

Norris Electric *News*

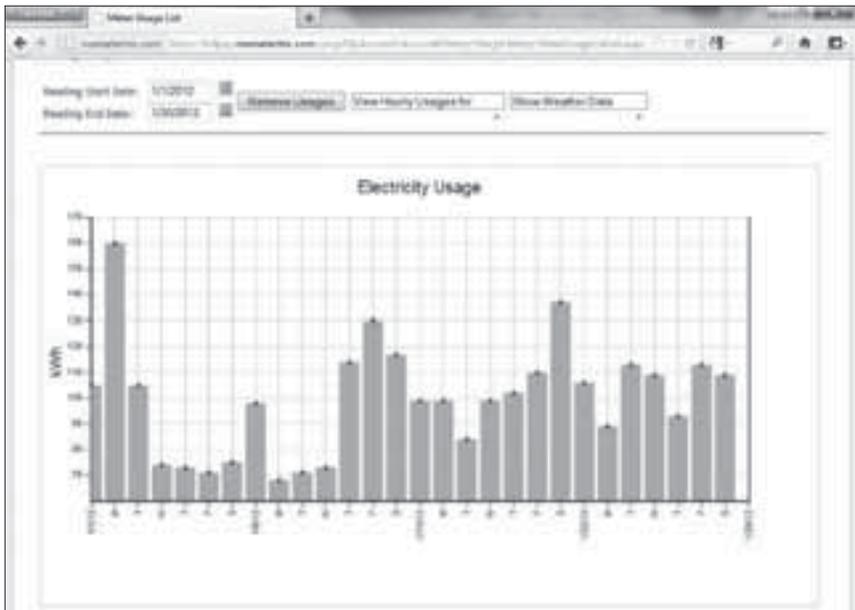
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

New Online Services Available

Norris Electric Cooperative members have been able to pay their bills from our website for quite some time but now there are additional features under the “Manage Your Account” link at www.norriselectric.com. Some of the features include sign up for bank draft or credit card draft, view your billing and payment history, view your kWh usage history, and sign up to receive alerts and reminder notifications such as payment confirmation and due date reminders.

Once in the “Manage Your Account” portal of the website, you will need your account number and a password to access the system. If you already pay your bills online, it will be the same account number and password you use to access that (remember the account number now has three trailing digits instead of two, i.e. 12345678-01 becomes 12345678-001 but leave out the dash when entering your account number). If you don't have a password, you may obtain one through the portal. Our records must have your current home phone number and a valid e-mail address to assign a password. You may also call our office at 877-783-8765 to obtain a password for your account.

There are four main menu items in the “Manage Your Account” portal, **Payments, My Account, My Alerts, and Services**. We will cover each menu item in more detail below.



Payments

- **Make Payment** – Selecting this option directs you to a list of your accounts. Select the account you would like to pay, click on the continue button, and select ‘yes’. Then select the payment option, either payment by credit card or payment by e-check, enter the required information and click the submit button. Note the payee on your financial statement for this transaction will be listed as “Norris Electric Cooperative”.
- **Pay by Draft** - Our **Bank Draft** program allows you to pay your bill electronically, without the hassle

of writing a check. By authorizing us to deduct the amount of your monthly bill, your payments will be made automatically, the day before your bill is due, except for weekends or holidays in which case it will be on the next business day. **Credit Card Draft** allows you to pay your monthly bill electronically, without having to remember to schedule the payment. By authorizing us to pay the amount of your monthly bill using a credit card saved on file, your payments will be made automatically, on time, every time. With these programs, you will continue to receive a monthly statement as

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you normally would. To enroll an account in either of our Pay by Draft programs, select an account from the list, click the continue button and enter the required information.

- **Payment Profile** - By saving your **Credit Card Profile**, you eliminate the need to re-enter your payment information each time you visit this site to make a payment. Your security and privacy are guaranteed, and you may change your profile at any time. If you add, change or delete any data on this screen, you must also re-enter the credit card number. By saving your **E-Check Profile**, you eliminate the need to re-enter your payment information each time you visit this site to make a payment. Your security and privacy are guaranteed, and you may change your profile at any time.

