

WHITEWATER VALLEY REMC Powerlines

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR THE MEMBERS OF WHITEWATER VALLEY REMC

Comments from your CEO

Do you know what time it is?



Boyd Huff, CEO

If you're like most people, when you get your electric bill, you look at what you owe, and then you pay it. Sure, if you've cranked up your heating or cooling system on particularly hot or cold months, you may grumble a bit more when the bill comes due, but you just pay the bill, since there is not much you can do about it.

That is changing. What time it is—time of day or time of the year—will now start to matter a lot in terms of what your electricity bill will be each month. The cost of the power we buy from our supplier varies a lot depending upon demand. Under new rates from our supplier, our prices during periods of peak demand—the summer and winter months—will be higher, and rates during the rest of the year will be lower.

Residential customers, who continue to use electricity under these new rates as they have in the past under the old rates, will see an increase annually of about \$120, or \$10 a month. However, when looking at your bill each month rather than on an annual basis, your summer and winter bills will be higher compared to last year while in all the other months it will be lower. (See the chart with examples on page 2.)

While this is a major change from our traditional "one rate for every customer all the time" actually for the first time you have real ability and a powerful economic incentive to be more efficient in your use of electricity and actually offset the continuing increases in the cost of power.

Take this month for instance. May is considered an Off-Peak (or shoulder

month—under our new plan, the rates are low, but so is your usage anyway, so any additional energy savings do not really show up as big savings on your bill. However, next month is a different story. June not only kicks off the summer, but it is the first month for the new Summer On-Peak billing. Any efficiency steps you take starting in June are reducing use of the most expensive electricity that we have to buy, so you get a bigger payoff. Of course, if you do not change your usage, you will end up with a larger bill the next month. Even if a lot of that is offset in later months when rates and usage drop, you don't want to get caught unaware or miss the chance to save when it matters. Think of this as your season of energy savings—rates are higher during our peak usage months—in the summer and during the winter—and lower the rest of the year during spring and fall.

Later this year, we even plan to offer members the option of going to a special Time-Of-Use rate where the differences between peak and off-peak prices are different enough that members can save even more money by shifting times they use electricity during the day. For example, they may choose to cycle off the air conditioner for a few hours during the day when no one is home or do laundry at night rather than during the day or on weekends which are all off-peak.

As your co-op, we are not motivated to make profits for outside investors. We are motivated to serve the needs of our members—and this new rate design, while different, really can work to your benefit.

We all just have to remember what time it is.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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For up-to-date information,
visit us on the web
at www.wvwremc.com

Liberty Office Hours:

7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday
Closed Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays

To Report an Outage or Emergency:

Call 1-800-776-0493

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Be ready to provide the following information:

- The name and account number under which your electric service is listed
- Map location number
- Your phone number—needed to call back or confirm power restoration
- The type of problem you are experiencing—flickering lights, complete power outage, etc.

We appreciate your call and will work promptly to assist you.



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Making Wind Work By Scott Gates

Wind energy has been used to improve quality of life for thousands of years. Rudimentary windmills were pumping water in Asia and grinding grain in the Middle East as early as 200 B.C.

Wind turbines were first used to generate electricity in Denmark as far back as 1890, and multi-bladed mills became a symbol of rural America in the early 1900s. With recent advances in technology, this driving force has been channeled by electric cooperatives and other utilities into electricity. Last year, enough wind was harnessed to power almost 10 million American homes (roughly 35,000 MW).

With help of tax credits and federal funding, wind power costs have dropped from 80 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) in 1980 to 8 cents per kWh in 2009. (In comparison, the cost for electricity from coal-fired power plants averages 3.6 cents per kWh; nuclear power roughly 2.1 cents per kWh; and natural gas, 7 cents per kWh.) As the generation becomes more affordable, wind power

plants in some parts of the country—often called wind farms—are now as common as weather-beaten windmills of the past.

How to Harness Wind

Wind power follows a basic premise: if you can turn a generator, you can produce electricity. Turbines convert the natural energy of wind into mechanical energy by attaching giant, wind-catching blades to a generator. When wind blows through the blades, they spin and generate power.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)'s Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy provides a step-by-step look at how wind turbines tap potential energy at www.eere.energy.gov/windandhydro/wind_how.html.

Pros and Cons

Some parts of America seem custom-fit for wind power. Over the last three years, two Alaska cooperatives Kodiak Electric Association and Alaska Village Electric Cooperative have been named Wind Cooperative of the Year, an award sponsored by DOE and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

The 2009 honoree, Kodiak Electric, uses wind to meet 9 percent of its power requirements. By harnessing wind when possible, the co-op plans to save more than 800,000 gallons of diesel fuel in 2010.

