



Why do electric bills go up in the winter?

You may notice that your bills are higher during the colder months. The size of your bill and how it is calculated is dependent on how much electricity you use. Rates in the winter don't increase, so if your bill goes up in the winter (or summer for that matter), it's because more electricity is being used. In the winter, heating is a large piece of the usage "pie," weather accounting for nearly half of your bill. First, it is important to note, when it's extremely cold outside it takes more energy to warm your home. When it's 70 degrees outside, compared to even a 90-degree day in the summer, the system does not have to work as hard. When it's 10 degrees outside, your system must make up the 60-degree difference to keep it warm indoors. Your system works harder and cycles more often, making your usage higher. Even if you have a gas or LP furnace, electricity

is still needed to run the blower and fans. Here are some additional things to consider when pinpointing where the extra use came from:

- Warm baths or showers feel great on cold days – and heating extra water can increase your consumption and your electric bill. Be sure your water heater is properly insulated if it is in an unheated space, and have it checked for leaks.
- Heat pumps are efficient heating systems, yet if it malfunctions, they become electric furnaces that will lead to high electric usage. Verify the outdoor unit is operating on a weekly basis, keep filters clean and make sure the coils are clean too.
- Christmas can mean company who may not always turn off the lights. Was there any baking or cooking over the holiday season?
- Christmas lights (remember those?)
- Shorter days and longer nights mean that we use lighting more both inside and out.

- Space heaters feel great in basements, garages and bathrooms, but they use a lot of electricity.
- Engine block heaters can be necessary to make sure vehicles and equipment start, but can impact your bill.

Try using SmartHub, our online internet portal, on your desktop or mobile device. You can see how much energy you used yesterday, last week or last month, as well as what the temperatures were. If your energy use suddenly takes a spike, there may be a problem that you can pinpoint and fix before you get the bill the next month. **05-22-0005**

Remember, there is value in comfort and convenience. For us to be comfortable in our homes, many things in our homes will most likely be working harder and longer in the winter months, but it may be worth the additional cost. When reviewing your bill, consider that the usage during your billing cycle is directly reflected in your amount due for that month. To learn about the budget billing option or an energy audit, please contact our office.

Board vacancy

Due to an upcoming retirement, a vacancy on our board of directors will become available.

If you are a consumer-member living in Jackson or Williamson county and are interesting in learning more about this exciting opportunity, please visit our website at www.eeca.coop/about-egyptian/board/





Egyptian Electric
Cooperative Association
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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Choose your payment option!

- At our office lobby, drive-thru, drop-box, or payment kiosk
- Mail to: 1732 Finney Road, Murphysboro, IL 62966
- Set up recurring bank draft or credit card payments
- Use SmartHub portal, online or mobile app
- By phone, using credit card or checking account
- Off-site kiosks located at 2301 N Reed Station Road in Carbondale and 1306 N Market Street in Sparta



**Our office
will be
closed
January 1 for
New Year's
Day**



**Our office will be closed on
January 21 in observation of
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Is your hot water tank warm to the touch? Consider insulating it to save 7 to 16 percent annually on water heating costs. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations.

Source: energy.gov



MEMBER PRIZES

Every month we will have three map location numbers hidden throughout our Egyptian Electric News section. If you find your location number, that corresponds to the one on your bill, call our office and identify yourself and the page that it is on and you will win a \$10 credit on your next electric bill.

Egyptian Electric is looking for the next generation of leaders

What do 1,500 high school students, our nation's capital and electric cooperatives have in common? The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, of course! Youth Tour was established with one thought in mind – to inspire our next generation of leaders. Since 1964, more than 50,000 young Americans have taken advantage of this special opportunity offered by their electric cooperatives. It all takes place in June, when hundreds of electric co-ops across the country send participants to Washington, D.C. for a chance to learn about the cooperative business model and a full week of sightseeing. While in D.C., participants have a chance to meet with their elected officials and discuss the issues that are important back home. Without a doubt, Youth Tour has grown into an invaluable program that gives young Americans an experience that will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

In January, we will begin the application process to select local students to attend Youth Tour June

14-20, 2019. If you are a high school sophomore, junior, or senior interested in traveling to Washington, D.C. to experience the trip of a lifetime, please contact us for more information. Perhaps you know of an exceptional student who would be a great candidate for the program. If you do, please share this article with them. Eight students will be chosen to attend the all-expense paid bus trip on April 3 to meet their elected senators and representatives at the State Capitol alongside their counterparts from other Illinois high schools and communities. From these students, two will be invited to attend the week-long trip to Washington, D.C.

