we not only welcome in a new year, we also mark the beginning of a new decade — the '20s. It is difficult to think of the '20s without thinking of the decade a hundred years ago, known as the “roaring '20s.” While the '20s of the last century might have been times of plenty for large cities and towns across the nation, most of which had been electrified, rural America lagged behind.

The large power companies did not venture far from the cities because it was more costly to serve the rural areas that had lower population and where farms were miles apart from one another.

The U.S. government even referred to rural America as

“the dark land,” as farmers continued to use kerosene or “coal oil” lamps for light and wood or coal to cook. Prior to the Rural Electrification Act in 1936, only a few farmers had access to electricity, and many of those were from Delco systems, which used gas to power a generator that produced power stored in batteries.

As part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal program, the Rural Electrification Act was approved by Congress in 1936, creating the Rural Electrification Administration (REA). Through the REA, electric co-ops could obtain low-interest loans to build and maintain an electric distribution system to serve farmers and rural businesses and homes. The people served by the co-op were its owners and members.

Through the REA and the hard work of rural Arkansans, the state went from having only 2.1% of its farms with electric service in 1930 to 67% with electric service in 1950. Today, Arkansas’ 17 electric distribution co-ops serve more than 500,000 farms, homes and businesses across 74 of the state’s 75 counties. The distribution co-ops, including C & L Electric Co-op, also own a statewide service organization, Arkansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (AECI) (see page 8), and a wholesale power supplier, Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corporation (AECC). By working together, Arkansas’ electric co-ops have helped build our local communities and our state.

We look forward to many more decades of service to you, our members. We wish you all a very happy and prosperous new year.



Families in rural areas depended on kerosene lamps for lighting before electricity came to their homes and farms.

C & L employees and director recognized

At the end of 2019, 11 C & L employees and three directors received awards for their service to the cooperative.

Those recognized were:

Employees

5 Years of Service

Mike Berry
Lora Rainbolt

20 Years of Service

Bryan Connett
Steven Drake
Justin Fowler

30 Years of Service

Tim Boykin
Brian Lowery

35 Years of Service

Kelly Goins
Johnny Pevey

40 Years of Service

Charles Hall

Directors

10 Years of Service

Keith Griffin

20 Years of Service

Charlie Searcy

50 Years of Service

Ray Morrison

Re-file for sales tax exemption by March 1

If you are currently exempt from paying sales tax on the first 500 kilowatt hours of electricity used each month, that exemption expired January 1, 2020. If you still qualify, you may continue receiving the exemption if you complete and return the exemption form to C & L Electric by March 1, 2020.

Act 120 of 1983 provides that members whose household income is less than \$12,000 annually shall be exempt from paying sales tax on the first 500 kWh of electricity used each month. All charges for electricity used above 500 kWh will still be taxed.

To qualify, members must complete a form supplied by the Revenue Division of the Department of Finance and Administration. These forms must be completed and re-filed

annually to get the exemption. If you filed a form last year and are currently receiving the exemption, you must file again this year.

These forms may be obtained from the Commission of Revenues or from any one of the cooperative's offices in person or by mail. As noted on the official form, all claim forms are "subject to audit for tax purposes, by the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration."

Completed claim forms must be in the C & L headquarters office by March 1 to be eligible for the exemption during all of 2020. All applications received after March 1 will be for the remainder of the year.

C & L HELPS PROTECT SERVICE TO ELDERLY AND HANDICAPPED MEMBERS

C & L Electric provides special considerations to ensure the protection of our elderly and handicapped members. This protection includes:

- Before disconnecting your service due to an unpaid bill, we will make two attempts at different times of day to contact you, an adult at the premises, or someone previously designated by you, either in person or by telephone at least 72 hours before suspending service. If the attempt to contact is successful, we will offer to explain what can be done to avoid suspension of your service and explain payment and assistance options.
- If the attempt to make personal contact is not successful, we will give you 24 hours written notice which explains what can be done to avoid suspension of your service.

To receive C & L Electric's "protection" service, you must register and provide written documents certifying the status claimed. This protection is provided to prevent disruption of your electric service. It does not relieve you of liability for your electric bill or reduce the amount of your electric bill.

ELDERLY—An "elderly" member is one who is at least 65 years of age.

HANDICAPPED—A "handicapped" member is one who has a severe physical or mental impairment who is certified as being disabled by a physician, licensed psychologist, by the United States Veterans Administration, the Social Security Administration, the Arkansas Department of Human Services, the Arkansas State Hospital, or a licensed mental health center.

If you wish to register for elderly or handicapped status, fill out the form below & return to C & L with proof of age for elderly or physician's statement for handicapped status.



my co-op

REGISTRATION FORM (Mail form to: C & L Electric, P. O. Box 9, Star City, AR 71667)

(Providing false information shall be grounds for termination of service.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone # _____ C & L Account # _____

CHECK STATUS: HANDICAPPED _____ ELDERLY _____

**Attach proof of age for Elderly or physician's statement for Handicapped*