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How electric rates are set



How does EnerStar know the appropriate amount to charge members for electric service? Have you ever wondered about that question?

Certainly, part of the answer depends on how much electricity you use. But it is much more complicated than that. Let me use something we are all familiar with, the purchase of appliances (or anything else) at your local hardware store, to explain.

The price includes these components:

- **Fixed costs.** That is, those costs to keep the hardware store running and are unrelated to the volume of appliances sold.
- **Variable costs.** This is the wholesale price of each appliance sold.

In the electric utility world, we have two costs as well. They are:

- **Fixed costs.** They are costs to maintain the basic, minimum infrastructure (power lines, substations, etc.) needed to serve you. These fixed costs are there regardless of whether you use any electricity. It is comparable to the fixed costs at a retail store.
- **Variable costs.** This is the wholesale cost for the electricity you buy.

At EnerStar, we hire independent third parties to professionally evaluate our cost structure. They conduct a detailed review of all aspects of our business model. The study first breaks our costs into **Rate Classes**, such as:

- Single-phase service,
- Small commercial three-phase service, and then
- Large power.

Within each rate class, the costs are broken down into **Rate Components**:

- **Fixed costs** – These are billed as a Grid Access fee on your billing statement.
- **Variable costs** – These are billed as an Energy Charge on your billing statement.

All results from the studies are then reviewed by the board of directors before being approved.

All of this effort to create cost-based rates serves to avoid cross subsidies, or one group of rate payers subsidizing another. By keeping rates as close as possible to the true cost to serve results in fairness and equity for all. Such an approach – fairness and equity for all – is the only approach that works long-term!

Finally, remember EnerStar is a not-for-profit entity. We do not have any investors to reward with profits. We have no conflicting goals pulling at us. We only exist to serve you with the best quality of service at the lowest (and fairest) price.



Our offices will be closed on Friday, April 7, in observance of Good Friday.



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.

Changes to billing coming in May, June

All members' due dates moving to the 24th of the month

In recent years, more and more members are choosing alternative billing and payment options like paperless billing or autopay. These changes, along with the co-op's continued efforts to reduce costs, have resulted in a need to change our billing process. Therefore, beginning in May, we will reduce from four bill cycles to one bill cycle. All members will have a due date on the 24th of the month.

We specifically chose the month of May to make this change as it is what we call a "shoulder month." Generally during this time, members are neither heating nor cooling their homes. It tends to be a lower usage month. That factor was important to us because for those members affected, their June bill will be for more than 30 days of electric usage.

This change offers reduced costs and offers many benefits to the co-op. But what is important is how these changes affect you, the individual member. To know how you are affected by these changes, you will need to know your current due date then read on to learn more:

If your bill is currently due on the 4th:

- You will receive a normal bill in April which is due May 4.
- You will not receive a billing statement in May.
- Your next billing statement will be mailed June 5 for usage from April 8 to May 31. That is 22 additional days of usage.
- Instead of your bill being due on the 4th, your new due date is June 24. That gives you 20 extra days to pay your billing statement.

If your bill is currently due on the 10th:

- You will receive a normal bill in April which is due May 10.



- You will not receive a billing statement in May.
- Your next billing statement will be mailed June 5 for usage from April 15 to May 31. That is 15 additional days of usage.
- Instead of your bill being due on the 10th, your new due date is June 24. That gives you 14 extra days to pay your billing statement.

If your bill is currently due on the 14th:

- You will receive a normal bill in April which is due May 14.
- You will not receive a billing statement in May.
- Your next billing statement will be mailed June 5 for April 21 to May 31. That is 9 additional days of usage.
- Instead of your bill being due on the 14th, your new due date is June 24. That gives you 10 extra days to pay your billing statement.

If your bill is due on the 24th of the month:

- There is no change to your billing or due date.
- You will receive a May billing statement, and your payment will be due on the 24th as usual.

Accounts using PrePaid Go:

- This change does not affect your prepay account, and no action is necessary.

Accounts using Autopay:

- If your billing cycle dates are changing, your payment will be drafted as usual in May but going forward, it will be drafted on June 24. All due dates will be the 24th of the month.

If these changes create a hardship: We understand. If that is you, please do not hesitate to call our Member Services department with your concerns. We may have options available to assist you.

Petitions available for June 2023 board elections

EnerStar Electric Cooperative's Annual Meeting of Members is set for June 3, and cooperative members have the opportunity to run in the upcoming board of directors election. Members who are eligible candidates and can commit the time and energy to the member-owned corporation may want to consider this opportunity.

The role of director is a huge commitment – of time, energy and education – more than most members realize. Thankfully, there are members who are willing to serve in this important capacity. Decisions made can affect the membership into the next generation.

For the 2023 election, EnerStar has three director seats, which are three year terms in Districts 1A, 5B, and 9C.

Members interested in running for the board should contact the cooperative office to verify eligibility and receive a petition packet. The packet includes all the necessary information one would need to learn more about the cooperative and the role of the director.

Board petitions require the signatures of 15 EnerStar members who live in the candidate's Voting District. All members signing petitions must have an original membership card on file and must be currently receiving electricity from the cooperative. Candidates will also need to check with cooperative



personnel to make certain they reside within the correct Representative District.

