

AUGUST 2023

POWERLINES

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR THE MEMBERS OF WHITEWATER VALLEY REMC

IN THIS ISSUE

PAGE 2

Factors That Impact Electricity Prices (Continued)

4 Key Factors That Impact Energy Bills

PAGE 3

Go Paperless
Get a \$5 Bill Credit

Coloring Contest Winner

Operation Round Up
20th Anniversary
Campaign Continues

PAGE 4

Director Candidate
Applications Available
on the Web

Bill Credit Winners

August Due Dates

The due dates for payment of electric bills are **August 19** and **26**.



wwwremc.com

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

FACTORS THAT IMPACT ELECTRICITY PRICES



MARY JO THOMAS
CEO

I was recently asked by one of our newer employees about what impacts electricity prices. We talked about how the daily cost of living has 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 explain some of the factors that impact electricity prices (and energy bills).

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

There are three primary parts to your monthly electric bill: a monthly service fee, an energy charge and a wholesale power adjustment (WPA). To understand your total energy costs and what impacts your bill, let's 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 WWVREMC's service territory, regardless of the amount of energy used. In order to ensure the reliable service you expect and deserve, we must maintain the local distribution system, including power lines, power poles, transformers 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 (the metal can at the top of a power pole) went from \$658 in 2020 to \$1,283 this year and wait times to receive this essential piece of equipment are up to 10 months. Power poles and wire have had similar price increases. 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 costs are shared across the membership with each rate class having its proportionate charge.

continued on page 2



continued from page 1

Another component of your monthly bill is the energy charge, which covers how much energy (kWh's) 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 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 since energy used for cooling and heating your home makes up a large portion of your monthly energy bills. Of course, we all want to be comfortable during hot summer days and nights. But did you know keeping the difference between the temperature of your thermostat setting and the outside temperature to a minimum can cut your energy use. Take advantage of our HVAC Tune-up incentive too. Members can apply for this incentive of up to \$50 for having their system serviced. We also offer fixed-budget billing and time-of-use rates, which can be helpful for our members. To learn more about those options, call our office, and our member support representatives can discuss those options in more detail.

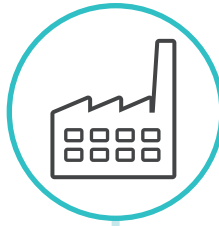
The last component of your bill is the wholesale power adjustment (WPA), which is the same amount for all co-op members. The WPA recently increased because of variable costs including higher fuel prices, which means the power that WWVREMC purchases from our wholesale provider is more expensive than planned in the base rates. The WPA covers fuel cost fluctuations without having to continually restructure electricity rates.

I hope this information sheds light on some factors that impact electricity prices. While we can't control the weather or the rising costs of fuels, please know WWVREMC 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.

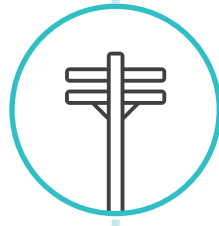
4 KEY FACTORS That Impact Energy Bills

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



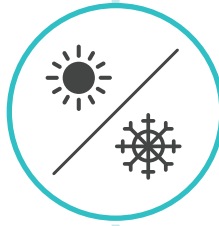
1 Fuel Costs

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



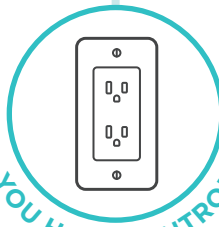
2 Service Costs

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 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, or kWh. You have control over how much energy you use, which can ultimately help manage your monthly costs.

YOU HAVE CONTROL



GO PAPERLESS.

Get a \$5 Bill Credit!

Paperless billing is not only a convenient way for you to pay your bill, but it also gives you access to your account and an easy location to store your bills. Going paperless allows you to pay your bills directly online, rather than needing to mail a payment or travel to pay your bill. It also allows you to have easy access to your billing history without the paper clutter at home. Going paperless is great for the environment and members benefit in other ways, too.

