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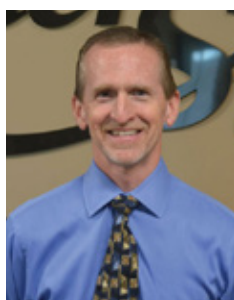
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It is probably no surprise to any of our members that the costs of goods and services have been increasing in recent months. From groceries to building

materials, restaurants to automotive repairs, there seems to be few sectors of our economy that remain unaffected by recent price increases. Your local cooperative is no exception.

Some of the most notable cost increases for EnerStar have been related to material, such as wire and service transformers. Not only are we experiencing longer delivery times for many of these products, some material costs have increased by more than 25 percent! As you might anticipate, notable and widespread cost increases will naturally cause pressure on retail electric service rates.

It is important to note that your local co-op board reviews EnerStar's electric rates on a regular basis, and based upon budget indicators, determines if and when rates need to be updated. In order to offset the rising cost of goods and third party services, the board has scheduled a rate change impacting both the residential and small commercial rates effective March 1, 2022. The residential rate will see

a \$5 per month grid access fee (GAF) increase, along with a decrease in the energy (kwh) rate of \$0.0018 per kWh. The grid access fee for small commercial accounts will increase by \$15 per month while the energy rate remains unchanged.

Under the current rate structure, a portion of the cooperative's fixed costs are covered in the kWh rate that you pay. Because these are fixed costs directly related to the cost of providing electric service, the rate revision is intended to properly allocate these costs while modestly increasing cooperative revenue. The grid access fees will become a better reflection of the fixed cost of service identified within the cooperative's most recent cost of service study.

So how does this affect you? The table below shows how the reduction in the kwh rate and increase in the GAF will have an offsetting effect for many members, with 1,100 being the average consumption for a residential account.

Electric Consumption	Monthly Increase
1,100 kwh	\$3.30 per month
750 kwh	\$3.65 per month
1,700 kwh	\$1.94 per month

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

11597 Illinois Highway 1
Paris, IL 61944
800-635-4145
Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Rate Change

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It is important to keep the financial stability of your cooperative strong, and therefore rate changes are necessary from time to time. While few of us would like to see energy costs increase, the EnerStar board and co-op staff believe these to be modest increases in light of the recent increases in goods and services. One thing you can count on is that we will continue to source reliable and competitively priced material/services so that we may continue to provide the level of electric service that our membership has grown to appreciate.

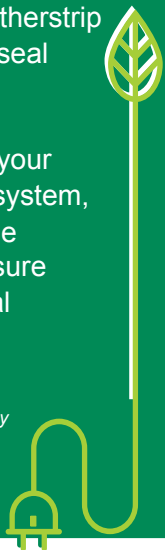
Should you have any questions regarding the upcoming rate change, please contact our member services department at 800-635-41455, or call me directly at 217-466-7600!

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

About 30% of a home's heating energy is lost through inefficient windows. Caulk and weatherstrip all windows to seal air leaks.

When running your home heating system, lock all operable windows to ensure the tightest seal possible.

Source: Dept. of Energy



Youth to Washington

APPLY TODAY TO REPRESENT ENERSTAR IN D.C.

For more than 50 years, the electric cooperatives of Illinois have given tomorrow's leaders the opportunity to learn from today's public officials, and EnerStar is on the hunt for two outstanding students to represent our co-op at Youth Tour this year. EnerStar's Youth Tour is actually two separate events: Youth Day in Springfield and the Youth to Washington trip.

YOUTH DAY IN SPRINGFIELD – MARCH 29, 2022

Each year, nearly 300 outstanding students get an up close and first-hand look at democracy in action when they meet their elected representatives during Illinois Electric Cooperatives Youth Day.

YOUTH TO WASHINGTON – JUNE 17-24, 2022

Those individuals selected will also travel by charter bus for an all-expense, week-long tour of Washington, D.C where they will create lasting memories and visit all the Washington must-see sites including Gettysburg, George Washington's Mt Vernon, Smithsonian museums, Arlington Cemetery, and much more!

Applicants should be high school freshmen, sophomores or juniors during the 2021-2022 school year. In addition, the students must reside in the EnerStar service territory and receive their electricity from EnerStar.

Visit www.enerstar.com to find the application in the Community Section. Applications are due February 28, 2022. Good luck!

