



More Power to You

Electricity's Value is Easy to Find

Shane L. Larson,
Chief Executive Officer

Popular demand and short supply drive the cost of everyday necessities higher. Some price tag changes—like the cost to fill your car's gas tank—are obvious to anyone driving down the road. Other increases at the grocery store are more subtle, but they still impact your family's bottom line.

Look at the chart on this page to compare the average price increase of a few household expenses to see how the rising cost of electricity stacks up. The cost for a gallon of unleaded gasoline shot up 11.1 percent on average every year between 2002 and 2012, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Eggs don't go over easy—the cost for a dozen eggs increased 7.8 percent. Apples felt the crunch with a jump of 4.8 percent—every year.

In comparison, the cost of electricity grew at a slower pace—3.2 percent a year, on average. The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) reports homeowners across the nation pay an average of 11.7 cents per kilowatt hour.

Unlike eggs or apples, electricity is a 24-hour-a-day commodity. Despite energy efficiency advancements, the average household uses more electronic gadgets—and needs more power to operate them—every year.

Thirty years ago appliances and electronics accounted for 17 percent of the amount of residential electricity used, according to the Residential Energy Consumption Survey conducted by the EIA. Today that figure has increased to 31 percent. The survey found that nearly a third of all U.S. households have four electronic devices, such as cell phones, plugged in and charging.

Clearly, our appetite for electricity shows no signs of slowing down. So the next time you flip a switch, charge your cell phone, or run your washing machine, remember the value that electricity holds. And know that here at Rock Energy Cooperative we're looking out for you by keeping energy bills affordable, controlling costs through innovation, and putting you—our members—first.

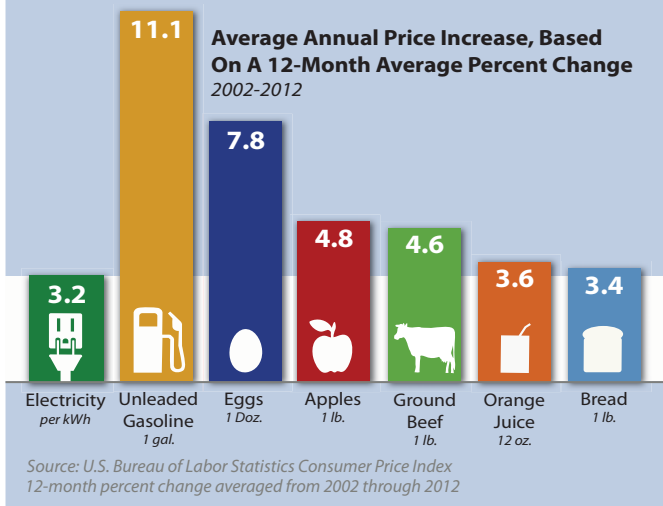
It's been three years since the co-op has modified residential rates. After absorbing past years' increases from our power supplier and being notified of another significant increase, it has become necessary to examine the cost structure of all rates. If it becomes necessary to adjust rates, please be sure to keep an eye on these pages for additional information.

We work hard to keep your energy safe, reliable, and affordable. But you also play a role in the price of your power. Just as you might cut back on eggs if your budget is tight, we can help you cut your monthly energy bill. See how little changes add up at www.TogetherWeSave.com.

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, of which Rock Energy is a member, also has produced a short video called *Everyday Value* that shows that electricity is still one of the best values out there. You can watch it on Rock Energy's YouTube channel. Just go to www.youtube.com and search for Rock Energy Cooperative.

Electricity Remains a Good Value

The cost of powering your home rises at a slower pace than expenses like gas and groceries. Compare the average price increase of these expenses each year over the span of a decade, and the value of electricity shines.



Celebrating Co-op's Independence

July is the time we celebrate our nation's independence. In the midst of apple pies and hot dogs, fireworks shows and parades, I can't help but think about the independent streak that inspired groups of farmers around

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Check Out Our New Website!

