

EMPIRE ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

Echoes of the Empire

JANUARY 2019



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NO PROPOSED RATE INCREASE IN 2019

BY JOSH DELLINGER CEO



JOSH DELLINGER

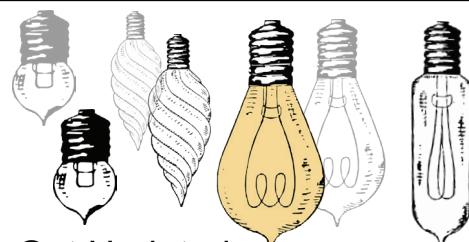
Empire Electric Association Board of Directors and staff work hard to ensure our members have access to reliable and affordable power. Regarding reliability, we work to maintain a system that delivers power when our members need it. We also maintain a professional workforce that addresses problems when they occur. Regarding affordability, we work to ensure we operate as efficiently as possible. This entails being a good steward of the money we collect from our members as well as making sure our rates are fair.

EEA's board periodically evaluates our rates for adequacy and fairness. The board recently considered our electric rates for 2019, and I am pleased to announce that there are no proposed rate increases. Since I am also a member of EEA, this is good news for me and I hope it is good news for you as well.

Though there are no proposed rate increases, the board did approve a few changes to our general service, irrigation and large power tariffs. The edits are all wording changes meant to add clarity and consistency. The most notable change is removing the phrase "average monthly demand" and replacing it with "equipment capacity" as a delineating factor for determining which rate class a service should be in. This should eliminate some of the ambiguity associated with the phrase "average monthly

demand." This change will also directly link the tariffs to the size of the equipment installed, which aligns well with cost-based rate principles. We try to develop rates that recover costs as fairly as possible and limit subsidizations. Since the size of equipment we install is a major factor in our costs to establish a service, it makes sense to recover costs based on equipment capacity.

The proposed changes took effect on January 1, 2019. If you have questions about rates or about any other cooperative business, please give us a call at 970-565-4444 or stop by the Cortez office located at 801 N. Broadway. Thank you all for continuing to support your local electric cooperative.



Got Updated Efficient LED Bulbs?

2019 is the Last Year to receive Residential Rebates for LED Bulbs.



1. Purchase LED bulbs with a lumen output of 500 or greater.
2. Download an LED rebate application from our website, www.eea.coop
3. Attach receipt and photocopy of bulb box to the application.

Rebate amount is 50% of the cost of each bulb, up to \$8 per bulb. Apply for your LED bulb rebate within 120 days of purchase and before December 15, 2019. Maximum of 50 bulbs rebate per member.

www.eea.coop for a complete list of available rebates.



An Outlet for Energy Savings

BY KALEY LOCKWOOD

 ThinkEco offers smart, energy-saving outlets. Shown here is the modlet (or modern outlet), which can be controlled remotely and adjusted to your personal schedule. Photo credit: ThinkEco.

Does the ebb and flow of your energy bill have you searching for an affordable way to reduce or better control your electricity use? If you answered yes, then look no further because we're taking a quick dive into a practical and affordable device that allows you to better manage your home's energy use: energy-saving outlets.

These next-generation devices afford the same surge protection as their predecessors, but also tie in the "smart" functionality of an internet-connected device.

There are several different kinds of energy-saving outlets available, but there are two factors you should consider. First is size; there are many different sizes ranging from a single external outlet to a power strip with multiple sockets. The second thing you want to consider is Wi-Fi connectivity. Internet-connected outlets, commonly known as smart plugs, may enable you to fully realize the potential of the energy savings. This is because you have greater remote control of the outlet through your smartphone, tablet or home assistant (such as Google Home or Amazon's Alexa).

You also want to consider where you will use the energy-saving outlet and what you will use it for. Answering these questions will make it easier to choose the device that

works best for you.

With smart plugs or smart power strips, a few clicks and swipes on your smartphone will allow you to fully shut down the electrical current to your high-powered devices to prevent them from consuming electricity even when switched off. Several devices found inside your home are commonly referred to as "parasitic loads," "phantom loads" or "energy vampires." In fact, most entertainment systems consist of several parasitic loads. These include televisions, DVD players and video gaming consoles. Smart outlets can potentially curb these loads, which can cost the average household an extra \$200 per year.

In addition to preventing unnecessary energy consumption, these energy-saving outlets are affordable for most folks who are looking to trim their use. The average smart outlet costs around \$10 to \$20 on Amazon.com and has the potential to pay for itself within two years or less, depending on how often you use it.

As previously noted, convenience is a major factor to consider when thinking about your next efficiency upgrade. Smart plugs typically come with simple instructions to download an accompanying app on your smartphone and then connect the plug to your home's Wi-Fi. The convenience

in the ability to turn the device on and off using your phone cannot be overstated. Advanced smart plugs and smart plug apps also have the capability to automate the use with your schedule and even your presence in the home.

You can also have large-load devices turn off at a set time each night and turn on every morning when you're ready to use them. If you want to use your television, for example, at a time that's outside of the preset hours, you can easily switch the device on through the smartphone app. Through automation, you can power down these energy-intensive devices and prevent unnecessary energy use.

