



Sac Osage Electric Cooperative

March 2024

News



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
The power of human connections®



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FROM THE MANAGER'S DESK

General Manager

At Sac Osage Electric Cooperative we have a clear mandate from our members: Provide the most reliable service at the lowest reasonable cost. The Cooperative board, management and employees take that fundamental principle very seriously. Since 2018 Sac Osage has covered its cost and had revenue to return to the membership without increasing the rates our members pay, but steady inflation has been eating away at our margins.

In 2023 the ever-increasing cost of service would have required an increase in electric rates if it were not for revenue coming in from the fiber to the home project. As our members are aware, costs in all areas continued to go up.

This year the Cooperative cannot fulfill its financial obligations without a rate increase. The major driver of increasing costs is the cost of electricity from our power supplier. Due to higher demands set by the membership, the demand cost Sac Osage will pay in 2024 will be more than \$500,000 higher than in 2023. Kilowatt hour energy charges will also increase from our power supplier starting in April, meaning we expect our power bill to be 1.2 million dollars more than it was in 2023.

Unfortunately, energy costs are not the only drivers of Sac Osage rates. The Cooperative has experienced the same 22% inflation that has impacted our members since 2018. This is why all four parts of Sac Osage Electric Cooperative's rates will be impacted. The service availability will go to \$35.00. The peak demand will be \$7.50/kW. The off-peak demand will be \$1.80/kW. And the kilowatt hour

rate will be 7¢ per kilowatt hour (still one of the lowest kwh rates in the nation).

The decision to raise rates weighs heavily on the board and management of the cooperative. Now more than ever, we want to do everything we can to provide the best service to our members and help them get the most out of their electricity.

Three things that I have tested in my own house to lower our electric bill:





1. Keep the washer and dryer off during peak times.
2. Put a timer on your water heater.
3. Set the dishwasher to run outside of the on-peak hours, 6AM to 9AM and 4PM to 7PM.

We also want to encourage members to take advantage of home improvement rebates which will lower your overall electric usage. Through Associated Electric Cooperative, our members can receive rebates on things like new and replacement heating and cooling systems, smart thermostats, an energy audit for their home and home improvements that the energy audit suggests.

The necessary rate increase will go into effect starting April 1st. Members will see the new rates on the bill they receive in May. These changes will allow Sac Osage to continue to provide the reliable 24-hour service our members have come to expect. We were gratified to go through the last 5 years without increasing rates, and we believe we are continuing to provide an incredibly valuable service at the most reasonable cost. We hope our members agree - Aaron Ash

RATES OF INFLATION

ON SAC OSAGE ELECTRIC COST

<p>100 AMP METER LOOP</p> <p>2018 - \$324.51 2023 - \$484.35</p> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">↑ 49% INCREASE</p>	
	<p>POWER POLES</p> <p>2018 - \$166.40 2023 - \$465.12</p> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">↑ 179% INCREASE</p>
<p>15 KVA TRANSFORMER</p> <p>2018 - \$768.00 2023 - \$1533.00</p> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">↑ 99% INCREASE</p>	
	<p>SERVICE TRUCK</p> <p>2019 - \$153,321.58 2023 - \$171,368.04</p>

IN DECEMBER OF 2022, SAC OSAGE ELECTRIC, ALONG WITH OTHER COOPERATIVES IN THE STATE, SET RECORD DEMANDS BECAUSE OF THE EXTREME COLD IN OUR AREA. INFLATION RATES HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY HIGH AND THE COOPERATIVE HAS BEEN IMPACTED IN ALMOST EVERY AREA. THIS ALSO INCLUDES THE PRICE SAC OSAGE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE PAYS TO ITS POWER SUPPLIER.



DISTRICT 7 BOARD DIRECTOR ATTENDS WINTER SCHOOL



In November of 2023, I attended the NRECA's Winter School in Nashville, TN. While there, I completed the remaining credits for my CCD certification.

This Director specific training is for new Directors and all Cooperative Board Members are encouraged to attend. This certification is designed to give me the tools required to serve at Sac Osage Electric Cooperative.

The school was well thought out with great instructors. After completing the classes, I now understand the material in the boardroom more thoroughly and feel more confident in my decision making ability. The instructors were engaging and knowledgeable. I really enjoyed how they used their experience in their class lectures by bringing real world topics to our discussions.

Additionally, class sizes were about 25 students in groups of about 5. One thing I really liked a lot about the classroom setup was that I got to meet many other directors like me from Cooperatives around the country. Sharing with the other students really connected me to them, many of which I will stay in

contact with.