- A monthly email notification will be sent via email.
- See the identical bill statement online as you would receive at home.
- You will be able to access your SmartHub website or mobile app 24/7.
- Pay your bill online using your checking account or credit card. You will receive an email confirmation of your payments made online or through our mobile app.
- Your Powerlines newsletter will be emailed to you, so you won't miss out on important co-op news.

SIGN UP BEFORE OCTOBER 2 TO RECEIVE YOUR POWER BILL BY EMAIL AND RECEIVE A ONE-TIME \$5 BILL CREDIT.

Reduce the number of paper bills being sent to your home by enrolling in our paperless billing notifications. The hidden account number is 735300. It's free and simple!



COLORING CONTEST WINNER

In May, we held a coloring contest for children ages 5-14. We are pleased to announce that Emerlyn, age 5, is the winner. She is the granddaughter of Linda Lawyer, Modoc. Emerlyn won four tickets to the Cincinnati Zoo.

Thanks to all the kids who submitted entries.

OPERATION ROUND UP®

The 20th Anniversary Campaign Continues

Our annual Operation Round Up membership drive continues. Sign up through the end of August and be entered for a chance to win the summer grilling package. The winner will be selected from all entries on Facebook Live at the end of the campaign.

more support we receive from our members, the more lives will be changed! Complete the form below, check the appropriate box and fill in the amount of your donation where applicable.

PARTICIPATION IS EASY

Operation Round Up is a great way to help your community. If you are not a participant, simply sign up, and WWVREMC will automatically 'round-up' your monthly electric bill to support organizations within the cooperative service territory. You may also elect to contribute a one-time donation of a specified amount or contribute a specified amount to the fund monthly. Since the program began in 2003, donations have resulted in over \$644,000 being awarded to organizations throughout our communities, showing how much our members care about making a difference. While Operation Round Up is a voluntary program, the

**Yes! I want to help our community.
Sign me up for Operation Round-Up®**



Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Account Number: _____

- ☐ New participant, round-up my monthly bill.
- ☐ In addition to my round up, I want to contribute \$_____ each month to Operation Round Up®. (fill in the additional dollar amount to be added to monthly electric bill)
- ☐ I want to make a one-time contribution. My check is enclosed.

Send your completed form to Whitewater Valley REMC, P.O. Box 349, Liberty, IN 47353.



Each month we hide an account number in the Powerlines. Did you find it?

NO JUNE WINNER

Keep reading your Powerlines each month because the next hidden account number could be yours!

Payment Options

US Mail

Whitewater Valley REMC, P.O. Box 350
Liberty, IN 47353

SmartHub

Log-on at www.vremc.com.

Pay-by-Phone

Call 844-827-4759. Set up your PIN. Follow prompts.

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. Bring payment stub.

VanillaDirect

Visit vanilladirect.com for payment locations and details.



For more information about payment options, please call us:

765-458-5171 or 1-800-529-5557

Helpful Information

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. Login to your SmartHub account and report your outage.

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.

DIRECTOR CANDIDATE APPLICATIONS

Available on the Web

WWVREMC members interested in running for a seat on the WWVREMC Board of Directors are encouraged to read the Director Candidate Information Sheet and complete an application. The information sheet and application can be downloaded from the cooperative website.

Members interested in serving on the Nominating Committee can download the Nominating Committee Candidate Information Form. More information on the 2024 election will be included in upcoming issues of the Powerlines, but members can submit applications now for consideration at the Nominating Committee meeting(s).

Visit www.vremc.com/nominating-committee for more information.

Bill Credit Winners

Our monthly drawing for five \$20 bill credits from all voting members of the 2023 annual meeting continues. Here are the winners.

AUGUST

Stephen Glover, Richmond

Linda Westjohn, Fountain City

Douglas A. Myers, Fountain City

John Roell, Lynn

Steven McCauley, Centerville



101 Brownsville Avenue, P.O. Box 349, Liberty, IN 47353

765-458-5171 • 1-800-529-5557

www.vremc.com • info@vremc.com

President & CEO - Mary Jo Thomas • Powerlines Editor - Sandy Cason