My Account

- **Account History** - The **Billing History** option directs you to a list of your accounts. Select the account you would like to view and click on the continue button. This page displays the billing history for your account. The Balance shown for each bill is the amount due on the bill plus all payments and adjustments that are made prior to the beginning of the next billing cycle. The Account Balance is the amount currently due for the account. A binocular icon in the View column indicates that the bill can be viewed online. Click on the binoculars icon to view an electronic version of your bill. To view your Payment History for a particular account, select the account from the list and click the Continue button. All payments for the selected account are listed. The **Usage History** option allows you to view your kWh usage in graphical format based on the criteria selected. To view usage history for a particular account, select the

account from the list and click the Continue button. The page will be refreshed with a graph of daily kWh usage for the selected account (see daily usage graph). You may select to show average, low, and high temperature as well as heating or cooling degree days on the daily usage graph. You may also select to show hourly kWh usage for your account and select to overlay weather data including temperature, humidity, heat index, wind chill, wind speed, and percent cloud cover. This is valuable data in understanding your electrical usage.

- **Deposits** - Deposits are normally returned to our members after 2 years of service and a satisfactory payment history. Deposit refunds are applied as a credit towards the member's account. Any of the following criteria will preclude the return of a deposit on an account: three or more delinquent payments during the previous 24 months of history, or has been cut off in the past 24 months, or has any returned checks within a 24 month period. Existing deposits on all accounts are listed in this section.
- **E-Notifications** - Start receiving electronic notifications by signing up for **E-Bill** today. To enroll, or to change your billing method at any time, select an account and then click the Continue button. An e-mail address is required when registering for E-Bill.
- **Change Password** - It is recommended that you change your password on a regular basis for added security. Your password is case-sensitive, may contain spaces, and must be between 1 and 10 characters long. Your Password Hint should be a word or phrase that reminds you what your password is in the event that you forget.

My Alerts

- **Alerts & Reminders** - Alerts and Reminders can be used to help monitor your account activity. Whether receiving a text on your cell phone or having an email sent, you have a choice of how you would like us to inform you of changes to your account. To enable Alerts and Reminders for a particular account, select an account from the list and click the Continue button. Verify the E-mail address and mobile number which we have in our records, so that alerts & reminders can be sent and update the E-mail address and mobile number if required. Select preferences for alerts and reminders via either text messages or e-mail including due date reminders, past due date reminders, account profile changes, returned check alerts and payment confirmation. Select your preferences and click the submit button. You will start receiving the selected alerts and reminders based on your selections.

Services

- **Budget Billing** - Sign up for budget billing with this option. Select the account and click continue. A zero balance on your account is required for this option to work.

Norris Electric Cooperative is very excited to be able to offer these new services to our members and we hope it will be beneficial to both of us as we move forward in the digital age. These new services will make our billing department more efficient and at the same time provide our members with important information about their accounts. Although these services are now available, please remember you may always contact us in person at 877-783-8765 or e-mail questions to billing@norriselectric.com for any of the mentioned services.

International Year of Cooperatives

The world is celebrating *you*

The cooperative model has stood the test of time. It's proven to be an effective means to help people just like you, meet common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise efforts. In simple terms, a cooperative makes it feasible for a group of people to accomplish what an individual in business might struggle to do.

The cooperative model pre-dates 1844. However, it was in that year that the Rochdale principles were first penned in England as the governing trademarks for running a small, local consumer cooperative. Through the years, the principles have been adapted to make them relevant to the time, but the early pioneers of this model continue to have their stamp on the 7 Cooperative Principles on which we operate.

In fact, the cooperative model is so successful that the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2012 to be recognized as the International Year of Cooperatives. In the United States that would be 350 million people with memberships in 29,000 cooperatives. And in Illinois, among cooperatives, Norris Electric, your electric cooperative, makes you one of the key players.

So, let's look inward to see how our cooperative is serving you.

We have **Voluntary and Open Membership** – the first of the seven principles. If you move into Norris Electric's territory, our electric services are open to you. We don't discriminate. The only requirement is that you accept the responsibilities of membership.

Do you attend our Annual Meeting each year? You absolutely should. There you can exercise your rights under the second principle – **Democratic Member Control**. It is at the Annual Meeting when you can exercise your right regarding any

issues that come in front of the membership. Prior to the Annual Meeting, members may submit petitions to try to gain a seat on the Board of Directors for the Cooperative. If there are multiple candidates for board seats, ballots are mailed to all members and the successful candidates are announced at the Annual Meeting. Keep in mind, your interests and their interests are the same because they live in the cooperative territory. You want affordable, reliable services. They do, too.

