

EMPIRE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Echoes of the Empire

JANUARY 2022

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2022 BUDGET APPROVED WITH NO RATE INCREASE

BY JOSH DELLINGER GENERAL MANAGER



JOSH DELLINGER

The Empire Electric Association Board of Directors approved the 2022 operating budget at its November meeting. I'm excited to report that our budget does not include any base rate increases. We accomplished that by working to find ways to do more with less. Part of that includes our new software suite. By using a single vendor's software for all aspects of managing our business, we realized significant cost savings. I know there have been some issues during the transition and I appreciate your understanding as we continue the software roll out.

Safety and reliability are still priorities, and the budget includes over \$8 million for new crew equipment, system reliability improvements, vegetation management and the completion of the Monticello rural substation back feed project. The western side of our service area is currently supplied with power from a single line originating in the Cahone area. Any problem along that line can mean an outage for many consumer-members, and the ability to switch our power supply to the bulk transmission system that passes through southeast Utah will greatly improve reliability for members in the Dove Creek and Monticello areas.

The budget also includes a substantial allowance for material cost increases that EEA is experiencing. The power business has the same issues as other industries right now when it comes to procuring the basic materials we need to keep our system and your power delivery reliable. We are working with our suppliers to maintain adequate stock, and I encourage consumer-members who are considering upgrading or adding a new service to contact our engineering department as early in your building process as possible to make sure we will have the necessary equipment to accomplish your request in a timely manner.

I hope the news that EEA will have no base rate increase is a good start to your new year. EEA appreciates your support, and we look forward to serving you this year as we work to meet your electrical energy needs safely, responsibly and reliably in 2022.



GETTING A HANDLE ON KILOWATTS

BY ANDY CARTER MEMBER ENGAGEMENT MANAGER



ANDY CARTER

Empire Electric Association’s rate structure change has been in place for a few months now. One of the most frequent member questions has been, “What is this new distribution demand charge on my bill?”

The distribution demand charge is part of the time of use demand (TOUD) tariffs that EEA created to charge members more equitably for the power service EEA provides. EEA is a consumer-member-owned cost-of-service-based cooperative, and our goal is to provide safe, reliable, affordable electric service in a financially responsible manner.

To be financially responsible, EEA needs to collect money from consumer-members to pay for the expenses we incur in providing that service. The distribution demand charge is how we collect about half of the money we need to operate and maintain our distribution system as well as about half of our general and administrative expenses. The remaining money needed to operate and maintain our system, pay for general and administrative expenses, as well as all expenses to provide member services and billing is collected in the grid access charge.

The last part of the expense equation is the cost of purchasing power from Tri-State Generation and Transmission, EEA’s wholesale power provider. This is

by far EEA’s largest expense; the money required to pay for purchased power is all collected in the on-peak and off-peak kilowatt-hour charges in the TOUD rate. No other expenses are recovered in the energy charges on a TOUD rate.

Getting back to the distribution demand charge, just exactly how does it make your bill fairer? It makes it fairer because each member is charged based on the measured amount of the distribution system capacity they are using each month. Distribution demand is determined by finding the average demand that created the highest 15-minute energy use in the billing period. Our meters measure kWh use in 15-minute periods. Our billing system converts the highest measured 15 minutes of kWh use to distribution demand by dividing by a quarter of an hour. In the sample bill below, this member’s highest 15-minute energy consumption period was measured at 0.7115 kWh. Dividing 0.7115 kWh by 0.25 hours shows the average demand was 2.846 kW.

How did EEA come up with the \$2.74/kW charge for the residential TOUD rate? The charge is calculated by adding the allocated expenses we need to collect from residential rate class members for operation, maintenance and administration and

dividing it by the total Distribution Demand for the residential rate class. EEA does the same for all the other rate classes that have a TOUD rate. The different rate classes have different expenses allocated to them because the nature of the service EEA provides is different. The distribution demand charge for the general service three-phase rate is much higher because the distribution system requirements are larger for a three-phase commercial service than for a single phase residence.

You may ask, “Is there anything I can do to lower my demand charges?” Yes. Demand charges are a result of using a lot of energy in a short amount of time. If you limit the number of high-demand appliances that you run at the same time, you will reduce your demand charges. Examples of high-demand appliances are water heaters, all electric clothes dryers, electric resistance heaters, heat pumps and electric ovens. Planning out when you use high-demand appliances so they do not run at the same time can help reduce your electric bill.

Account Number: 00000001		Rate Description: RESIDENTIAL ON PEAK TOU				Service Address: 2000 RD O			
Meter #	Description	Days	Services		Readings		Metered Usage	Meter Multiplier	Recorded Usage
			From	To	Previous	Present			
140000000	On Peak	31	10/15/21	11/15/21	1718	1899	181	1	181
140000000	Off Peak	31	10/15/21	11/15/21	2440	2704	264	1	264

Previous Account Activity	
Previous Balance	\$78.68
Payment Received - Thank You	-\$78.68
Balance Before Current Charges	\$0.00

Current Activity	
Grid Access Charge	\$32.00
On Peak kWh	181 kWh @ 0.14814 \$26.81
Off Peak kWh	264 kWh @ 0.04339 \$11.45
Distribution Demand	2.846 kW @ 2.74000 \$7.80
Total Current Activity	\$78.06

Total Amount Due	\$78.06
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Usage History

PERIOD ENDING

11/2020	11/2021	
Avg Daily Temp	42	45
Avg Daily kWh	23	14

Max kW

5

4

3

2

1

Winter Increases the Potential for Power Line Accidents



Winter wonderlands are beautiful, but they can be a driving nightmare. Snow, slush, ice and wind can make it stressful and difficult to drive. These driving conditions also make it more likely that your car will skid off the road. Losing control of your car may seem like the worst-case scenario, but if you do not know what you are doing, the moments following an accident could potentially be more dangerous than the accident itself.