But wind doesn't blow everywhere, and rarely does so around the clock. Even in areas with strong wind resources, an active wind turbine typically only generates 20 percent to 30 percent of its "capacity factor"—the total electricity it could generate operating around the clock. A 2010 National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) survey found less than 1 percent of land in states like Alabama, Kentucky, and Georgia windy enough to achieve at least 30 percent capacity factor.

Because it's temperamental, wind can't be relied on as a steady source of

energy. Instead, think of wind as a "fuel displacer," allowing baseload power plants that rely on fossil fuels like coal and natural gas to burn less when wind blows.



Source: American Wind Energy Association


Moving energy from a wind farm to homes also raises difficulties. Transmission infrastructure may not be available in areas where the wind blows best, and building new transmission lines takes time, money, and a lengthy governmental approval process. Before turbines go up, studies must be done to judge the wind's variability in a given area. And although the sight of a tall, white wind tower may not be as intrusive as other types of power plants, environmental and economic impacts must be assessed. Will the turbine disrupt bird or bat migratory patterns? Will shipping routes be affected by an offshore wind farm?

Although great strides have been made in recent years and more wind turbines are built daily, making wind work as a reliable, affordable energy source will take time. To learn more about wind power's potential, visit the American Wind Energy Association at www.awea.org or NREL's wind section, www.nrel.gov/wind.

Sources: U.S. Department of Energy, American Wind Energy Association, National Renewable Energy Laboratory

For Your Information OUTAGES BY CAUSE

February 2010



Cause	Outages	
	#	%
Major Storm	56	45.16
Equipment	19	15.32
Decay/Corrosion	11	8.87
Member	9	7.26
Unknown	9	7.26
Trees	5	4.03
Ice	4	3.23
Power Supplier	4	3.23
Construction	3	2.42
Animals	2	1.61
Vehicles	2	1.61
Total	124	100

Staying Safe



I heard a pretty amazing story the other day. It involved two teens in Indiana, Lee Whittaker and Ashley Taylor, who were driving down the road with some friends when their car started to fishtail. Lee did his best to keep the vehicle on the road. But before he knew it he was sliding straight into a utility pole—and that pole came down, lines and all, right on top of his overturned car.

Now, most folks faced with this situation would do what comes naturally: get out of the car. But Lee and Ashley knew better. Not a week earlier they had attended a safety demonstration at their school sponsored by their local electric co-op. One of the key messages relayed was “stay in your car if it ever hits a power pole, where you’ll be safe from any electrical current.”

The two did just that, and kept their friends in the car and family members at a safe distance once they arrived.

As a result, the entire group walked away with just a few minor injuries. However, without a basic knowledge of electrical safety, the outcome that night could have been much different.

The electricity Whitewater Valley REMC provides day-in and day-out is a phenomenal resource, powering our modern lifestyles in a safe, reliable, and affordable way. But electricity must be respected: if safety isn’t made a priority, what changes our lives for the better could change them for the worse in an instant.

Lee and Ashley know this from experience, and we’re striving to keep you informed of electrical safety so you don’t have to learn a similar lesson the hard way.

Safety has been a part of the fundamental culture at Whitewater Valley REMC since day one. Being an electric lineworker is ranked by the U.S.

Department of Labor as one of the top ten most dangerous jobs, on the same list as fisherman, loggers, and military servicemen. We demand that not only those out in the field, but employees at all levels make safety a top priority.

As part of our safety commitment, please take time to learn how you can be safe around electricity at home. Spending just a few minutes with some helpful resources can make all the difference when you’re faced with a possible unsafe situation. For more information on electrical safety, please visit our website, at wwwremc.com, as well as SafeElectricity.org and Electrical-Safety.org.

I hope there won’t be any stories about Whitewater Valley REMC members getting into sticky situations like Lee and Ashley. But if there are, a few minutes spent studying safety today could ensure a happy ending. The hidden account number is 1054301.

