

President's Report



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President/CEO

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Effective this month, Spoon River Electric Cooperative raised the facilities charge on your monthly bill from \$15 to \$18. This cost is the same for every member and is a fair way of spreading the rising cost of providing power among all members.

The facilities charge is a flat rate that helps us pay for power and maintenance on lines and equipment. Even when members use little or no power, we still incur costs to keep it ready for them should they decide to flip the switch. Our facilities charge is still among the lowest of all cooperatives statewide.

We are also conducting a cost of service study, which takes a comprehensive look at how much it costs us to provide power to our membership. We have to be prepared to meet the capacity of all members, but some have energy needs that are steady and others have needs that vary depending on several factors. As we look at the future of rates for our cooperative, we want to make sure we are fairly passing on costs. We currently use a fuel adjustment to cover the fluctuating cost of buying power. The cost of service study will help us accurately pinpoint how to charge members based on usage patterns and the cost of making electricity available.

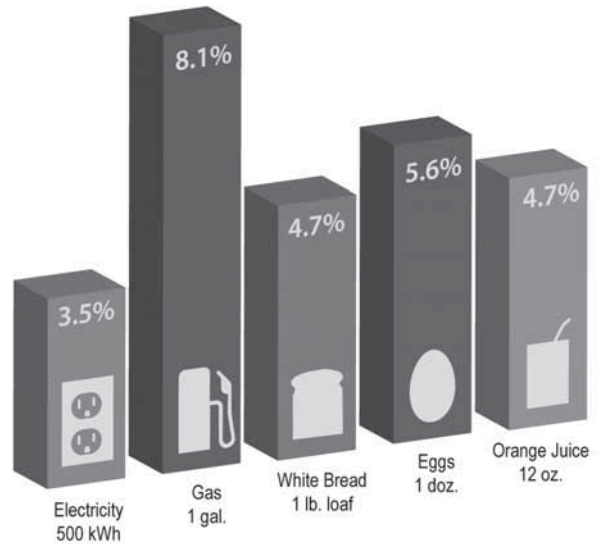
With climate change legislation still under discussion, it's a precarious time for the electric industry. If the government mandates we pay more in energy taxes, we will have to pass that cost on to members. That troubles me greatly at a time when I know many can't afford to pay more. Please stay engaged in the climate change debate and let your legislators know how you feel.

If you have any questions about the new facilities charge, please feel free to call me at 309-647-2700.

Electricity Remains a Good Value

Electricity continues to be a bargain, especially when compared to other consumer goods. As demand for energy rises and fuel prices increase, your electric cooperative is committed to providing safe electricity at the lowest possible cost.

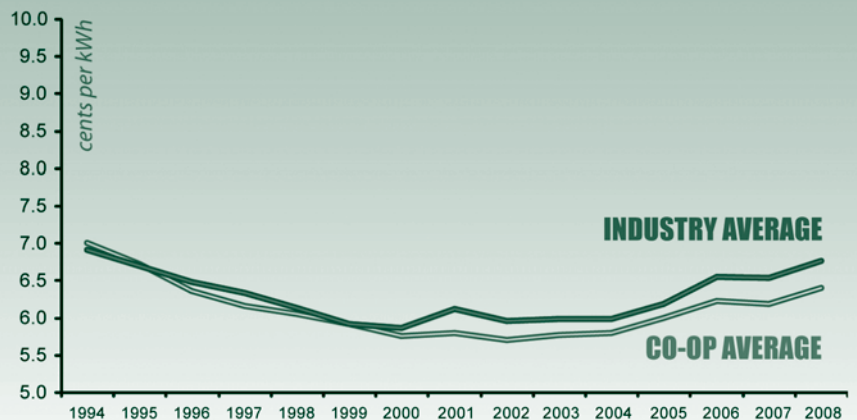
Average annual price increase over the past decade:



Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; NRECA

Co-op electric rates still lower than average

Residential electric rates have held steady for many years. Between 1994 and 2000, inflation-adjusted rates actually fell. Since 2005, inflation-adjusted rates for co-ops have been rising by 2.2 percent per year, but are still below the industry average.