Your contributions to the cooperative's capital mean you reap the rewards of its successes, hence the third principle – **Members' Economic Participation**. Your payments not only provide electricity to your home, but they keep our cooperative structure in place, which in turn serves you. Those on the lines before you, and your contributions have or will assist in the following: developing the cooperative, possibly setting up reserves, benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

The fourth provision provides you – **Autonomy and Independence**. Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations. You have the control. Should Norris Electric Cooperative enter into an agreement with a government agency or embark on a capital venture, we do so on your terms.

As a cooperative we are interested in your safety and well-being. As a cooperative we attempt to inform you of financial savings and life-saving precautions through direct contact with you. We provide newsletters and issues of Illinois Country Living (your rural electric magazine) and we have a presence on the Web (www.norriselectric.com) to help educate you on these issues. In addition, we train our managers and

board directors so they will make the wisest decisions regarding your electricity. Through this the fifth principle is fulfilled – **Education, Training and Information**.

We know the cooperative model is great framework in which to do business. Can we strengthen that? Yes. Cooperatives serve their members and strengthen the cooperative movement when working together through local, national, regional and international structures. That's known as the sixth principle: **Cooperation Among Cooperatives**.

The final cooperative principle – **Concern for Community** – completes the picture. Not only do we exist to provide a service, but the member is truly at the heart of our operations.

Manager Keith McKinney stated "We try to stay in tune with the local communities through Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations and other community organizations. We also provide education and safety training to communities and schools. We support our youth by offering Youth to Springfield, Youth to Washington and scholarships as well as donating to our local 4-H organizations. By staying in touch with our local communities we get a better idea of what our members want."

In short, your cooperative/our cooperative is working to enhance the community. Sometimes it comes in the form of home improvement programs such as the recent HomeE grant rebates that put money back in your pockets. Or it might help to bring a service to our area, such as WildBlue Internet. Regardless, everything we do must be to enhance our community and your lives.

As the world celebrates the cooperative in 2012, we are proud to be an example of a viable cooperative now operating in its 74th year. And we are happy to celebrate you as a member.

Co-op connections card featured local business

SD's Auto & Residential Glass - You can stop worrying about your damaged home windows or auto glass. Our company specializes in glass repair and replacement. We offer general glass repair, windshield replacement, and windshield repair. You can rely on our certified auto glass technicians to repair or replace your damaged auto glass. Rest assured that we make use of high quality auto glass for your car.

Our glass specialists can also assist you with home window replacement. With SD's Auto & Residential Glass, you are assured of working with a reputable company as we are a member of the Better Business Bureau and the Independent Glass Association.

Please give us a call if you need more information about our company and our glass repair and replacement services. SD's Auto & Residential Glass is a local company based in Mt. Carmel, Illinois.

SD's Auto & Residential Glass is located at 916 W



9th St, Mount Carmel, IL 62863. Please call us at (618) 262-8800.

Use your Co-op Connections card from Norris Electric and receive 1/2 off rock chip repair (if the chip is under the size of a quarter).

Deadline nears for nominating your dad

Each year the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives sponsors a contest to recognize a deserving mother or father for his outstanding service to his family and community. Many have overcome obstacles in their lives that stand as true testaments to their fortitude and integrity. If you have such a father or know a man in the community deserving of this year's Father of the Year title, please write a letter to the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives by March 15.

It's not difficult. Fill out the form on page 15 of this month's Illinois Country Living and either mail your letter or e-mail it according to the instructions. A story on the winning father will be featured as an upcoming cover feature in the ICL. The father will also receive prizes and recognition at a community event held in his honor. Be sure to enter.

Attention!! Account numbers changing!

Due to recent software changes, all Norris Electric Cooperative members' account numbers changed to include a three-digit "separator" at the end (instead of the previous two-digit "separator.") Your new account number now contains a 0 before the last two digits. For example, if your current account number is 8203395701, your upgraded account number would be 82033957001.

You must update your payment information if you use any third-party methods for paying your bill each month, such as automatic payments through your bank's website. (No action is required if you mail your payment each month, pay by phone, pay in per-

son or have signed up for auto-pay with Norris Electric).

Please take the necessary steps today to ensure your bill payment transactions are not interrupted. If your payment is sent to the wrong account number, our system will not recognize it and your payment will not be credited to your account.

Norris Electric apologizes for any inconvenience this change may cause. However, we believe all members will benefit from the added services and greater efficiency made possible by our new billing system.

If you have questions concerning any of these programs or changes, please contact Member Services at 1-877-783-8765.

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Office hours: Monday — Thursday

7:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m