

EMPIRE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Echoes of the Empire

SEPTEMBER 2024

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The Choice Is Yours

BY ANDY CARTER MEMBER ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

Many service providers offer customization to customers to meet their specific needs. Empire Electric Association is no different and offers rate options that allow our co-op member-owners to choose what works best for their circumstances.



ANDY CARTER

Most EEA rate classes offer a choice of the Time of Use Demand rate or the All Energy rate. The TOUD rate has three rate components with energy charges broken down into two charges that vary based on when the energy is used. The TOUD rate offers the most flexibility for members who want to control their energy costs. A member on the TOUD rate can reduce their monthly bill by shifting energy use from the on-peak period to the off-peak period. The on-peak period is 1 p.m. to 9 p.m., Monday through Saturday. The off-peak period is all other times. Additionally, New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day are off-peak as well.

A member on the TOUD rate can also reduce their electric bill by minimizing the demand they place on EEA's grid. Demand is measured in kilowatts and is an important factor in determining the size of the equipment needed to provide safe and reliable service. With the TOUD rate, EEA charges for the highest distribution demand measured during each month. The distribution demand is based on the highest 15-minute kilowatt hour use during the billing period. Charging by measured demand is a fair way to recover the cost to serve. A home with a demand of 10 kW requires twice the grid capacity of a home that only has 5 kW of demand.

So how do you minimize demand? If you think of appliances as building blocks with the height of the block represented by their power requirement, keeping your cost low requires you to keep your "tower of power" low to the ground. In the illustration on page 8, you'll see if you wash a load of clothes in cold water, you are only powering your washing machine — this creates a demand of 1 kW. If you wash a load of clothes in hot water and you have an electric water heater, your tower of power is now 5 kW — the 4 kW hot water heater stacked on top of the 1 kW washer. If you are multitasking and baking cookies at the same time you are doing laundry with hot water, your tower of power is now 8 kW tall because you stacked an additional 3 kW on for the electric oven. If you waited to bake the cookies until after the water heater recovered, you would still accomplish the same things but with less demand, potentially reducing your electric bill.

Why is that not a guaranteed bill reduction? Because the distribution demand is based on the single highest 15 minutes of energy use during the billing period. Building a tall tower of power once a month will set your distribution demand for that month. To ensure a bill reduction, you must be consistent and not use high demand appliances at the same time all month. If something comes up where you end up creating a high distribution demand, remember it is just for that month. The next billing cycle your distribution demand is set to zero and the meter will start tracking the highest 15-minute usage interval as you go through the month.

Another way to reduce your electric bill is to use less electricity. Using less can be as simple as turning off lights when you leave the room or turning the thermostat up a few degrees in the summer and down a few degrees in the winter. Replacing older appliances with more efficient ones featuring better control options can also help reduce your bill. This strategy will work on EEA's TOUD rate and the All Energy rate.