In an accident, a car may slide off the road and into a power pole. The pole may fall, lines may fall on your car or nearby, and the area around your car may become charged with electric energy. If you stepped out of the car in this scenario, your body

would become the path to ground for the electricity, and you could be electrocuted.

While downed lines can sometimes show they are live by arcing and sparking with electricity, this is not always the case. Power lines do not always show signs that they are live but are just as lethal.

Stay in the car after an accident with a power pole. Warn those who try to come near your car to help that they must stay far away. Call 911 for help and wait until a professional from the electric utility tells you it is safe to leave the car.

The exception to this rule is if your car is on fire. In that case, jump clear of the vehicle without touching it and the ground at the same time. Then hop away with feet together. This way there will not be a voltage difference between your two feet, which would give electricity the chance to flow through your body.

If you witness a car collision with a power pole, do not approach the accident. By trying to help, you will put your own life at risk. The best thing to do is contact emergency responders and stay far away from the accident.

Power lines may be difficult to see if they

are covered in snow or ice, so be cautious if you must be out driving after a winter storm. For more about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.



January 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: Department of Energy

Monthly Calendar

January 1

Happy New Year

January 14

EEA's board meeting begins at 8:30 a.m. at its headquarters in Cortez. The agenda is posted 10 days in advance of the meeting at eea.coop. Members are reminded that public comment is heard at the beginning of the meeting. Meeting restrictions due to health concerns may require the meeting to be held remotely.

January 17

Martin Luther King, Jr., Day



Co-op Photo Contest Winner January 2022 – Frosty Trees by Sarah Wright

STAY TOASTY AND WARM WHILE

TURNING DOWN THE THERMOSTAT



When the winter winds blow, it is tempting to adjust the thermostat up a few degrees to stay toasty and warm. However, turning to other (FREE!) ways to help keep you warm could help reduce your energy bills.

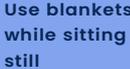
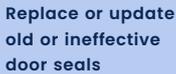


Each degree you reduce your thermostat saves 1% on your heating bill. No one home during the day? **Adjust your thermostat 7 to 10 degrees from its normal setting to save up to 10% annually.**

Source: Department of Energy

Here are ways to help you stay warm when it is cold outside:



-  Bundle up by wearing layers and heavy socks
-  Get your body moving and stay active
-  Use blankets while sitting still
-  Caulk windows and door frames that leak air
-  Replace or update old or ineffective door seals
-  Make sure your home's heating system is working properly
-  Keep your furnace clean and change the filter monthly
-  Let the sun shine in during the day and close window coverings at night
-  Reduce how long you use ventilation fans (they transfer warm air outside)
-  Keep a fireplace damper closed when not in use
-  Humidify your home to make the air feel warmer

If you use a portable space heater, use it safely and for short amounts of time. Using one for extended periods can cause your energy bill to spike since it draws a lot of power.

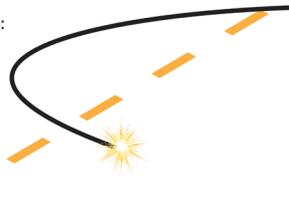
Learn more at:



Downed and Dangerous

Always assume a downed power line is energized and dangerous! If you see one:

- Notify local authorities.
- Stay at least 35 ft. away.
- Never drive over a downed line, or through water touching one.
- Never try to move a downed line.



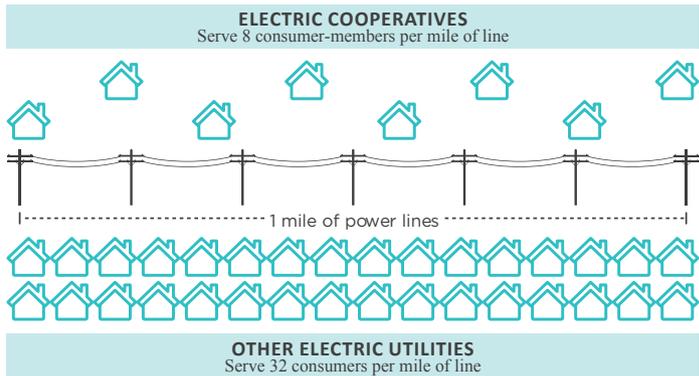
CARBON MONOXIDE SAFETY REMINDERS



- Install CO alarms on every floor of your home and outside each sleeping area.
- Test CO alarms monthly.
- Replace CO alarm batteries at least annually.
- Make sure your family knows the difference between CO and smoke alarm sounds.
- If your CO alarm sounds, immediately go outdoors.

GOING THE EXTRA MILE

Electric co-ops maintain more miles of power lines per consumer than other electric utilities. Even though we power fewer consumers on our lines compared to other utilities, we'll always go the extra mile for you, the consumer-members we proudly serve.



2022 Energy Efficiency Incentive Program Changes

This year EEA has added smart thermostats, whole house fans, and electric thermal storage / thermal slab heating incentives!



The submission deadline has been changed to 90 days from the purchase date. Remember to submit your documentation as soon as possible. Online submission for incentives makes it fast and easy. For requirements, incentive amounts and other updates for 2022, go to eea.coop.

