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Market volatility and rolling blackouts

MURPHYSBORO – The possibility of rolling blackouts and electric rate increases across the Midwest have consumed the news of late. The electric rates of Egyptian Electric Cooperative Association (EECA) consumer-members remain stable. While consumer-members of EECA are shielded from most of the market volatility that is forcing investor-owned utilities to increase electricity rates, we are not immune from inflation and supply chain concerns as these items will continue to put upward pressure on electricity rates.

EECA and all Illinois utilities are part of a larger regional electric grid. For the Midwest, MISO (Midcontinent Independent System Operator) manages the coordination and stability of the electric grid across multiple states. As summer-time temperatures rise, consumers use more electricity. Reliability issues can occur when more electricity is required than is available. Electric utilities are preparing for the possibility that the greater regional area may not have enough electric supply to meet peak demand. If this event were to occur, MISO may call for temporary rolling blackouts.

“Egyptian Electric wants all consumer-members to be aware and prepared that the potential for a blackout exists,” says Shane Hermetz, EECA general manager. EECA has created a website as a resource to keep our member-consumers informed as the market evolves and more information becomes available: <https://eeca.coop/market-pricing-possible-blackouts-eeca/>

We encourage you to assist us in curbing electric demand by implementing everyday energy conservation methods to help reduce stress on the electric grid this summer. You can use these tips to most effectively reduce energy consumption, that will also in turn, save you in cost on your utility bill:

- Set your thermostat(s) in your home to a minimum of 76-degrees, and use ceiling fans, in a counterclockwise mode, to circulate cooler air.
- Reduce your water heater setting to 115 degrees, or to the lowest temperature.
- Turn off lights and unplug electronics when not in use.
- Avoid using large appliances from 2-10 p.m. such as washer, dryer, dishwasher, pool/spa pumps, and electric vehicle charging.

“By working together,” Hermetz says, “we can do our best to ensure all consumer-members have an adequate electric supply.”

Egyptian Electric Cooperative Association (EECA) is a member of Touchstone Energy — a national alliance of local, consumer-owned electric cooperatives providing high standards of service to members large and small. More than 700 Touchstone Energy cooperatives in 46 states are delivering energy and energy solutions to more than 30 million members every day. EECA is committed to providing superior service based on four core principles: integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community. The co-op serves more than 15,000 meters over 2,000 miles of line in Jackson, Perry, Randolph, St. Clair, Washington and Williamson counties, and parts of Franklin, Johnson, Monroe and Union counties. For more information visit www.eeca.coop.

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