

Norris Electric *News*

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

2012 Rate Increase

Norris Electric is committed to delivering quality, reliable power at the lowest possible cost. To maintain the quality, reliability and integrity of the services we provide it is necessary for us to adjust our pricing structure. This increase is based on numerous factors, the largest of which is purchased power. Norris Electric's rates remain very competitive with other utilities on an average basis, generally lower than those of other utilities serving Illinois residents.

To lessen the impact of the current rate increase to our members, your Board of Directors has approved a stepped plan increase over a three-year period beginning in 2012. Your January 2012 bill will reflect these adjustments. A typical residence using 1000 kWh per month will see an increase in their bill from \$96.98 to \$107.20 in 2012, an increase of \$10.22 per month. Other residential kWh usage increases are below:

KWh	2011 Rate	2012 Rate	Increase
500	\$ 60.33	\$64.60	\$ 4.27
1000	\$ 96.98	\$107.20	\$10.22
1218 - Average	\$112.96	\$125.77	\$12.81
1500	\$133.63	\$149.80	\$16.17

Please keep in mind this is the first of three increases over the next three years. We anticipate similar increases in 2013 and 2014 to maintain financial stability.

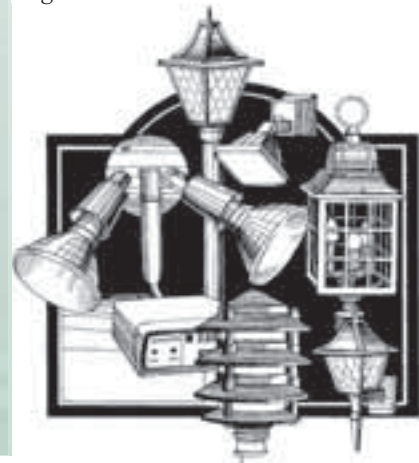
While rate adjustments are never easy, we must ask you as members of the Co-op to share in these costs. Maintaining dependable service at the most affordable price possible remains the cornerstone of our business. To accomplish the goal, we must also protect the integrity and financial stability of the cooperative.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the implementation of this rate adjustment, we encourage you to call our office at 877-783-8765. We will do our best to answer your questions and we are available to work with you on ways to reduce your energy usage.

Dusk to Dawn lights available

Since the time change has made our nights even longer, this may be a good time to think about installing a dusk to dawn light.

Norris Electric Cooperative offers security lights for a small monthly fee starting at \$6 for a 100-watt, high-pressure sodium, dusk-to-dawn light. This cost covers installation, operation and maintenance of the light. The electricity the light uses is not metered and is included in the monthly fee. The only requirement is the light must be installed on a Norris Electric pole. It's a great deal for our members! Contact our office at 877-783-8765 to sign up or visit our website at www.norriselectric.com to print a copy of the lighting agreement.



Norris Electric Cooperative • Newton, Illinois 62448 • 783-8765 • www.norriselectric.com

A new year for efficiency

Many people turn over a new leaf at the beginning of a new year by making a resolution. This year why not make a resolution to stop wasting money? Some efficiency improvements are easy to accomplish, while others are more complex. Tackling it all at once can be overwhelming, but spaced out over a year, they are more manageable.

Efficiency actions that can be taken in the next few weeks:

- Buy and install low-flow showerheads, faucet aerators, and compact fluorescent lamp (CFL) bulbs from a hardware or home improvement store.
- Put a water heater blanket on your older water heater to help water in the tank stay hot.
- Apply rope caulk to very leaky window frames.
- Assess your heating and cooling systems, and determine if replace-

ments are justified or whether you should retrofit them to make them work more efficiently and provide the same comfort (or better) for less energy.

Efficiency actions that can be taken in the next few months:

- Separate your electricity and heating oil/natural gas bills. Target the biggest bill for energy conservation remedies.
- Find out what level of insulation is recommended for your area at EnergySavers.Gov. Then crawl into your attic and/or crawlspace, and inspect the insulation in order to determine if there is enough. If not, add the appropriate amount.
- Insulate hot water pipes and ducts wherever they run through unheated areas.
- Seal up the largest air leaks in your house. The worst culprits are

usually not windows and doors, but plumbing penetrations, gaps around chimneys, and recessed lights in insulated ceilings and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets.

- Have an energy auditor with a blower door determine where the worst cracks are.
- Set your thermostat lower in the winter (higher in the summer) when you can accept cooler (warmer) conditions. This generally includes nighttime and whenever you leave your home for several hours. Many people find it easier to use an Energy Star programmable thermostat that you can set to automatically adjust.