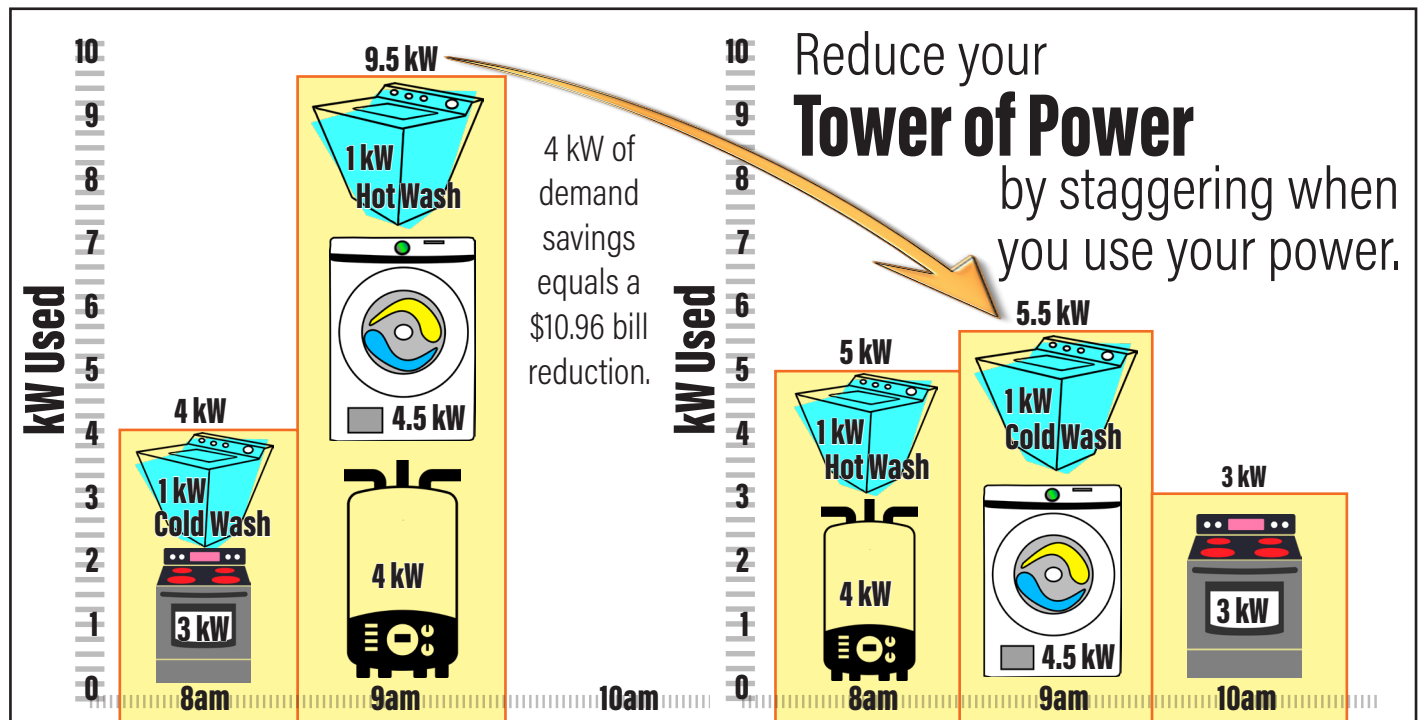
The All Energy rate has two rate components, the Grid Access Charge and an energy charge. The energy charge does not vary, and the revenue EEA collects through the demand

charge on the TOUD rate is collected partly through the energy charge and the higher GAC charge. The All Energy rate can be less expensive for members who have high demand and low kWh usage. This may include a home that has mostly gas appliances and an all-electric clothes dryer. The dryer, depending on use, can create a high demand and not use many kWh over a billing period.

The simplicity of the All Energy rate may seem attractive to some, but we urge you to compare the rates before you make your decision. EEA is a member-owned not-for-profit cooperative and we purposely structure our rates to collect the revenue we need to cover our expenses no matter what rate a member chooses. We offer rate comparison tools at eea.coop/rate-tools that make it easy for you to compare rates and choose what is best for you. If you use the

tools, we recommend you compare both a summer and a winter month because energy use during different seasons will impact your bill. If you want to change your rate, you can do this through your SmartHub account using the Account Inquires menu, or you can call us at 970-565-4444. Please remember our rules limit rate changes to once every 12 months.

No matter which rate you choose, EEA is here to make sure we meet your electrical energy needs in a safe, responsible, and reliable manner. The options available to help reduce your bill are there for you to take advantage of but are not a requirement. EEA stands ready to deliver all the power you need when you need it.



Monthly Calendar and Co-op Photo Contest Winner September 2024

September 2 – Labor Day. EEA office closed.

September 13 – 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 may attend in person or remotely. Instructions to attend remotely are included on the agenda.

September 15 – Nonprofit donation requests are due for 2025.

> Fall Pondering by Denise Moore



Deadline September 15, 2024

Donations & Sponsorships

EEA's Board of Directors is taking requests for the 2025 calendar year donations. Donations are for not-for-profit entities and sponsorships. All requests must be received by September 15, 2024, to be eligible for funding in 2025. Applications are open for 2025 funding. Complete your application online at eea.coop.



