

Finding the value of electricity

Nowadays, cell phones and personal digital devices are a part of our culture. Everyone, it seems, is connected on the go — whether they're just making phone calls, text messaging, or checking e-mail. Such communication freedom is a luxury we pay for, generally without grumbling.

So why is it that when it comes to electricity — a necessity in our modern world — many of us grumble and complain when the electric bill comes every month? We expect electricity to be there at the flip of the switch, and when it's not, we get angry or frustrated.

Hey, I'm no different — I expect the lights to come on every time, too. And as the CEO of Spoon River Electric Cooperative, I have a special responsibility to make sure your electric service is safe, reliable, and affordable. But I also believe

that when compared to other commodities, electricity remains a great value.

For example, over the past 10 years, gasoline has shot up 10.9 percent on average every single year, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. A loaf of white bread has increased 4.2 percent annually, and a dozen eggs 6.5 percent per year.

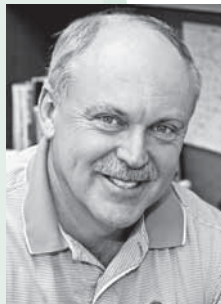
In comparison, electricity has increased just 3.7 percent a year nationally for the past decade. When you consider how reliable electricity is, the value goes up even more.

Those cell phones I mentioned earlier? Nearly a third of all U.S. households have four electronic devices, such as cell phones, plugged in and charging, according to the Residential Energy Consumption Survey by the U.S. Energy Information Administration. In the past 30

years, the amount of residential electricity used by appliances and electronics has increased from 17 percent to 31 percent. More homes than ever use major appliances and central air conditioning. Digital video recorders (DVRs), computers, and multiple televisions have become ubiquitous.

Clearly, our appetite for electricity shows no signs of slowing down. So the next time you flip a switch, use your toaster, or run your washing machine, remember the value electricity holds. And know that we at Spoon River Electric Cooperative are looking out for you by working together to keep electric bills affordable, controlling costs through innovation, and putting you, our members, first.

President's Report



William R. Dodds
President/CEO

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Check out a Kill A Watt

How much electricity do the appliances in your home use? Find out with the Kill A Watt. Just plug the meter into an outlet, then plug any electronic device into it. The Kill A Watt will show you how many kilowatt hours the device is using, allowing you to determine how much it costs each month on your bill.

Spoon River Electric Cooperative now has several Kill A Watts available for members to check out. Stop by the office at 930 S. Fifth Ave., Canton, or call (309) 647-2700 to learn more.



Give your home's energy use a vacation when you're on vacation

Going on vacation? Even if you plan to be away just a few days, you can save energy in your home when you travel. Here are some tips from Spoon River Electric Cooperative that can give your utility bill a break when you take a break.

Water heater. Turn down the temperature, so it doesn't keep the water warm while you are away.

Thermostat. During hot weather, turn up the thermostat on your air conditioning system. That way, you'll save energy while ensuring that your home doesn't get too warm. If you're away during the winter, lower the temperature on your furnace. The house can be as cool as 50 degrees without the risk of your pipes freezing.

Refrigerator. Depending on food stored in your fridge, you may be able to turn the thermostat as high as 38 degrees without risking spoilage. Storing water-filled bottles in your refrigerator can prevent temperature fluctuations, which will save energy. Food in the freezer compartment will stay frozen if the temperature remains at minus 5 degrees.

Lights. Turn off all lights in your home. You may want to install timers on one or two lights for security.

Electronics. Unless you're recording something while away, unplug all of your electronic devices—computer, monitor and printer, TV and cable boxes, DVD player, microwave, and digital clocks. Any electronics with digital displays, instant-on features, or remote controls will consume energy even if they're not in use.

For other tips on how to save energy — and money — visit Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives energy-saving website, www.TogetherWeSave.com.

Source: Touchstone Energy Cooperatives®



Spoon River Electric Cooperative

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Spoon River Electric Cooperative – By the Numbers

Miles of line energized: 1,249 • Number of members served: 4,944
Number of power poles in territory: 29,255



ATTENTION 2011-2012 SENIORS!

Spoon River Electric Cooperative is Awarding Two \$500 Scholarships to High School Seniors

High school students who are seniors during the 2011-2012 school year, and are the son or daughter of a Spoon River Electric member, are eligible to apply for a \$500 Scholastic Scholarship or a \$500 Honorary Scholarship, awarded by the cooperative at this year's Annual Meeting held on September 1, 2011.

Fill out the form at the bottom of the page and send to the cooperative before August 22, 2011 to participate. Please see official rules and descriptions of scholarships below.

OFFICIAL RULES

- Applying students and their parent/legal guardian must be present at the Annual Meeting September 1, 2011, to win.
- Students must be a son or daughter of a Spoon River Electric Cooperative Member.
- Students must be a high school senior during the 2011-2012 school year and begin college undergraduate studies in the 2012-2013 school year.
- Students must plan on attending a two-year or four-year accredited college or university, including vocational/technical schools.
- Scholarship winners must be full-time students (at least 12 hours) during the 2012-2013 academic year.
- Scholarships are for one year and are non-renewable.

SCHOLASTIC SCHOLARSHIP

- The Scholastic Scholarship will be awarded based on an application detailing GPA, college entrance test scores, work and volunteer experience, participation in school and community activities, and a biographical statement.
- Five semi-finalists will be chosen from the scholastic application forms received.
- Semi-finalists will be notified by mail with a time and place for a personal interview.
- Those not chosen as semi-finalists for the Scholastic Scholarship will be automatically placed in the Honorary Scholarship drawing.

HONORARY SCHOLARSHIP

- The Honorary Scholarship will be awarded by a drawing as students are recognized at the Annual Meeting.
- All applicants are eligible for the Honorary Scholarship drawing except the Scholastic Scholarship winner.



Scholarship Participation Request

Name of Student _____

Address of Student _____

Name of Parent/Guardian _____

Telephone Number _____

Scholarship Applying For: Scholastic* _____ Honorary _____

Return To: Brenda Rothert
Spoon River Electric Cooperative
PO Box 340
Canton, IL 61520
647-2700

*Those applying for the Scholastic Scholarship will receive an additional form in the mail regarding scholastic achievement.



Home of the Free and Land of the Brave

The Illinois Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives thank our servicemen and women and veterans for their bravery. Her generation and generations to come will enjoy the freedom for which you've fought!



Energy Efficiency *Tip of the Month*

Consider using solar lights for outdoor lighting. Solar cells convert sunlight into electricity that can be stored in a battery and tapped at night to make light. Check manufacturers' instructions to make sure your solar lights are situated to receive sufficient sunlight to recharge each day.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy