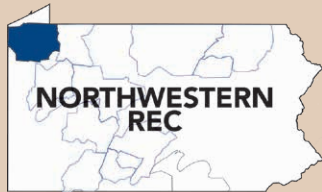


Northwestern Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

NORTHWESTERN REC

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OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday
7 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Amy Wellington, Editor

One Penny per Kilowatt-Hour



RYAN MELLER

WHEN YOUR MONTHLY ELECTRIC BILL COMES, do you ever consider the value you receive for the money? Since electricity first came to rural Pennsylvania in 1936, the cost of living has risen substantially. One thing hasn't changed much, though, and that's the value of electricity. Today, a penny still has a lot of value when it comes to buying the electricity to power your life.


On Oct. 1, Northwestern Rural Electric Cooperative's (REC) residential rate will increase by one penny. This will be the first change to our energy charge since 2008. Our new residential rate will be \$0.11115 per kilowatt-hour. The average monthly bill for a residential member will increase approximately \$10, and for a little more than 11 cents, you'll get 60 minutes of electricity.

Using this new rate, a penny's worth of electricity allows you to fully charge your cellphone more than 16.5 times or once every day for a year for a little more than 22 cents. Or you could charge your average laptop, with its far larger screen, for only \$3 per year (based on 79 watt-hours).

For only a penny, you can also power a 1,000-watt microwave on high for about 5.5 minutes; run a 200-watt desktop computer for 27 minutes; or watch an hour of your favorite show on a 90-watt, 65-inch LED television.

On the flip side, you can also reduce your monthly electric bill by focusing on your monthly usage. Here are some tips to help you save up to \$10 per month on your electric bill:

- ▶ Unplug seldom-used appliances, like an extra refrigerator in the basement or garage that contains just a few items.
- ▶ Keep the refrigerator and freezer stocked; it takes more energy to cool an empty fridge or partially filled freezer. If your freezer isn't full, you can fill 2-liter bottles about three-quarters full to store there and take up space.
- ▶ Wash only full laundry loads. In your clothes washer, set the appropriate water level for the size of the load; wash in cold water, when practical; and always rinse in cold. About 80% of energy used for washing clothes is heating the water.
- ▶ Don't forget to flip the switch off when you leave a room.
- ▶ And finally, watch out for vampire load — items that use electricity even when turned off.

For more energy savings ideas, follow our Facebook page or visit Northwestern-REC.com. We're always here for you. Questions about your bill can be referred to our Member Services department any weekday between 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. by calling 800-352-0014. 

Cooperatively yours,

RYAN MELLER
PRESIDENT & CEO

Northwestern REC is a self-sustaining, not-for-profit electric cooperative owned by you, the members, and governed by a board of directors elected by the membership. Your cooperative is accountable to the members, not outside investors, and works hard to provide reliable power and quality customer service at the lowest possible cost.

EPA's Power Plant Rule Threatens Electric Reliability

AMY WELLINGTON, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON At a cost you, our members, can afford is the focal point of everything we do at Northwestern Rural Electric Cooperative (REC). Transparency is one of our core values, too, so in addition to sharing co-op successes, I believe we also have a responsibility to tell you about the challenges we face.

In May, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a rule that impacts energy production from power plants. The power plant rule will undoubtedly threaten access to reliable electricity for our community and others across the country.

The rule requires existing coal and new natural gas plants to install carbon capture and storage (CCS) — a technology with potential that isn't widely available yet. In fact, no power plant in North America currently uses CCS at the scale and levels mandated by EPA. And when they are unable to comply with the EPA's CCS requirements, the facilities will be required to shut down, significantly limit operations or switch fuels. These unrealistic standards will force the unnecessary and early shutdown of many power plants that currently provide reliable electricity 24/7.

Renewable sources, such as solar and wind, are important components of our overall energy generation mix. But given their intermittent nature, we simply cannot

depend on them. The need for always-available, power-generating resources is still essential.

The timing of the power plant rule is equally troubling. At the same time the EPA is leading our nation down the path to fewer power plants, utilities are facing a surge in electricity demand, driven by the on-shoring of manufacturing, the growth of the American economy, and the rapid expansion of data centers to support artificial intelligence, e-commerce, and cryptocurrency.

Many states have already experienced rolling outages, and if the supply of electricity is further threatened by the EPA's power plant rule, the problem will only get worse. In fact, the nation's electric reliability watchdog, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation, recently forecasted all or parts of 19 states are at high risk of rolling power outages during normal peak electricity demand over the next five years.


It's no secret: When demand is high and supply is low, costs go up. We're concerned about threats to reliability as well as cost increases for our members.

We want our members to understand the challenges that lie ahead. Just as we've always done, Northwestern REC will look for solutions that serve our members best. We are joining electric co-ops across the country to fight these regulations and working with our local

elected officials to help them understand the consequences this rule will have on all Pennsylvanians.

Co-ops are no strangers to innovation, and we're taking proactive steps to address today's energy challenges and tomorrow's energy needs. We've led the charge on industry endeavors, and we'll continue to explore new technologies and strategies that bolster reliability and our local grid.

Electric cooperatives like Northwestern REC deliver power to 42 million Americans. At the end of the day, our top priority is to meet our members' energy needs, and we must have reliable electricity available to do that.