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 you home cozy and warm when the temperatures begin to drop.



High School Juniors...

Expand
your horizons,
apply for an all-expense
paid youth trip.



Youth trip applications for the 2025 trips will open on September 16. Application deadline is December 15. Visit eea.coop to apply online.



Washington DC Youth Tour - June 16-22, 2025
Steamboat Leadership Camp - July 12-17, 2025



Reliable and Renewable Power Supply

BY ANDY CARTER MEMBER ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

The electric power industry is experiencing many changes. The predicted growth in demand and increased regulation and requirements make for a challenging environment. Empire Electric Association is committed to providing its member-owners with safe, responsible, and reliable power. EEA knows reliability and affordability are of greatest importance for much of our membership. We also understand we have a responsibility to provide equitable and environmentally-responsible service.

To accomplish this, we are working with Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, our not-for-profit cooperative wholesale power supplier. EEA is a full requirements member of Tri-State and buys 95% of our power from them. Our power supply portfolio mirrors theirs.

Tri-State member co-ops currently use a power supply that is 33% renewable. In late 2025, this will increase to 50% when two new solar projects owned by Tri-State — including Dolores Canyon Solar in EEA’s service territory — come on line.

This summer, Tri-State filed an unopposed comprehensive settlement of Phase I of its 2023 Electric Resource Plan with the Colorado Public Utilities Commission. If approved by the CPUC, Tri-State will begin the process of obtaining new renewable resources for 2026-2031, leading to an 89% reduction in its greenhouse gas emissions in Colorado and 70% clean energy used by its member co-ops systemwide in 2030. The ERP also continues to deliver competitive wholesale rates to Tri-State’s members including EEA and meet both industry standard reliability metrics and Tri-State’s heightened Level II reliability metrics, which assess electric system resilience in extreme summer and winter weather conditions. Tri-State’s continued ownership and operation of generation and transmission assets provides another layer of reliability



▲ Totten Lake solar generation station located northeast of Cortez is one of three local renewable generators that delivers clean energy to EEA members.



▲ An EEA linecrew upgrades a distribution line on Road T.5 earlier this year.

and ensures adequate resources to serve its members.

Knowing that we can rely on Tri-State to provide reliable and renewable power to our system, EEA is working to improve our renewable energy supply while maintaining reliability and preparing for growth on our distribution grid. EEA has taken full advantage of the flexibility in our contract with Tri-State to procure local renewable generation. EEA has contracts to purchase the power output from three local solar generation stations totaling 9.2 megawatts of capacity, which is 5% of EEA’s power supply. Buying from these local power generators will continue to enhance the gains Tri-State is proposing in its ERP filing.

In addition to EEA’s efforts to secure local renewable generation for the entire cooperative, EEA allows individual members to connect their own renewable generation through its net metering program. To date, more than 600 EEA members have interconnected a total of 6.1 megawatts of renewable generation, producing an estimated 13,800 megawatt-hours of energy annually. That equals 2.2% of the total kilowatt-hours EEA purchased in 2023 and brings the EEA locally-supplied portfolio to 7.2% renewable power, plus the renewable energy we receive as members of Tri-State.

To maintain reliability, EEA continues to focus on system maintenance and upgrade projects. EEA crews recently completed line upgrades in Arriola and Lewis and are preparing to upgrade the grid south of Mancos. Our system engineer performs periodic tests to locate potential weak spots and confirm we are providing power to all parts of our grid within our required specifications and terms of service. EEA’s efforts to maintain reliability have allowed us to achieve consistently high reliability ratings. In 2023, the average EEA member experienced 1 hour and 56 minutes of total outage time. That equates to 99.98% reliability using the accepted industry methodology.

Although we see many changes facing our industry, EEA will continue to focus on the fundamentals of putting safety first, and to ensure safe, responsible, and reliable power delivery. We are committed to serving you and appreciate your support as we work to meet your energy needs.