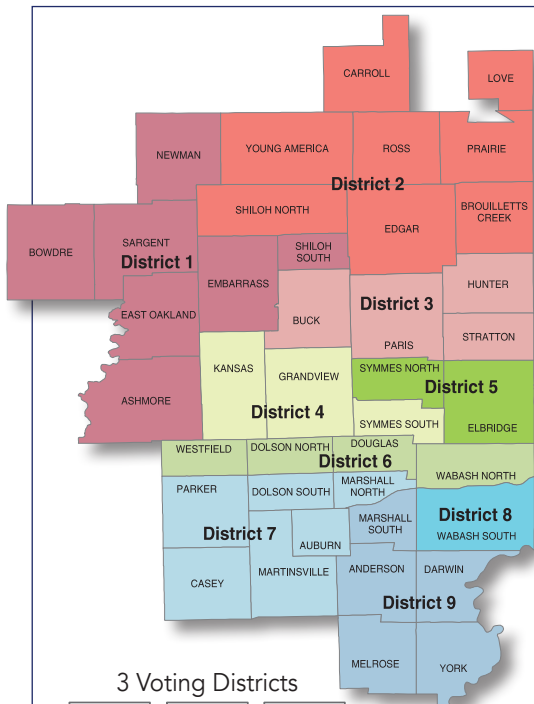
Petition packets will be available beginning February 22, 2023.

Completed petitions may be turned in to the cooperative office

from March 20, 2023 to April 4, 2023. Candidates should also provide a short biographical sketch, 250 words or less, and a digital photo to be published with the Annual Meeting Notice.

Candidates should also make plans to attend the 2023 Annual Meeting of Members on Saturday, June 3, 2023.

The tentative mailing date of the official notice of the meeting will be late April.



3 Voting Districts

A	B	C
1	4	7
2	5	8
3	6	9

Voting Districts A, B, and C each contain three Representative Districts in shades of red, green, and blue, respectively.

2023 elections

Representative Board District Descriptions 3 year terms

✓ Voting District 1A

District 2 - Currently served by Jeff Zimmerman, Oakland

The Townships of Newman, Bowdre, and Sargent in Douglas County, Illinois; the Townships of East Oakland and Ashmore in Coles County, Illinois; the Township of Embarrass in Edgar County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Shiloh lying south of the 1800th Road in Edgar County, Illinois

✓ Voting District 5B

District 4 - Currently served by Thad Martin, Paris

The Township of Elbridge in Edgar County, Illinois; all that portion of the Township of Symmes lying north of the 400th Road and west of Illinois Highway 1 in Edgar County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Symmes lying north of the 300th Road and east of Illinois Highway 1 in Edgar County, Illinois

✓ Voting District 9C

District 7 - Currently served by Danny Gard, West Union

The Townships of Anderson, Darwin, Melrose, and York in Clark County, Illinois; and all that portion of the Township of Marshall lying south of Interstate Highway 70 in Clark County, Illinois

Only certified workers can trim trees near power lines

Stay away and stay safe

Can anyone trim trees near power lines? The answer is no. Specialized tree trimmers, certified by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in utility clearance, are the only persons legally allowed to trim within 10 feet of power lines.

OSHA requires this certification because electricity is a serious and widespread hazard to tree workers. According to the Tree Care Industry Association, electricity is the leading cause of death in the tree care industry, causing about 15 percent of all industry fatalities. Tree care industry workers do not have to directly contact a power line to be electrocuted; about half of all electrocution fatalities are the result of indirect contact.

Qualified line-clearance trimmers must be specially trained in how to safely work in proximity to energized lines. They must understand how an electrical grid functions, the effects of tree growth patterns and tree damage and how to implement directional pruning, as required by the American National Standard for Arboricultural Operations' safety standards.

According to OSHA, the duties of line-clearance certified tree trimmers typically include the following:

- Undergoing annual evaluations by licensed professionals to ensure continuous adherence to industry best practices.
- Requesting job briefings from employers and other crew members before starting a job or when environmental conditions change.
- Properly wearing approved personal protective equipment, including fall protection equipment when needed.
- Complying with material handling and mechanical equipment requirements.
- Working with a second line-clearance tree trimmer within voice range.



- Determining the voltages of lines before work begins or assuming that the line is operating at the highest possible voltage if it is not possible to determine voltage.
- Ensuring body parts and any ladders, platforms or aerial devices being used remain outside the minimum approach distance from any energized equipment.
- Using only insulated tools and equipment to remove branches and limbs that are in contact with, or are within the minimum approach distance of, energized lines or equipment.
- Determining if weather conditions are no longer safe to work in, such as the presence of high winds, ice, thunder, or lightning that would make the work hazardous.
- Beginning work on storm restoration efforts in the aftermath of a storm if they have been trained in the special hazards involved with this type of work.

If you need more information on line clearance tree trimming, contact EnerStar's Keith Borchers at 800-635-4145. For information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

TRIMMED TREES = BETTER SERVICE



When you see us trimming trees near power lines, know that we are doing so because:

- **Tree and foliage overgrowth** can interfere with power distribution.
- **Power lines** can give off a spark or arc that may land on a nearby branch and ignite.
- The lights in your house may flicker when tree branches brush power lines during **high winds**.
- **Stormy weather** can cause nearby limbs to break off and land on power lines.
- Unobstructed power lines make it easier and **safer** for lineworkers to **maintain equipment** or **restore power**.

 Safe Electricity.org