If you're interested in learning more about how policy impacts energy reliability or want to make your voice heard on this matter, visit voicesforcooperativepower.com. 

IMPACTS OF THE EPA'S POWER PLANT RULE

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) power plant rule threatens access to reliable electricity for millions of Americans. The EPA's power plant rule will:



- 1 Force the premature closure of many power plants that currently provide electricity 24/7.
- 2 Mandate the deployment of unproven carbon capture and storage technology.
- 3 Jeopardize the reliability of the grid at a time when America is already facing a surge in electricity demand.
- 4 Heighten the risk of rolling power outages to relieve pressure on the electric grid.
- 5 Increase costs for consumers as utilities are forced to pay for new power generation to comply with the EPA rule.

Grants Available for Local Teachers

AT NORTHWESTERN RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE (REC), we recognize that the children of today are the members of tomorrow. The Clearly Brighter Teacher Grant Program was designed to reach these kids by helping their teachers better afford innovative and effective educational curriculum not covered by traditional school financing.

Individual teachers can apply for grants up to \$250, while teams of teachers (two or more) can apply for grants up to \$500. Each year, Northwestern REC awards a total of \$4,000 through this grant program.

Educators in public and private schools, pre-K through 12th grade, as well as home-school organizations in Northwestern REC's service territory are eligible to participate. It is not required for teachers or schools to receive electric service from Northwestern REC. Grants are awarded for projects in any discipline and are intended to help teachers bring special, hands-on projects to the classroom. Projects for special needs adults will also be considered.

Grants are awarded annually in a competitive evaluation process. Applications are accepted online beginning May 1 and are awarded in October. The application deadline this year is 5 p.m. Sept. 15.

For more information, contact Amy Wellington, director of communications, at 800-352-0014 or awellington@northwesternrec.com. Applications are accepted online only; visit NorthwesternREC.com.

Clearly Brighter Teacher Grants

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Now is the time to schedule annual maintenance for your home's heating system. During fall months, HVAC technicians are typically less busy, making this an excellent time for maintenance and any necessary repairs before the winter months.

A qualified technician can clean filters, check for leaks and ensure all system components are working efficiently to keep your home cozy and warm when the temperatures begin to drop.



Go Above and Beyond for a Safe Harvest

AMY WELLINGTON, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

MODERN FARMING OFTEN RELIES ON data and equipment with GPS and auto-guidance systems. However, even with these modern conveniences, farm workers must remain vigilant. That's because farming is considered one of the nation's most dangerous jobs.

Massive machinery is indispensable to farming, but its impressive size, height and extensions make it particularly vulnerable to contacting with power lines. That's why staying alert, focused, and knowledgeable about potential hazards and safety procedures is crucial.

During a busy harvest season, the familiar sights around the farm can easily fade into the background, and farm workers can overlook the power lines overhead. However, failing to notice them can lead to deadly accidents.

360-degree awareness

Awareness of your surroundings — around, above, and below — and planning safe equipment routes can significantly reduce the risk of accidents. Even with GPS and auto-steering, it's imperative farm workers keep a close eye on the equipment's location and are ready to act when necessary.

Exposed underground powerlines, defective wiring in farm buildings and extension cords are also hazards. Grain bins can pose a potential danger as well. The National

Electrical Safety Code requires power lines to be at least 18 feet above the highest point on any grain bin that uses portable augers or other portable filling equipment. If you plan to install new grain bins or you're concerned about the proximity of power lines to existing ones, contact Northwestern Rural Electric Cooperative at 800-352-0014.

Smart harvest safety tips

To ensure a safer harvest season, SafeElectricity.org recommends the following tips to avoid electrical accidents on the farm:

- ▶ Exercise caution near power lines. Be careful when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- ▶ Use spotters when operating large machinery near power lines. Ensure spotters do not touch the machinery while it is moving near power lines.
- ▶ Lower equipment extensions, portable augers, or elevators before moving or transporting equipment. Do not raise equipment, such as ladders, poles or rods, into power lines. Remember: Non-metallic materials like lumber, tree limbs, ropes and hay can conduct electricity, especially when damp, dusty or dirty.
- ▶ Never attempt to raise or move power lines to clear a path. Doing so could result in electric shock or death.

- ▶ Avoid using metal poles inside bins. Also, don't use metal poles to break up bridged grain inside or around bins.

- ▶ Hire qualified electricians to work on drying equipment and other farm electrical systems.

Keep in mind, too, the only reason to exit equipment that has come in contact with overhead lines is if it is on fire. However, if that happens, jump off that with your feet together and without touching the machinery and the ground at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area. ⚡

5 Tips for a Safe Harvest

Electrical safety during harvest season requires vigilance and proactive measures. Follow these tips to reduce the risk of electrical accidents.

1. Maintain at least a 10-foot distance from power lines when operating equipment like grain augers, elevators and other tall machinery.
2. Use a spotter to navigate safely around power lines and other electrical equipment.
3. Ensure all farm workers are trained on electrical safety procedures.
4. Regularly inspect all electrical equipment and machinery for signs of wear and damage.
5. Keep first aid kits and emergency contact numbers in an easily accessible location.