Knowing there are others out there with the same problems we have is reassuring, and it was especially interesting to hear about the diversity of problems other cooperatives face.

All-in-all, the trip was well worth my time, both personally and professionally. I feel more confident and knowledgeable for what my fellow members expect out of me. I think it's important to know what you are doing and this is a big step in that direction

Shannon Tucker, District 7 Director

TIME CHANGE HAPPENS MARCH 10TH

Here are a few tips as we spring forward one hour with the upcoming Daylight Savings Time change on March 10, 2024:

- Set your clocks ahead by one hour
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with LED light bulbs
- Change all batteries in items such as smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors, flashlights, and weather radios
- Restock First Aid Kits
- Check the pantry for any outdated items and rotate the oldest items forward to be used first
- Replace air filters on heating and cooling appliances

- Change the direction of your ceiling fan
- Clean the vents on appliances such as refrigerators and dryers
- Replace water filters
- Give your vehicle a fresh tune-up

Spring FORWARD

Remember to set your clocks forward one hour.

INSTALL CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

on every level of your home, and test them at least once a month.

Safe Electricity.org

Like Us



STORM SEASON IS APPROACHING QUICKLY.

ARE YOU READY?

Severe storms are devastating to homes, properties, and lives. These storms can also take down power lines—creating a dangerous situation for all of us, including the linemen and linewomen working hard to get your power turned back on.

How long it takes to get your power restored depends on the extent of the storm’s destruction, the number of outages, and when it becomes safe for utility personnel to get to the damaged areas. There are many steps in the assessment and restoration process—clearing downed power lines; ensuring public health and safety facilities are operational; checking power stations and transformers; repairing transmission lines, substations, and distribution lines; and getting power restored to customers within the various damaged areas.

Be sure to contact your electric utility immediately to report the outage.

Safe Electricity and its members want you to know how to stay safe and get through until power can be restored to you. They recommend taking the following safety precautions:

Just because power lines are damaged does not mean they are dead. Every downed power line is potentially energized and dangerous until utility crews arrive on the scene to ensure power has been cut off. Downed power lines, stray wires, and debris in contact with them all have the potential to deliver a fatal shock. Stay far away and keep others away from downed power lines.

Never enter a flooded basement if electrical outlets are submerged. The water could be energized.

Do not turn power off if you must stand in water to do so. Call your

electric utility, and have them turn off power at the meter.

Before entering storm-damaged buildings, make sure electricity and gas are turned off.

Do not use water-damaged electronics before properly restoring them. Electric motors in appliances should be cleaned and reconditioned before use. It may be necessary to replace some of your appliances and electronics. Have your water-damaged items inspected and approved by a professional before using them.

If you clean-up outdoors after a storm, do not use electronic equipment in wet conditions.

If you are driving and come along a downed power line, stay away and keep others away. Contact emergency personnel or your utility company to address the downed power line.

If you do come in contact with a downed power line, do not leave the car. Wait for utility and emergency professionals to make sure the power line is de-energized before exiting the car.

During an outage, Safe Electricity recommends turning off electrical appliances and unplugging major electronics, including computers and televisions. Power sometimes comes back in surges, which can damage electronics. Your circuits could overload when power returns if all your electronics are still plugged in and on. Leave one light on to indicate that power has been restored. Wait a few minutes and then turn on other appliances and equipment—one at a time.

If you use a standby generator, it is critical that proper safety precautions be taken. Always read and follow all manufacturer operating instructions.

There should be nothing plugged into the generator when you turn it on. This prevents a surge from damaging your generator and appliances. Operate generators in well-ventilated, outdoor, dry areas. Never attach a temporary generator to a circuit breaker, fuse, or outlet. Permanent generators should be wired into a house by a qualified electrician using a transfer switch in order to prevent feeding electricity back into overhead lines, which can be deadly for linemen.

To help you get through, have a storm kit prepared. Keep the kit in a cool, dry place, and make sure all members of the family know where it is.

For information on when to save and when to throw out refrigerated food after a power outage, go to FoodSafety.gov.

You can find additional information pertaining to this article at safeelectricity.org

STORM SAFETY KIT

- Bottles of water
- Nonperishable food
- Portable phone charger
- Flashlights
- Batteries
- Can opener
- First-aid supplies
- Hand sanitizer
- Prescriptions
- Pain reliever
- Warm clothing
- Blankets
- Battery-operated radio
- Toys, books and games
- Important documents
- Money
- Baby supplies
- Pet supplies

Learn more: SafeElectricity.org

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