Sources: U.S. Energy Information Administration; NRECA



Spoon River Mechanical Services Electrician John Dunning makes an adjustment to a Generac generator at Prairie Power, Inc. in Jacksonville. Electricians from Spoon River Mechanical recently installed the 130 kilowatt commercial grade generator to provide backup power to the offices of Prairie Power, of which Spoon River Electric Cooperative is a member. The electrical division of Spoon River Mechanical can also install a generator to back up power to your home or business. Call (309) 647-3450 for more information.

Line clearance crews will be working in the Wee-Ma-Tuk area this month. They will do planned tree trimming and removal of brush along right-of-ways for lines. If you have any questions about the work being done, call Josh DeWees, Manager of Line Clearance, at (309) 647-2700.



Keep Out the Cold with Weather Stripping

No mistaking it: winter has arrived. Any drafts around doors and windows that went unnoticed during fall are now downright uncomfortable—and adding to your energy bills.

Weather stripping offers a relatively quick fix for drafty doors. To determine if a door leading out of your house needs new weather stripping, look for daylight. If even a sliver of daylight remains visible between the door and its frame or the floor, add weather stripping.

Next, shut the door or window on a piece of paper. If you can pull the paper out without tearing it, you're losing energy.

There are a variety of weather stripping materials available, each good for fitting different types of door and window frames. Most are made of rubber, foam, metal, vinyl, or a combination of materials. To determine the right item for the job, check the area: if any old, worn material has been previously installed, take a sample to your local hardware store or expert like a contractor. If no material exists as a guide, make detailed notes about the type of gap and how the door or window is installed — someone at the hardware store or your expert should be able to make a recommendation for you.

Once you have the proper materials for the job, consult any instructions that may be on the weather stripping package. Installation techniques range from simple to technical, depending on the type of material being used. If replacing old, worn weather stripping, be sure to note how it was installed as you remove it.



Here are a few basic guidelines:

- Weather stripping should be applied to clean, dry surfaces in temperatures above 20 F.
- Measure the area to be weather stripped twice before you cut anything.
- Apply weather stripping snugly against both surfaces. The material should compress when the window or door is shut.
- Make sure the weather stripping meets tightly at the corners.
- Use a thickness that causes the weather stripping to tightly press between the door and the door jamb, without making it difficult to shut.

When weather stripping doors:

- Choose the appropriate door sweeps and thresholds.
- Weather strip the entire door jamb.
- Apply one continuous strip along each side.

When weather stripping windows:

- Apply weather stripping between the sash and frame.
- The weather stripping shouldn't interfere with the operation of the window.



State of Illinois
Pat Quinn, Governor
Illinois Department on Aging
Charles D. Johnson, Director

Be a Savvy Senior



© Elder Financial Protection Network

Were you the victim of a home repair scam?

Don't let it happen again!

- ▶ If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- ▶ Get estimates before doing home renovations.
- ▶ Do not pay for work in advance.
- ▶ Never do business without checking references.
- ▶ Don't be afraid to call the police and have them check out the credentials of someone who is working in your area.

Were you the victim of a telemarketing scam?

Don't let it happen again!

- ▶ Don't pay for any prize or send money to improve your chances of winning. It's illegal to ask you to pay to enter a contest.
- ▶ Don't be bullied into buying something "right now." If the caller persists, end the call.
- ▶ Don't give your credit card number to anyone over the phone unless you made the call.
- ▶ Don't give any caller your bank account number.


If you or someone you know has been the victim of a scam, call the Department on Aging to talk confidentially with someone who will help you to alleviate the situation.

Statewide Elder Abuse Hotline:

1-866-800-1409, 1-888-206-1327 (TTY)

This project was supported by Grant # 2002-VA-GX-0017, awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, through the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. Points of view or opinions contained within this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice, or the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.

The Illinois Department on Aging does not discriminate in admission to programs or treatment of employment in compliance with appropriate State and Federal statutes. If you feel you have been discriminated against, call the Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966, 1-888-206-1327 (TTY).

Printed by Authority State of Illinois Rev. 6/06 - 500M, 9/05 

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Federal tax credits are available for home energy efficiency improvements, including windows, doors, water heaters, and HVAC equipment for existing homes. For details, visit energystar.gov/taxcredits.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

