

CRIME STOPPERS

800-452-1111

STOP COPPER THEFT!

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

The holiday season is upon us, and that means we'll be using more energy in the kitchen. When possible, cook with smaller countertop appliances instead of the stovetop or oven. Smaller appliances like slow cookers, air fryers and Instant Pots consume less energy.

When using the oven or stovetop, match the size of the pot to the heating element and place a lid over the pot while cooking. The food will cook faster, and you'll use less energy.

Source: Dept. of Energy



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Spinach Artichoke Dip

Ingredients

- 10 oz. package frozen spinach thawed, chopped
- 14 oz. jar artichoke hearts chopped
- 8 ounces cream cheese
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan
- 1 cup mozzarella cheese



1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Combine ingredients in a large bowl, stirring until well-blended.
3. Spoon mixture into a cast iron skillet or baking dish.
4. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes or until bubbly.
5. Serve with pita chips, brown bread, or toasted baguettes



SAFETY IS ALWAYS OUR FIRST CONCERN

Twice a year, our linemen practice pole-top rescue and climbing competency. They train to rescue a lineworker that could be injured while performing maintenance or construction activities on our power lines. Their goal is to get the lineworker to the ground safely within 4 minutes to conduct the proper medical procedures. Pictured is Director of Operations, Justin Murphy, practicing pole-top rescue. In the basket truck is Corning's lineman, Brycen Wallace.

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Southwest Iowa REC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Southwest Lines

A monthly publication for members of Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative

Corning | Mount Ayr | Stanton

November 2023

Notice of Rate Increase

On August 31, 2023, Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors approved an increase in rates and charges affecting prices for electric service that you receive. The increase will apply to your usage beginning on January 1, 2024.

The increase in annual revenues will be approximately \$1,061,752 or 8.25 percent.

Although the effect of the increase on your bill will vary depending upon the type and extent of usage, the average monthly increase per customer for the primary customer classes are:

Customer Class	Current Monthly Rate	Increase	=	New Monthly Rate	Percentage Increase
Single-Phase 0-50 KVA	135.73	13.53		149.26	9.97
Single-Phase >50 KVA	904.40	31.65		936.05	3.50
Electric Heat	72.50	2.54		75.04	3.50
Multi-Phase 0-50 KVA	265.31	9.29		274.60	3.50
Multi-Phase LPS >50 KVA	1,977.83	69.22		2,047.05	3.50
Large Power - Industrial	7,609.78	266.33		7,876.11	3.50
Large Power - Poultry	8,519.32	298.16		8,817.48	3.50

The "Single-Phase 0-50 KVA" customer class includes 93.5% of our customers. If you are unsure which customer class you are in or have any questions, please call one of our business offices for information. A written explanation of current rate schedules and charges is available without charge from any one of our local business offices.

Employee Updates & Recent Activities



Congratulations to Tanner Rinehart for 15 years of service. Tanner is the line foreman in the Mount Ayr location. Thank you, Tanner!



On October 4th, Southwest Iowa REC Linemen, Cody Stackhouse and David Head, attended Big Truck Event Mount Ayr. This event was hosted by Ringgold Parents As Teachers Program. Pictured are Kasen & Rylan Head, Ryder Stackhouse, and Lineman, Cody Stackhouse.



We wish all our members a safe and happy holiday!

Our office will be closed in observation of Thanksgiving on Thursday November 23rd and Friday, November 24th.



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Electric Rates to Increase January 1, 2024



Phil Kinser

To maintain the reliability and quality of the electricity service Southwest Iowa REC provides, on January 1, 2024, the price of electricity will increase by 8.25 percent resulting in an increase in annual revenues of approximately \$1,061,752. The effect of this increase on your bill will vary depending upon the customer rate class you are in and your usage. **The last electricity price increase for Southwest Iowa REC member-consumers went into effect in 2011, followed by a revenue-neutral adjustment in 2015.**

While price increases for any product or service are rarely, if ever, welcomed with open arms, we believe it is important to emphasize that this electricity price increase directly benefits you by either maintaining or improving the dependability and reliability of your electricity service.

The majority of our member-consumers (93.5%) are included in the Single-phase 0-50 KVA customer class. Following is a comparison of the current rate and the new rate for that customer class (please note that these rates include the average Energy Adjustment Charge or EAC):

	<u>New Rate</u>		<u>Current Rate</u>
Availability Charge	\$40.00 per month	Availability Charge	\$29.00 per month
First 1000 kWh	\$.13238 per kwh	First 100 kWh	\$.14652 per kwh
Balance kWh	\$.08175 per kwh	Next 800 kWh	\$.12832 per kwh
		Balance kWh	\$.07922 per kwh

In addition, many of our member-consumers are on our Electric Heat rate. That rate is increasing from an average charge of \$.06146 (EAC included) per kWh to \$.06395 per kWh. The Electric Heat rate is very competitive with other heating fuels.

What is the Availability Charge?

Occasionally we are asked to explain what the Availability Charge is on member bills. The Availability Charge is a monthly charge that does not vary with the amount of electricity used. This charge partially covers the fixed costs of operating your utility including operations and maintenance of meters, lines, poles, substations, interest expense, depreciation, insurance, taxes, trucks, equipment, billing, administration, and miscellaneous services.

The Cost-of-Service Study indicated that the Availability Charge for the Single-phase 0-50 KVA customer class, for example, should be \$61.78/bill/month. Although this charge is being increased from \$29.00 to \$40.00, it is still well below the cost to serve so we are relying on energy sales to make up the difference.

Will the Energy Adjustment Charge (EAC) go away?