For more information on home efficiency, go to EfficiencyResource.org.

Is a space heater your best choice?

When the weather starts to get really cold, most of us are happy to settle into the comfort of our homes and workplaces. But sometimes, those places just don't seem to get warm enough. Even though we turn up the thermostat, our feet may still feel frosty, or an arctic draft may be sending shivers down our backs.

Portable space heaters offer one solution to the problem of cold rooms. Most electric space heaters are very simple devices that use coils of what's known as resistance wire to generate heat. If you've watched the coils inside your toaster glow bright orange, you've seen resistance wire in action. Often, a fan blows air across the coil to spread the heat around the room. Some space heaters wrap the wire around ceramic pieces or encase it in a sealed, oil-filled radiator. Both of those approaches allow for more even heat, and help the heater to remain warm even after the electricity stops flowing through.

(There are also non-electric space heaters, but those may not be suitable for indoor use without ventilation. Most generate heat through combustion – the process of burning a fuel such as kerosene or wood pellets – and they create fumes, moisture and deadly gases like carbon monoxide.)

While a space heater can generate a tremendous amount of heat in a very short time, it may not be the most economical or efficient solution for ongoing needs. Even a fairly small space heater can consume 1500 watts of electricity, the same as 20 standard 75-watt light bulbs. Running it 8 hours a day at \$.08/kWh can add \$18.00 to your monthly bill. Usually, whole-house systems are far more efficient.

If you have a room that's cooler than the rest of the house, or one with an annoying draft, the real problem may be that the room is not properly sealed. That means any kind of heater is going to have to work a lot harder

– and a large amount of the warm air you create is just going to seep out of the room. By identifying and solving the real problem, you may eliminate the need for the space heater and improve your comfort all year 'round. It may be as easy as caulking around a window or improving the weatherstripping on a door.

If you do decide to use a space heater, think about safety. Space heaters that are certified by agencies such as Underwriters Laboratories have built-in safety features, but you'll want to think twice about keeping them where young children or nosy pets might be tempted to touch them. They should also be kept a safe distance from paper and other combustible materials.

If you have a room that's just not comfortable, or if you're wondering whether a space heater is the right choice for you, let us at Norris Electric advise you. It's one more way we provide free advice when you want it and help when you need it.

Attention high school seniors

The Norris Electric Cooperative Board of Directors have decided to increase the number of scholarships to be awarded in 2012 from one to three. Each \$500 scholarship will be awarded to the son or daughter of a Norris Electric member who is currently receiving service from the cooperative at the time the scholarship application is submitted.

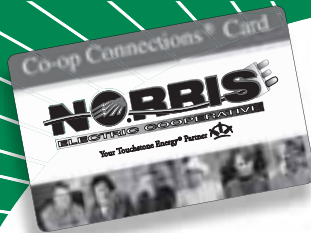
Requirements for application:

- Must be a high school senior
- Must begin college within a year of notification
- Must be a full time (12 hours) student

Scholarship awarded based on:

- Grade point average
- College entrance test scores
- Work and volunteer experience
- School and community activities
- Knowledge of electric cooperatives
- Biographical essay

Deadline for application submission is Feb. 1, 2012 and the winner will be notified by May 1, 2012. For more information call Norris Electric at 618-783-8765, log on to our website at www.norriselectric.com or contact your high school guidance department.



Co-op Connections® Card featured local business

Bales Unlimited, Inc. - Emerging from the recent boom in the travel industry are many companies offering a variety of travel services. We at Bales Unlimited Inc., realize that you have many choices in your travel plans. This is why we have made it our mission to lead the industry in safe and reliable transportation.

We are a family owned and operated company offering motor coach and limousine services for over 20 years. Based in Effingham, Ill., we

are centrally located allowing us to provide service to destinations both locally and nationwide. Our location also gives us the ability to provide service to four international airports.

Our fleet consists of modern luxury wide-body motor coaches in addition to our Lincoln super stretch limousines, Executive Party Bus and Limo bus. We take pride in owning and maintaining the reliability and safety of our fleet. We have received the Safety Excellence Award on numerous occasions.

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Bales Unlimited is located at 9845 East 1900th Avenue, Shumway, IL 62461. Please call for a quote at (217) 868-9998 or toll free 1-800-225-3708 or visit us at www.bales08.com.

Use your Co-op Connections card from Norris Electric and receive 10% off total booking- Charter Bus or Limousine Service (excluding existing Charter Bus or Limousine bookings).





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Norris Electric Cooperative • 8543 N. State Highway 130 • Newton, Illinois 62448 • 618-783-8765

Office hours: Monday — Thursday

7:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m