Melissa Crosby, a former Chester High school student and Egyptian Electric Youth Tour representative, said, "I enjoyed meeting other students from around the state, and it was a memorable experience that I will cherish for the rest of my life. I appreciate being given the opportunity!" **54-21-0014**

Youth Tour is so much more than a sightseeing trip. Students have



repeatedly shared that this experience has helped them grow into successful professionals. It has also benefited our local communities. Youth Tour participants return home with a deeper understanding and skillset of what it takes to be a leader. As a result, they put these skills to use right here in our community.

Help us find the next generation of leaders by sharing the Youth Tour opportunity with a promising student. For more information about Egyptian Electric's Youth Tour program, call Brooke at 618-684-2143, email bguthman@eeca.coop, or visit www.eeca.coop.

Touchstone Energy Classroom Grants

Thank you to all the Egyptian Electric Touchstone Energy Classroom Grant applicants, and to the 10 winners and their students! We truly appreciate every one of the educators that went the extra mile by taking the time to apply on behalf of their students. The top 10 projects that will be awarded \$500 to fund or assist their proposed classroom projects are:

- **Interactive Tools for Increased Student Engagement** - Samantha Holcomb of St. Andrew School in Murphysboro
- **Arduino Kits for Learning** - Shelly Avery, science department chair, Carterville High School
- **Light Table for Sensory Room** - Carla Vaca Dietz and Anne Kaszubski, kindergarten and first grade teachers at Parrish School in Carbondale
- **Quail Production** - Dustin Sievers, agriculture teacher, Elverado High School in Elkhart
- **Chromebooks for STEM Education** - Kim Kraatz, Carterville Jr. High School
- **Focused & Engaged Learning** - Dawn Seward, special education teacher, Carbondale Middle School
- **Community Classroom Projector** - Matthew Foster, administrator of Christ Our Savior Lutheran High School in Evansville
- **Classroom Audio System** - Kimberly Dillow, fifth grade teacher, Giant City School in Carbondale
- **Quilted Math** - Elizabeth Grandt, instructor at Murphysboro Middle School
- **Tiered Grow Light** - Kendra Bower, third grade teacher at Carruthers Elementary in Murphysboro

EECA hosts first Key Accounts Luncheon

We conducted our very first annual Key Accounts Luncheon on Thursday, Nov. 1 at Legends at Walker's Bluff from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. We invited our top 25 accounts for a buffet lunch and presentations to learn more about our organization, power production, challenges we face and will continue to face. Nick Reitz, VP of Government Relations of our statewide association the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives (AIEC) and Paul Furtak, VP Risk Management and Strategic Planning with Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC), were our two speakers that presented to our account representatives. We had 28 key accounts present and are looking forward to continuing this new program moving forward! **31-05-0009**



Nick Reitz, VP of Government Relations of the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives, addresses the attendees of the luncheon.



Colder temperatures are here, and Egyptian Electric Cooperative is offering two options for energy audits. The first option will be a “walkthrough” energy audit, or evaluation. The walkthrough is as it sounds; a walk around the outside and throughout the home looking at attic insulation levels, foundation and crawlspace insulation, doors, windows, water heaters and heating and cooling systems.

As there will be no written report, the homeowner will need to be present and ready to take notes. The auditor will discuss any deficiencies in the home they discover and make verbal recommendations to the homeowner, bringing to light the “low hanging fruit.” The walkthrough evaluation typically takes no longer than an hour to two hours and costs \$50 (that will be added to the member’s next bill).

The second option is a complete diagnostic audit. With a diagnostic energy audit, the auditor will inspect the same things as in a walk-through audit, but will also perform a blower door test, use an infrared camera when temperatures allow (it must be sufficiently cold or warm outside so there is a substantial temperature differential to show up on the camera) and when combustible furnaces or appliances are present, a Combustible Appliance Zone (CAZ) test to ensure the appliances do not back draft or have too high of carbon monoxide output. The auditor will take photos of issues identified and provide the homeowner with an audit report with documented and prioritized recommendations. The cost of the diagnostic audit is only \$150 to encourage our membership to be proactive in reducing wasted energy consumption! Call our office now to learn more or to schedule an audit this season.