No, the EAC will continue to be on your monthly bill. The EAC is calculated monthly using current costs for wholesale power compared to the wholesale power cost captured in the base rate. The base cost of wholesale power is deducted from the current cost of wholesale power and that "factor" is multiplied times your monthly kWh usage and added or subtracted from your bill. By doing this, Southwest Iowa REC can cover the fluctuating cost of its purchased power and not make frequent base rate adjustments.

Putting the upcoming electricity price increase into focus

The electricity price increase approved by the board of directors provides an opportunity for me, as the manager of Southwest Iowa REC, to help put the increase into focus.

Our cost of service and revenue requirements study and rate design is complete. The overall increase for the Cooperative will be approximately 8.25%. This increase will affect individual members and classes of members differently; your exact increase or decrease will depend on your actual electricity usage. The new rates become effective with usage beginning January 1, 2024.

When you receive your first bill reflecting the new price per kilowatt-hour, you may be glad to know the price is exactly the same as the price per kilowatt-hour the directors and many co-op staff pay for each kilowatt-hour of electricity they use as members of the Cooperative. Equally important to understand is the cost of running the co-op is the basis for determining electricity prices, which is why the directors, staff and I pay such close attention to daily costs. It's because those costs directly impact their own electricity bills - as well as yours. Almost everyone has heard someone say it's easier to spend someone else's money. Well, that is NOT how it works here at Southwest Iowa REC. The spending decisions are made by management, directors and staff that have a stake in the outcome. The decisions made directly impact their electricity bills, too.

We pride ourselves on doing everything within our control to manage the cost of providing you with reliable, affordable, and safe electricity in an environmentally responsible manner. This is not just because it impacts you; but because it impacts many of us too. You can be assured that the electricity price increase approved by the board of directors at the August board meeting was not an easy decision. Yet, your directors know it's exactly what is needed to continue to serve your needs now and in the future.

There are many factors that are part of the price of electricity over which we have limited or no control that contributed to the need for this price increase. Those factors include:

- higher costs for generating electricity
- environmental improvements at power plants
- routine power plant maintenance
- electric grid system improvements and maintenance
- technology upgrades
- higher health insurance costs
- increased labor costs that are necessary for retaining quality employees
- higher pension costs
- higher equipment purchase costs
- fuel and repairs for our equipment
- materials we purchase such as copper wire, transformers, poles, etc. have all increased significantly in recent years
- general property and liability insurance costs

We are constantly looking for ways to do what we can to limit those increases. Did you know there are several ways you can reduce your electricity bill in the coming months?

- **Request an energy audit.** This free service allows a trained professional from Southwest Iowa REC to come into your home or business to evaluate your energy use. We'll look for ways you may be able to save money!
- **Implement energy-efficiency improvements.** Often, relatively simple things like putting plastic over your windows in the winter, purchasing an energy-efficient heating and cooling system, if you're in the market for a new one, and turning the thermostat down a degree or two during the heating season and up a degree or two during the cooling season, can add up to significant savings. Please check out our website www.swiarec.coop for a complete list of cost-effective energy-efficiency programs and services available to help you save energy and save money.
- **Switch to budget billing and/or automatic payment options.** You can remove the fear of the unknown highest electricity bill of the year by participating in our level payment plan. Here's how it works. Your monthly electricity bill is calculated by dividing your annual electricity bill by 12, and that's what you pay per month. This is not a discounted electricity program. You still pay for the electricity you use, but the cost is spread out evenly over 12 months. If you're using less or more electricity compared to past usage, your monthly bill will be adjusted by taking the new annual electricity consumption and dividing it by 12. In some cases that could be a higher monthly bill and, in some cases, a lower monthly bill. The good news is you won't have to worry about that mystery bill that comes after a month of bitterly below normal temperatures or extremely high temperatures.
- **Sign up for SmartHub.** With SmartHub you will be able to view your electric usage which could help you to manage costs. SmartHub also allows you to make a payment, access payment history, view your bill, update your account, or contact information, and communicate directly with Southwest Iowa REC. You can sign up for SmartHub by downloading the app from iTunes or Google Play Store or by clicking on the SmartHub Bill Pay link on our website homepage at www.swiarec.coop. These are just a few ways you can save energy and money. If you're interested in talking about these examples or others, please call us at 888-220-4869.

Bravo.....

Thank you for attending and being a part of the Ag Career Day in Mt. Ayr. It was great to have you attend this event!

- Mt Ayr FFA members

Southwest Iowa REC,
Thank you for providing the t-shirts for the 4Hers at the Iowa State Fair. My friend and I did a working exhibit together and we received a certificate of merit. I will always remember the experience. Thank you for supporting Iowa 4H Youth.

- Bryson Lee

REC,
I was so thrilled when my number was called to win 6 months free electricity at the Annual Meeting! We are so lucky to live in SW Iowa

and have a strong cooperative where everyone works together to benefit everyone.
Big thanks,
Carolyn Nelson

Southwest Iowa REC,
I recently had the lucky ticket at the SWIREC annual meeting for a year's worth of free electricity. Since I do not have to choose whether to pay for food, medicine, or electricity, I have asked that the proceeds go the SWIAREC Operation Round Up program. I have always been grateful for the excellent service provided by SWIAREC. May God bless the SWIAREC employees and keep them safe.
Sincerely,
Max & Margaret Peterson

Thank you, Ken Peppmeier



Ken Peppmeier was recently recognized by the Board of Directors for his 9 years of service from 2014-2023. Ken also previously served on the Board of Directors from 2002-2006. We appreciate all that Ken contributed to the cooperative and his support of the members and employees.

Pictured is Board President Marilyn Werner presenting Ken with a Certificate of Appreciation.