Mother Nature's wrath can mean service disruptions

Although EnerStar Electric Cooperative works hard to maintain our equipment, monitor power delivery 24/7, and do all we can to keep the lights on, there are circumstances beyond our control that can interfere with power delivery. Winter weather is one example. Winter storms can impact the distribution of electricity due to ice, heavy winds, sleet and other extreme conditions.

Besides causing outages, wintery conditions can cause hiccups with power delivery that include blinking lights, or ebbs and flows in the amount of power that comes into your home. Although blinking lights can be a symptom of other problems such as loose wiring connections or overloaded circuits, they can also be caused by extreme weather.

Ice/freezing rain

Ice accumulation on power lines makes them heavy. Half an inch of ice can add as much as 500 pounds to a power line. This added weight can impact power distribution and even bring down a power line. Ice that forms on power lines also increases its surface area, which means gusts of wind have more to catch. The weight of ice on tree limbs can cause them to fall on power lines as well.

Wind

Wind can cause tree branches to brush power lines, which can result in blinking or flickering lights. Therefore, it's important for us to keep trees cleared around power lines and poles. In addition, heavy winds can cause lines to move and sway. If they gain enough

momentum, they can gallop or jump. This can cause disruptions in service since the motion can cause lines to break or make contact with each other.

Melting ice

Melting ice can be heavy, putting extra strain on power lines and causing the lines to touch or rest on one another. Because of this, melting ice can cause outages even though the temperature is rising. Depending on conditions, melting ice can cause as many or more problems than the ice itself and days after the weather event.

Tree branches

In any weather, tree-related issues cause the most power outages in many service areas. Branches, limbs or even tree trunks can fall into power lines and cause problems. Add wind, freezing rain or ice to the mix for an increased potential for problems.

Icy roads

Vehicles that slide on ice or collide with one another can strike a power pole or pad-mounted transformer, causing an outage or other problems.

Be sure to have a storm preparedness kit ready before a storm strikes to help get you and your family through a power outage. Items to gather include bottled water, non-perishable food, blankets, warm clothing, hand sanitizer, first aid kit/medicine, flashlight, radio, back-up phone chargers, extra batteries and toiletries.

Regardless of the reason for a power outage, know that when the lights go out, even during extreme weather, EnerStar is doing all we can to restore power safely and efficiently. To learn more about preparing for storms and electrical safety, go to SafeElectricity.org.



Gain a clearer perspective on windows

Homeowners may grumble this time of year that their windows welcome the wintry chill into their house. Some may think that replacements clearly are the answer to energy savings. Yet it's important to get the full picture to make the best decision for your home.

The Moving Truth

In most circumstances, upgrading windows will not automatically rush in energy cost savings (especially when factoring in the price of new windows!). Windows, even the very best, are never going to prevent as much heat transfer as a well-built wall.

The confusion arises because of how heat moves within a house. Heat moves to areas of lesser heat. The natural heat movement in a house gives you the impression that the windows are leaking simply because they do pull the warmed air their way. Even a triple-pane window doesn't have the insulation value to completely stop that movement.

Typical windows get about an R-3 rating (the greater the R-value, the greater the power to keep heat where you want it). For comparison, an average insulated wall has an R-11 rating while an energy efficient home would have an R-19 to R-40 rating.

Of course, there may be a time when your windows need to be replaced or repaired. Here are some common warning signs:

- Faulty window operation
- Excessive condensation between windowpanes
- Decay and water damage on window frames
- Severe storm damage



Improve Your Efficiency

If your home feels drafty in the winter, you may benefit from the energy efficiency enthusiast's adage: Seal, Insulate, Equip! Properly air seal any gaps or cracks in your home that allow treated air to escape, causing your heating system to work more than needed. Search low and high: water and gas line connections going through a foundation wall in a crawlspace or basement are common culprits, all the way to

ductwork in the attic. Next, make sure that your home is properly insulated to ensure that your home can maintain a desired temperature.

After your home is properly sealed and insulated, you can look into new equipment. You may even find that smaller equipment that uses less energy will properly heat and cool your home to keep you comfortable. For more information on energy efficiency rebates, visit www.powermoves.com.

Considering a career as a lineworker?

\$2,000

LaVern and Nola McEntire Memorial Lineworker's Scholarship

Apply Today!

The \$2,000 LaVern and Nola McEntire Memorial Lineworker's Scholarship will help pay for costs to attend the lineworker's school conducted by the AIEC in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield, IL. Apply online by April 30, 2022.