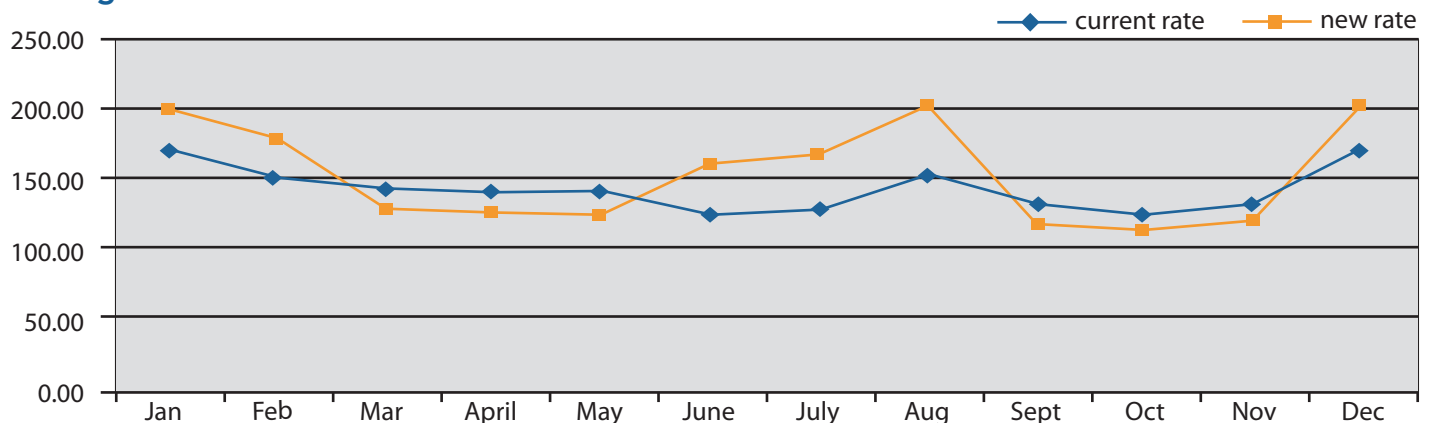


Together We Save Tips

- Install a programmable thermostat.
- Set your thermostat to 78 degrees in warmer weather.
- Install CFLs – we offer FREE CFLs – call or stop in for details.
- Check around the house to see if devices are unnecessarily plugged in.
- Apply for your rebate if you have replaced qualify heating, cooling and water heater equipment this year.

Go to Togetherwesave.com for more ideas and to complete an on-line energy audit.

Average Residential Bill



Attaching Signs to Poles is Illegal

Attaching signs or other objects to utility poles without the electric utility's consent is against the law and can be dangerous for our linemen.

Signs and other illegal attachments to power poles make the poles extremely hazardous—and sometimes impossible—for line workers to climb and make repairs. It only takes a nail partially driven into a pole to cause serious injury to a line worker. Nail holes also allow moisture to enter wooden poles, causing premature decay and the expense of early replacement.

Attachments to poles also pose a safety hazard for drivers as they impair visibility.

In addition to signs, the cooperative has also seen deer stands, bird feeders, basketball goals and other illegal attachments. It is often impractical and costly to send a lineman to remove pole attachments.

Whitewater Valley REMC asks the public to please refrain from placing signs or other structures on power poles.

Climate Change Debate Far From Over

Indiana cooperative members have been very engaged in the debate this past year sending close to 175,000 messages to Congress. You can learn more at www.ourenergy.coop and www.fairpowernow.org. The Fair Power Now web site contains a great new video explaining the concept of cap-and-trade and how it will effect your electric bill.

At both sites, you can register your opinion with members of the Indiana congressional delegation.



Doerstler Elected CFC Committee Chair

The National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) Board of Directors announced 2010 officers and committee chairmen during their recent annual meeting. We are pleased to announce that Jim Doerstler has been elected Chairman of the Finance Advisory Committee. Doerstler is the Assistant Secretary-Treasurer for the Whitewater Valley REMC Board of Directors. Formed in 1969, CFC is a privately owned, non-governmental organization that provides state-of-the-art financial products to its estimated 1,520 members.

May CFL Winners

Congratulations to the following members! They each won a complete home CFL package from the cooperative.

May winners are:
Melissa Abrams, Connersville
John Fohl, West Harrison
Belinda Gaddis, Connersville
Thad Thalheimer, Brookville
Randall Werking, Hagerstown

Each month we randomly select five members to receive a complete home CFL package.*



In addition to the drawings each month, the cooperative is giving away free CFL bulbs at the cooperative office in Liberty. There is a limit of six free bulbs per member.

For more information on CFLs and other energy saving ideas go to www.wvvremc.com and click on the Touchstone Energy Home Energy Audit link.

*while supplies last.



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Properly hooking up your clothes dryer can help save on energy costs. The outdoor dryer exhaust door should close when the dryer is off. Check to make sure the dryer vent hose is tightly connected to the dryer and also to the inside wall fitting. The vent hose should not be kinked or clogged.

Source: Alliance to Save Energy



Find the Hidden Account Number!

No one found the hidden account number from April. Keep reading your *Powerlines* each month or browsing our website — the next hidden account number could be yours!

May Due Dates

During May the due dates for payment of your electric bills are May 3, 10, 19 and 26.

Remember, we recommend that you allow five business days for the mail to reach the payment processing center. That way, you'll never run the risk of being late.

Payment Options

US Mail: Send your payment to:
 Whitewater Valley REMC
 P.O. Box 3199
 Martinsville, IN 46151-3168

Internet: Log-on at www.wvvremc.com

Liberty Office: In person or in the drop box

Automatic Withdrawal: Simply request a form and submit it to our office

FCN or Franklin County National Bank:

In person or in the drop box (Please bring your payment stub with you)

First Merchants Bank both Richmond Locations: In person or in the drop box (Please bring your payment stub with you)

If you would like more information about payment options, call 765-458-5171 or 1-800-529-5557.