For those looking to optimize their energy use and eliminate vampire loads, smart plugs may be the best option. For others who want more of a hands-off option to save additional dollars, energy-saving outlets and power strips without the Wi-Fi connection may be a better choice.

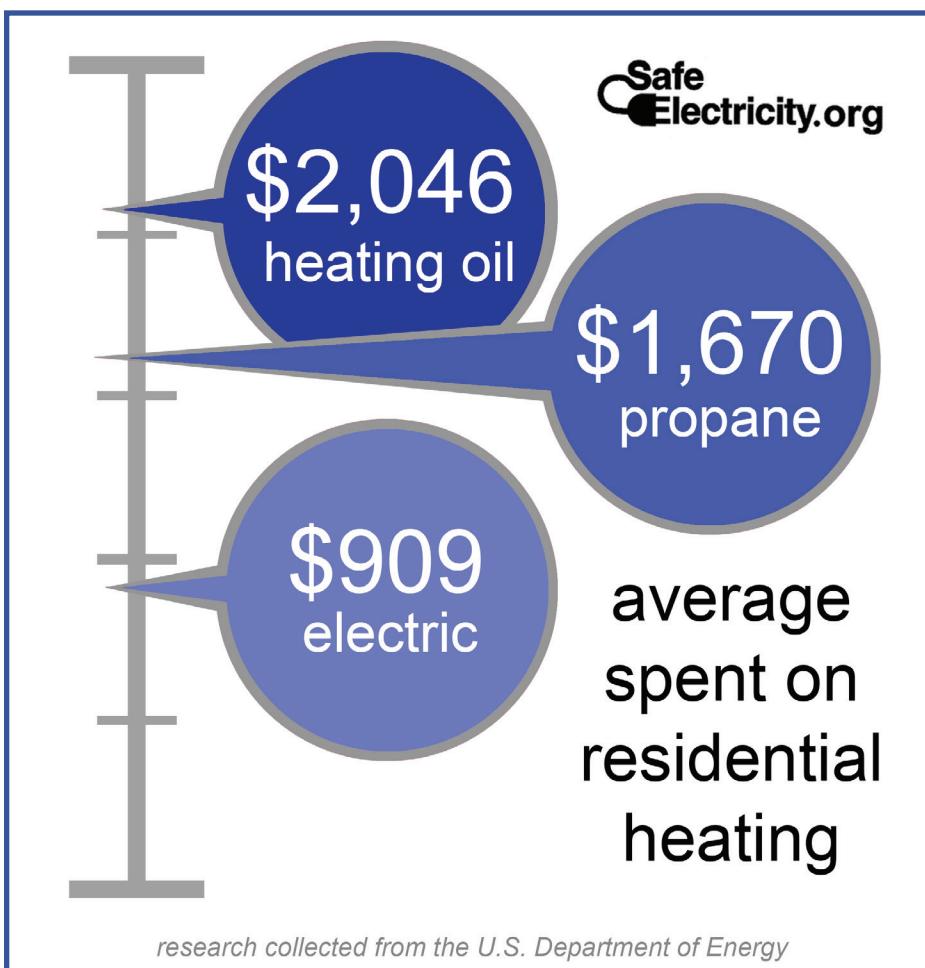
Either way, energy-saving outlets are just one of many energy-efficient options out there and, as technology continues to evolve, we'll likely see additional options emerge.

Kaley Lockwood writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

My Co-op Advantage



A check presentation took place on November 30, 2018, for Southwest Health Systems, Inc. (SHS) in the amount of \$27,595.30. The check represented energy efficiency rebates SHS received from Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association and Empire Electric Association for LED pole mounted lighting, commercial LED light fixtures and Energy Star appliances. (Left to right) Montezuma County Health Department board member Brad Wayt, SHS CEO Tony Sudduth, SHS board member Paul Deshayes, EEA board member John Porter and EEA General Manager Josh Dellinger were on hand during the presentation.



My Co-op Employees



Congratulations to Empire's newest consumer services representative (CSR). Millissa Baker started a part-time CSR position on December 3, 2018. Millissa previously worked for World Pay in Durango as an associate dispute specialist, where she assisted cardholders and financial institutions to resolve credit card disputes and trained new employees. Millissa, her husband and two children reside in Mancos.

Photo Contest Winner for January



 **Cliff Palace in Snow**
By Bill Di Paolo

My Co-op Employees



Preston Vialpando accepted the position of apprentice lineman on December 10, 2018. Preston began employment with Empire Electric on August 8, 2017, as an operator. He is married to Megann and has three children: Parker, Penelope and Roxanna.



Scholarship Applications are now available on our website www.eea.coop and are **due February 15, 2019**

Lineman School \$1000 Adult Scholarships \$1000

Student Scholarships \$1000

Electrical Related Trade Scholarship \$500



Co-op Calendar

January 1, 2019 –
New Year's Day, Office Closed

January 11, 2019 –
Empire'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.

January 21, 2019 –
Martin Luther King Jr. Day