



CMS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

The Enlightener

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Lightbulb Winners

Congratulations to this month's lightbulb winners:

- ▶ Scott Owens
- ▶ Abel Ramirez
- ▶ Todd Kohart
- ▶ George Krier
- ▶ Doug Kerstetter
- ▶ Sharon Leeper

Contact us today for your free lightbulbs!



Nondiscrimination

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

FROM THE MANGER

Factors That Impact Electricity Prices

I was recently asked by one of our members about what impacts electricity prices. We talked about how the daily cost of living seems to have increased across the board.

Just as inflation has impacted everything from the price of gasoline to the price of eggs, costs for the fuels required to produce electricity have also risen. This is a timely topic, so I wanted to help explain some of the factors that impact electricity prices (and energy bills) in this month's issue of *Kansas Country Living*.

While there is no short answer, there are a few key elements that impact electricity prices and rates. Some of these factors CMS Electric can manage, some of them you can impact and other factors are beyond our control. So, let me break it down.

There are three primary parts to your monthly electric bill: a service charge, an energy consumption/kWh charge and a Power Cost Adjustment

(PCA). To understand your total energy costs and what impacts your bill, lets unpack one piece at a time.

THE FIRST IS A FIXED MONTHLY SERVICE CHARGE,

which covers the costs associated with providing electricity to your home. This includes equipment, materials, labor and operating costs necessary to serve each meter in CMS Electric's service territory, regardless of the amount of energy used. To ensure the reliable service you expect and deserve, we must maintain the local system, including power lines, substations and other necessary equipment. Like many other businesses, we've experienced supply chain issues and steep cost increases for some of our basic equipment. For example, the cost for a distribution transformer (which looks like a tall metal can at the top of



Kirk Thompson

Continued on page 12B ▶



LABOR Day

Office Closing

In observance of Labor Day,
our office will be closed on
MONDAY, SEPT. 4.

4 KEY FACTORS THAT IMPACT ENERGY BILLS

You pay for the electricity you consume each month, but there are additional factors that impact your energy bills.

1 Fuel Costs

Before electricity can be delivered to your home, it must be generated at a power plant or from a renewable source. The fuel cost to generate electricity fluctuates, which is why you see a power or fuel charge on your monthly bill. This charge covers cost changes without having to continually restructure electricity rates.



2 Service Costs

Your bill includes a monthly service charge, which recovers part of the co-op's ongoing investments in poles, wire, meters, system maintenance and additional costs necessary to provide reliable electric service.



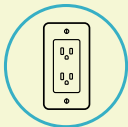
3 Weather

When temperatures soar or dip, your cooling or heating equipment must run longer and at maximum capacity, which can greatly increase your energy use. Extreme temperatures can also affect electricity market prices. When the need for electricity increases due to extreme heat or cold, the price of power typically rises.



4 Energy Consumption

This is the amount of electricity you use each month to power your home's cooling/heating system, appliances, lighting, electronics and more. The amount of electricity you consume is measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh). You control how much energy you use, which can ultimately help you manage your monthly costs.



Factors That Impact Electricity Prices *Continued from page 12A*

a power pole) significantly increased this year, and wait times to receive this essential equipment are up to 15-20 weeks. Because we are a not-for-profit cooperative, some of these expenses must be passed on to our members. I should note that the service charge is the same for everyone and the costs are shared equally across the membership.

ANOTHER COMPONENT OF YOUR MONTHLY BILL IS THE kWh CHARGE, which covers how much energy you consume. You've likely noticed the amount of energy you use can vary from month to month and is typically impacted by extreme temperatures. When temperatures soar or dip, your cooling and heating equipment run longer, which increases your home energy use. Regardless, energy consumption is an area that you have some control over, and you can lower your monthly bill by actively reducing energy use. Your thermostat

is a great place to start, so be sure to keep it close to 78 degrees during summer months.