New Design Features Fresh Look, Easy Navigation

Rock Energy Cooperative is excited to announce the launch of our new website with a fresh look, easy navigation, and greater focus on members' needs.

Many features have been added, and the new user-friendly layout allows you to easily access the information you need. Just click on the e-Bill logo conveniently located on the home page to view your monthly statement or make a payment.

The main part of the home page will feature the most recent co-op news and important announcements. In this example, we focused on our 2013 scholarship winners.

The tabs in the gray bar near the top of the page help us organize the website into succinct categories.

- **Your Account:** This section has links to everything you need to manage your energy account online.
- **Your Benefits:** Check out this section to discover the many benefits offered to you as a co-op member, including general information on capital credits, the Co-op Connections Card, and youth programs.

www.rock.coop

Many Rock Energy Cooperative members still use our old address, www.rceca.com, to access our website. That address will still get you to our new site, but now is a good time to bookmark www.rock.coop in your favorites and delete the old address.



- **Your Co-op:** Use the links in this section to find out about upcoming events, learn about the co-op's history and your current board members, and get information about Rock Energy. This section also includes links to the local pages of your monthly co-op magazine and newsletter.
- **Your Energy:** This section offers advice and tips about how you can more efficiently use energy in your home or business. In addition, you can click on the Together We Save logo at the bottom of every page to participate in Touchstone Energy Cooperative's national energy-efficiency campaign. The website promotes small changes that people can make to experience big savings on their energy bill.
- **Your Safety:** Electric and natural gas safety is featured in this section.

The top of the home page has a Search box that will help you find information on the website. If you can't locate something, just select the Contact Us link. You can email, call, or stop in with questions. Our staff is always willing to help. ■

Water and Electricity Don't Mix

When the weather gets hot, we head outdoors for sun and fun. Keep in mind some tips from the Electrical Safety Foundation International to make sure everyone has a safe summer.

- Awareness of electrical hazards around water while swimming and boating can prevent deaths and injuries. Always remember that water and electricity don't mix.
- Sailboats often have masts of 30 feet or more, which are dangerous when they come into contact with overhead power lines. Look up as you get close to shore, and stay at least 10 feet away from overhead lines. Coming into contact with an energized power line causes serious and sometimes lethal electric shock.
- Use covers on outdoor power outlets, especially near swimming pools. Keep cords and electrical devices away from the water, and never handle electrical items before you've dried off.
- Use a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to help prevent electrocutions and electrical shock injuries. These devices interrupt the flow of power when they sense a surge. Portable GFCIs require no tools to install and are available at prices ranging from \$12 to \$30.

Working with Large Appliances

If your air conditioner goes out, keep a few things in mind before you start poking around. Large appliances, such as air conditioners, are responsible for almost 20 percent of consumer-product electrocutions each year.

- Understand your electrical system—know which fuse or circuit breaker controls each switch, light, and outlet.
- Use a circuit tester—always test before you touch.



Use extreme caution when using electrical appliances outdoors, and make sure the outlet has ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection to prevent shocks.

- Make sure circuits are turned off before starting work and take measures to ensure they're not turned back on while working.

Lightning and Storms

Lightning strikes are fatal in 10 percent of victims, and 70 percent suffer serious long-term effects, according to the National Weather Service. Because lightning can travel sideways for up to 10 miles, blue skies are not a sign of safety. If you hear thunder, take cover.

- If weather conditions indicate a storm, stay inside—away from doors and windows—or seek shelter in a low-lying area away from trees and any metal, including sheds, clotheslines, poles, and fences. If you're near water, stay as far away as possible.
- If you're in a group, spread out—don't stand close together.
- Indoors, unplug electronics before the storm arrives, and don't use corded phones.
- Avoid plumbing—sinks, bathtubs, faucets.
- Don't forget about your pets. Doghouses are not safe from lightning, and chained animals are easy targets.
- If your home is flooded during a storm, don't turn on appliances or electronics until given the green light by an electrician. If there's standing water, don't go inside. The water could be energized.

