



Why do my electric bills go up in the winter?

That's a good question with a fairly simple answer. Higher Usage.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, an independent statistics & analysis resource, there are many factors that affect the amount of energy a household uses year-round.

- Geographic location and climate
- Type of home and its physical characteristics
- Number, type, and efficiency of energy-consuming devices in the home, and the amount of time they are used
- Number of household members

During southern Illinois winter months, home heating can account for nearly half of your utility bill.

All member-consumers have a flat service availability charge listed on their monthly statement. Otherwise, residential monthly bills are calculated using the published rates multiplied by each month's electric usage. Egyptian Electric Cooperative energy rates do not change or fluctuate based on season. Temperatures and usage are variable and can be unstable and unpredictable in nature. As cold temperatures set in, more kilowatt-hours (kWhs) are consumed on the member-side of the meter, that directly affect overall costs in a given period. **13-36-0003**

It is important to note that when it is extremely cold outside, it takes more energy to warm your home. In the summer, when your thermostat

is set at 70 degrees inside, compared to even a 90-degree day, the system(s) does not have to work as hard to make up the 20-degree difference. On the flip side, when it is 10 degrees outdoors, your heating system(s) must create and maintain the 60-degree temperature variance to manage comfort indoors. When the heating system(s) work harder and cycle more often, it will result in increased energy usage. Should you have a gas furnace, electricity is still used to run blowers and fans.

We get several calls during the cold months from consumer-members contemplating the possibility of a faulty meter to blame. Although failure is always a possibility, further investigation in most instances leads

► Continued on 18C



Egyptian Electric
Cooperative Association
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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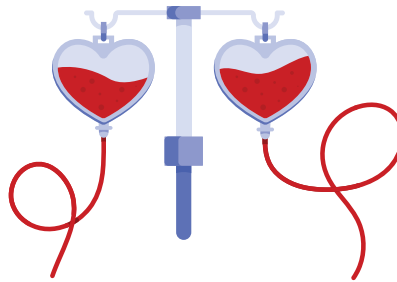
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Office Closure

Friday, December 31, 2021
for the New Year

Monday, January 17, 2022
MLK Jr. Day



Blood Drive

February 8, 2022



Egyptian Electric Annual Meeting

Thursday, July 14, 2022

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.



► *Continued from 18A*

to a discovery that, usage is proportional to recorded temperatures based on the described make-up of a member's home, its characteristics, and their desired level of comfort. Other times, when the usage is not easily explainable or still seems incorrect, it could later be attributed to an equipment malfunction, failure, or another unforeseen issue.

Here are some additional things to consider when pinpointing where higher, or unexplainable, usage could be coming 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 very efficient heating systems, yet when it malfunctions, they can become electric furnaces that will lead to high electric usage. Regularly verify the outdoor unit is operating properly. Keep filters clean and make sure the coils on the unit outside are clean too. HVAC malfunctions can be costly to repair, and when they linger over long periods of time, will be costly to your electric bills.
- Temperature settings. Do you have a smart thermostat? What temperature do you keep your home thermostat set at throughout the day and night? Comfort levels vary person to person and can have a significant impact on usage. Also ensure that your thermostat is in the most economical location inside your home.
- The holiday season can mean additional guests that can affect extra (appliance) usage, such as a washer, dryer, lighting, and hot water to name of few.
- Shorter days and longer nights cause more energy usage from

Christmas lights and lighting in general, inside and out.

- Space heaters feel great, but they can use a lot of electricity. If you are using a space heater extensively, you could be compensating for problems in your home, such as inadequate insulation, drafty windows, doors, or an inefficient heating system.



- Engine block heaters can be necessary to make sure vehicles and equipment start but can impact your bill. **9-31-0008**
- Older mobile homes and modular homes statistically use more energy than many traditional built homes due to the nature of construction. Make sure the underbelly of the home is not uninsulated, which leaves the home vulnerable to outside air infiltration.
- Duct work. We have observed many instances when metal duct work is left uninsulated or placed in uninsulated environments, such as under the home or in attic spaces. Energy is wasted when warm to hot air travels through cold ducts, or through holes and/or loose or detached duct work.

If you don't already, we urge you to utilize SmartHub, our online

internet portal, on your desktop or app on your mobile device. You can, on demand, see how much energy (kWhs) you used yesterday, last week or last month to name a few. You can also view what the temperatures were like on corresponding days. If your energy usage suddenly spikes, there may be a problem that you can pinpoint and fix before you see the repercussions on your following bill.

We also now show detailed information on our bills to help better communicate the relationship between usage and temperatures. You can see your monthly usage, with temperatures, a two-year monthly usage comparison graph, average daily usage, and average daily costs. Please know we want you and all our members to efficiently utilize energy.

In fact, we have various online resources on eeca.coop, under our energy efficiency page, such as tips, digital downloads, audit information and virtual tools. We also have booklets in our lobby and available upon request to help you recognize shortcomings within your home "envelope" with suggested worksheets and methods to address them. We offer free walk-thru energy audits, conducted by our employees to help identify energy efficiency issues. Full energy audits can also be requested that offer numerical data with a written report at a nominal cost.

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. When reviewing your winter bills, please consider these factors, monitor your usage, and assess the possible impacts that could be causing high energy consumption. As always, please contact our office during business hours, to speak with a live person on any questions you should have.



Youth Tour 2022

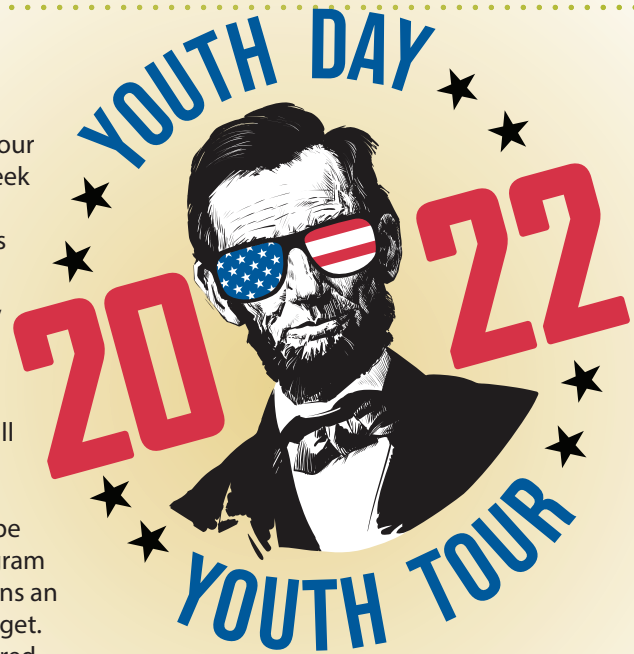
Applications for the 2022 Youth Tour are now available! Youth Tour was established to inspire and empower our next generation of leaders. With Youth Tour unable to occur the last two years, we are looking forward to relaunching this program to our southern Illinois students.

Since 1964, more than 50,000 young Americans have taken advantage of this unique opportunity offered by electric cooperatives across the nation. Youth Day will be held on March 29, 2022. In previous years students have been chosen to attend Youth Day where students have met with their elected senators and representatives at the State Capitol alongside their counterparts from other southern schools and Illinois communities. From Youth Day two students would be selected for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Youth to Washington trip, or Youth Tour as it is also called. Youth Tour takes place in June, when hundreds of electric co-op student participants travel to Washington, D.C. to learn about the cooperative business

model, our government, and our nation's history. Within the week students will experience the best of the best in our nation's Capital with their newfound life-long friends. While in D.C., participants will meet with their local Congressmen and can discuss issues important to the students. Youth Tour will take place June 17-24, 2022.

Without a doubt, Youth Tour has established itself to be an invaluable leadership program that gives our young Americans an experience they will never forget. Students have repeatedly shared that this experience has helped them grow into successful professionals. Youth Tour participants return home with a deeper understanding and skillset of what it takes to be a leader. As a result, they seek networking opportunities and can put these skills to use right here in our communities. **52-16-0007**

Help us share this Youth Tour opportunity with a student leader! If you are or know a standout high school sophomore, junior or



Youth Day March 29th
Youth Tour June 17th - 24th

senior interested in traveling to Washington, D.C. to experience the trip of a lifetime, please visit eeca.coop to learn more or contact us for more information. Deadline to apply is Feb. 11, 2022.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Maximize your heating system's performance by inspecting, cleaning or replacing air filters once a month or as needed to reduce energy costs and prevent potential damage to your system.

Make sure radiators, baseboard heaters and warm-air registers aren't blocked so air can flow freely.

Source: Dept. of Energy