THE LAST COMPONENT OF YOUR BILL IS THE PCA, which is the same amount for all co-op members. The PCA recently increased because of higher fuel prices, which means the power that CMS Electric purchases from our wholesale provider is more expensive. The PCA covers fuel cost fluctuations without having to continually restructure electricity rates.

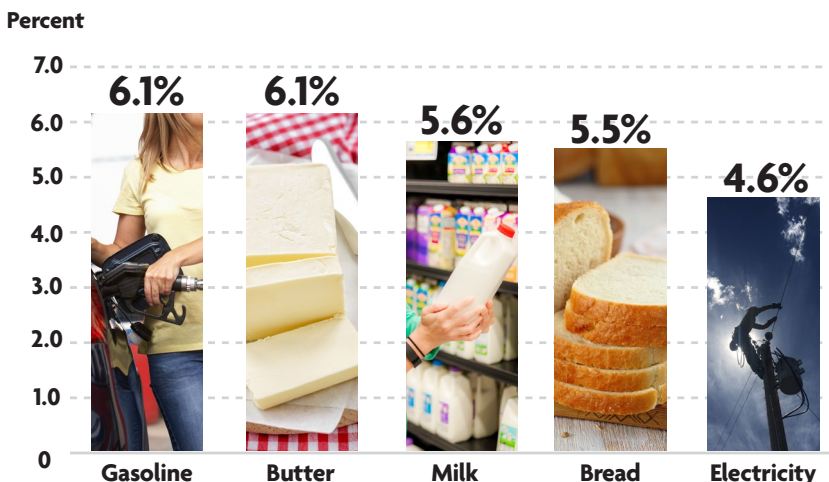
I hope this information sheds light on some of the factors that impact electricity prices. While we can't control the weather or the rising costs of fuels, please know CMS Electric is doing everything possible to keep internal costs down.

We're here to help you, too. Contact us if you have questions about your energy bill or for advice on how to save energy at home.

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

Although inflation has led to increasing costs in many areas of our lives, the cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common goods. Looking at price increases over the last five years, electricity remains a good value.

Average Annual Price Increase 2017-2022



SOURCES: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS & CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

Stay Safe During Harvest — Get Proper Rest

For many farmers, fall requires long days in the field and little rest. The pressure to harvest as much as possible, combined with fatigue and looming deadlines, increases the risk of injury. In fact, most injuries occur during the spring and fall when stress and fatigue are often at their highest.

The safety and health of workers, including making time for sleep, should be a priority when considering a farm's productivity, according to Josie Rudolphi, University of Illinois Extension associate research scientist.

"Rushing and cutting corners can lead to injury, which no one has time for, especially during the harvest," Rudolphi says.

Rudolphi grew up on a farm and understands the pressures of harvest season. She says that getting proper rest can make a huge difference in staying safe, but during the time crunch of harvest season, farmers sacrifice sleep to work late into the night.

"Sleep deficiency has been associated with increased injury, reduced reaction time and reduced concentration," Rudolphi says. "All of which could impact health and safety, as well as productivity."

The demands of harvest are stressful, and a lack of sleep can intensify that and lead to errors in the fields or even on the roads.

To improve sleep, Rudolphi advises farmers to go to bed and wake up at regular times when possible. They can

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**JOSIE RUDOLPHI, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
EXTENSION ASSOCIATE RESEARCH SCIENTIST**

use rainy days to catch up on sleep. Other sleep health tips include:

- ▶ Create a bedroom environment that encourages sleep; keep it quiet, dark and cool.
- ▶ Limit electronic device use.
- ▶ Avoid large meals, caffeine and alcohol before bedtime.

In addition to improving sleep, managing stress is an important component to injury prevention, health and safety, according to Rudolphi.

"By using the 'Four A' Method of avoid (planning ahead), adapt (changing expectations), alter (changing the situation when you can) and accept (acknowledging that a situation is what it is), farmers can successfully manage the stress of long hours and unpredictability," she adds.

For information about safety around electricity, including farm and ranch safety, visit www.SafeElectricity.org.



INSPECT IT REGULARLY



MAKE SURE FENCING IS VISIBLE.

Use electric fence tape, warning signs or other methods.



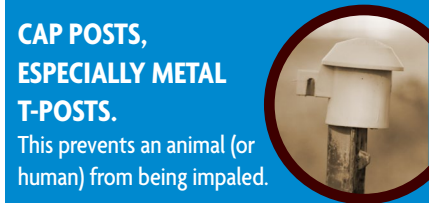
INSPECT FENCING REGULARLY.

Ensure everything is tight, secure and free from frays.



MAKE SURE FENCE IS TIGHT AND WELL-SUPPORTED.

A lack of support can cause it to sag.



CAP POSTS, ESPECIALLY METAL T-POSTS.

This prevents an animal (or human) from being impaled.



CHECK FOR A LOOSE OR SAGGING FENCE.

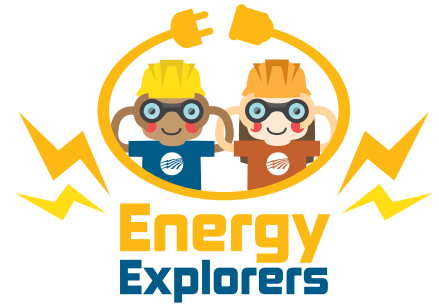
Not only can animals escape, but wires can fall out of insulators.

SOURCE: SAFE ELECTRICITY

ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

Did you know ceiling fans can make a room feel 4 degrees cooler? To save energy through ceiling fan use, remember to raise your thermostat a few degrees while fans are turned on. In the summer, operate ceiling fans in a counterclockwise direction. Reverse the direction to clockwise during winter months and set fans on a low speed so warm air can circulate from the ceiling to the lower levels of the room. Remember, ceiling fans cool people, not spaces. Be sure to turn them off when you leave the room. **SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV**





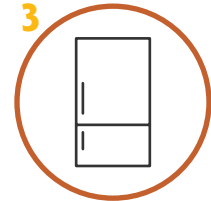
SPOT THE BIGGEST ENERGY USER

We use electricity every day, but we rarely think about the appliances and electronics that consume the most energy. Can you spot the biggest energy users?

Review each grouping below, then circle the one that you think consumes the most energy. Check your work in the answer key.

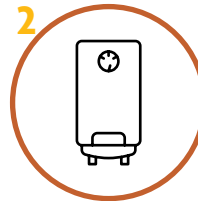
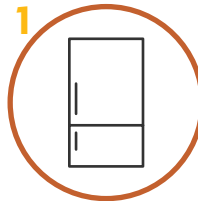
A

1. Heating and Cooling Unit
2. Clothes Washer
3. Refrigerator



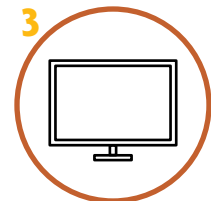
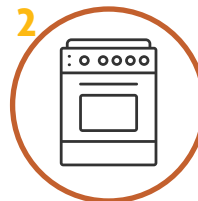
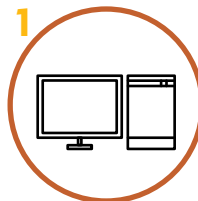
B

1. Refrigerator
2. Water Heater
3. Laptop Computer



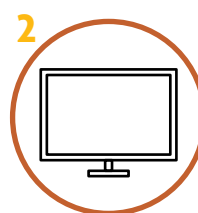
C

1. Desktop Computer
2. Electric Oven
3. TV



D

1. LED Lights
2. TV
3. Clothes Dryer



Answer Key: A.1 B.2 C.2 D.3



Save Energy!

- ▶ Wash clothing in cold water and air-dry when possible.
- ▶ Only run full loads in the dishwasher.
- ▶ Turn off lights when you leave a room.
- ▶ Take short showers instead of baths.
- ▶ Unplug electronic devices when not in use.