Find more safety tips at esfi.org. ■

A colorful graphic announcement for a pancake breakfast. It features a stack of pancakes on a fork. The text reads: "Mark Your Calendar! Member Appreciation Day 2013 Pancake Breakfast Saturday, Sept. 14 • 8 to 10:30 a.m. REC Headquarters, 2815 Kennedy Road, Janesville, Wis." A blue starburst graphic says "Watch for details!".

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Pancake Breakfast**
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REC Headquarters,
2815 Kennedy Road, Janesville, Wis.

Watch for details!

Get Connected

Check out these great deals offered with your Co-op Connections Card.



The Studio, 759 S. Fremont St., Janesville – (608) 363-8273

Full-service portrait studio. Involved in the photography field in southern Wisconsin since 1983. Photography is not just my business; it's my passion. Every session is treated as an event. Kids, pets, families, senior portraits, modeling portfolio, weddings, business, events, and a couple of our "artsiest" sessions, Water's Edge and Trash Your Dress. Very traditional to cutting edge; unique services include digital restoration of old photos, copy work, photographic business cards, passport photos, and greeting cards.



Free 8x10 (\$40 Value) with paid portrait session (\$25 value)

Best Western Legacy Inn & Suites, 5910 Technology Drive, South Beloit – (815) 389-4211 – www.bestwestern.com

Hotel with complimentary deluxe continental breakfast, wireless internet, heated pool, hot tub, exercise facility, meeting space available, refrigerator and microwave in all rooms, cable and HBO, free local calls, cribs available, hot tub rooms available, free parking. Easy access from I-90/39 & I-43.

10% Off



Healthy Savings Discounts

The same program that offers discounts at local merchants and has saved Rock Energy members \$52,000 on prescriptions also provides significant savings on dental, vision, hearing, lab and imaging services, and chiropractic work. To locate providers that participate in the Healthy Savings program, call (800) 800-7616 or go to www.rock.coop, click on the Co-op Connections Card, and look under the Healthy Savings tab. Be sure to have your Co-op Connections Card handy.

Add Up Your Savings!

Tell us how much you have saved by using your Co-op Connections Card. If you have a story you'd like to share, e-mail Barbara Uebelacker at BarbU@rock.coop or call her at (866) 752-4550.



P.O. Box 1758
2815 Kennedy Rd.
Janesville, WI 53547

(608) 752-4550 • (866) 752-4550

Shane Larson, CEO
Barbara Uebelacker,
Editor

P.O. Box 126
15229 Willowbrook Rd.
South Beloit, IL 61080

More Power to You

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America's countryside to band together and improve their quality of life.

Aside from President Franklin Roosevelt's promise of federal aid in the form of low-interest loans and engineering expertise, rural Americans didn't have much help in bringing electricity to their homes. They pulled themselves up by their proverbial bootstraps and did it themselves.

This independence not only tends to inspire cooperatives. It's a guiding principle. The Fourth Cooperative Principle, "Autonomy and Independence," means that no matter what contracts Rock Energy might enter into, we will always remain an independent entity.

Each year, our annual meeting becomes an independence celebration. You vote for candidates on the board of directors, and we discuss co-op business. We share a meal and have some fun.

Energy cooperatives form a vast network across the country, from coast to coast. Co-op lines are strung in 47 states, serving 42 million people—a different world from 1935, when much of America remained dark. This Fourth of July, as we recognize the hard-fought war that created the United States, I'll also tip my hat to Rock Energy Cooperative's founders, who beat incredible odds to make life better for themselves and their neighbors.

If there's anything we can do to serve your energy needs and improve our service to you, please let us know. In the meantime, have a safe and happy Independence Day! ■

**Have a Safe
and Happy
Independence Day!**

Rock Energy Cooperative offices will be closed on Thursday, July 4, in observance of Independence Day. We will reopen at 7:30 a.m. Friday, July 5. Even though our offices are closed, standby crews are always available 24 hours a day. If you need to report a power outage, please call (608) 752-4550 or toll-free (866) 752-4550.