

Energy Partners

A monthly look at the happenings of and related to:



New-Mac Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 
The power of human connections

April rate increase will be reflected in May bills

New-Mac Electric ready to help customers *Take Control & Save*

In April of 2009, New-Mac Electric Cooperative residential customers will experience a general rate increase of \$.0065 per kilowatt-hours billed. Additionally, the availability fee (minimum bill) will go up \$2.50 for those customers. This change will be reflected in the bill customers will receive in May.

“Unfortunately, there’s nothing we can do about this. Costs go up every year, and the one that affects us the most, the wholesale power rate, has now gone up four years in a row,” said New-Mac’s CEO and General Manager Mitch McCumber.

This is the 2009 rate adjustment McCumber announced at New-Mac’s annual meeting this past October, although the exact numbers were not known at that time. New-Mac customers have been made aware of the alarming industry cost trends and unavoidable increases to come at every annual meeting since 2004.

In spite of rising costs in all facets of the business of providing power, New-Mac managed to go 17 years without a general rate increase prior to 2008. But starting in 2006, New-Mac began contending with hikes in the cost of wholesale power from suppliers Associated Electric Cooperative, Inc.

(Springfield, Mo.) and KAMO Power (Vinita, Okla.). For two years, New-Mac absorbed these increases without having a general rate increase. However, in 2008, due to rising costs, New-Mac finally had to succumb and pass a general rate increase on to its customers. Now, with costs continuing to escalate, New-Mac must do so again in 2009.

“We’ll never stop working to keep rates as low as possible,”

said McCumber. “Something we can control, however, is how much energy we use. By being more energy efficient, money can be saved.” McCumber echoed what he

more efficient appliances.

“We have always done everything we can to help our customers,” said Mark Rakes, Manager of Marketing & Consumer Services, “and

“By being more energy efficient, money can be saved,”

said New-Mac CEO/General Manager Mitch McCumber.

set forth at New-Mac’s annual meeting, when he encouraged the attendees to *Take Control & Save* – which is the name of the co-op’s campaign to help its members be more energy efficient. A few of New-Mac’s efforts with this campaign have included the giving away of energy-efficient CFL bulbs to customers at various events and a rebate program for customers upgrading to

through *Take Control & Save*, we will continue to be of service. By giving suggestions on how to better weatherize or offering a rebate to encourage someone to buy more efficient appliances, there are lots of ways we can be of assistance to our customers.”

Rebates extended into 2009

New-Mac Electric will continue to encourage customers to *Take Control & Save* in 2009 by extending its rebate program.

New-Mac hopes customers will use this incentive by spending a little more to purchase more energy efficient appliances, knowing they can qualify for

rebates. And, of course, buying energy efficient appliances will result in savings for years to come for the purchaser.

So, if it’s about time to buy a new clothes washer, dishwasher, window air-conditioning unit, water heater, or heat-

See *Rebates*, page 3

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Rebates availablepage 1
- Phone payments.....page 2
- Doug Rye sayspage 4



New-Mac Electric Cooperative

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Energy Partners is a monthly publication of New-Mac Electric for the purpose of informing members of the programs, services and happenings of, and related to, the cooperative.

Assistance is available

If you are having a problem paying your New-Mac account, please call us to make arrangements. Please don't disregard paying your bill. There are programs and options (such as budget billing) designed to assist you. So, please give us a call at 451-1515 or (800) 322-3849.

LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM & EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE
 Jasper County417/781-0352
 McDonald County...417/845-6011
 Newton County.....417/451-2206

Stay away from downed lines

Heavy snows, ice and winds are all capable of bringing down power lines. New-Mac would like to remind everyone to stay away from downed power lines.

Please **don't** touch, attempt to move, or drive over downed lines. Also, **don't** touch anyone who is in contact with power lines.

Always report downed power lines to New-Mac Electric at 451-1515 or (800) 322-3849.

Outage reporting

To report an outage, have your location number (found at the top of your bill) ready and call 451-1515 or (800) 322-3849.

Help yourself to 'Rural Missouri'

Copies of the latest *Rural Missouri* magazine are always available, free of charge, at either New-Mac office.

Frequently asked questions about CFL bulbs

What is a CFL?

CFL stands for compact fluorescent lamp. It is a small fluorescent light bulb that uses 75 percent less energy than a traditional incandescent bulb and can be screwed into a regular light socket.

Can using CFL lighting really save energy and save money on my electric bill?

Yes. A single 19 watt CFL bulb burns 56 watts less than a comparable 75 watt incandescent bulb and provides the same amount of pleasing, warm white light. Over the 10,000 hour life of a CFL bulb, you would save 560 kilowatt-hours. At 8.5 cents per kilowatt-hour, that's a \$47.60 energy cost savings per bulb. And don't forget to deduct the cost of replacing 10 to 13 incandescent light bulbs, which generally last only 750 to 1,000 hours each.

Why do CFL bulbs cost more than incandescent bulbs?

The price of CFL bulbs reflects technology development costs. Also, each CFL bulb has a built-in ballast which helps it come on. This adds to the cost. As the number of bulbs sold increases, the overall price will continue to decline. Plus, the initial cost is quickly made up in energy savings and reduced replacement costs since the bulbs last much longer.

Will a CFL bulb fit my light fixture?

CFL bulbs, which include a lamp and a ballast for transformer, come in many shapes and sizes. Great strides have been made in reducing the overall size, and many CFLs are now equivalent in size or smaller than incandescent bulbs. However, it is best to measure your fixture and compare bulb sizes before purchasing a CFL. The benefits of using these bulbs may make it more cost effective to replace the fixture if it does not work with CFL bulbs.

Where should I use CFL bulbs?

Use CFL bulbs any place a tradi-



tional incandescent bulb is used. However, the most practical use for CFL bulbs is in a lamp or fixture turned on for at least three hours at a time. Hard-to-reach fixtures are also good candidates, since a CFL does not have to be changed as often as an incandescent bulb.

Can I use CFL bulbs in a fully enclosed fixture?

Yes, it is safe to use CFL bulbs that are 23 watts or below in a fully enclosed fixture.

Can CFL lights be dimmed?

There are dimmable CFL bulbs sold specifically for dimmable applications. Dimmable applications tend to have a small amount of electricity running through them even though a lamp is shut off. The lamp continually tries to turn itself on, which shortens the CFL life.

Can CFL bulbs be used where it is wet or damp?

CFL light bulbs can be installed in wet or damp locations as long as they are a covered bulb such as a flood lamp. Regular spiral CFLs may be installed in sheltered exterior locations.

Can CFL bulbs create interference with electronic equipment?

This product may cause interference with radios, cordless phones, televisions and remote controls. If interference occurs, move this product away from the device and plug into a different outlet.

What about air temperature and CFL bulbs?

CFL light bulbs may generally be used where the air temperature is between 20 degrees and 140 degrees. Above 140 degrees, there may be reduced light output and premature ballast failure. CFLs have a harder time starting below 32 degrees, reducing the brightness.

Do CFL bulbs give off ultraviolet light?

Compact fluorescent bulbs give off a minimal amount of UV light. It does not pose a hazard.

How long does it take for a CFL to reach full brightness?

The start-up time for CFL lamps varies. Most electronically ballasted units start their lamps instantly. All fluorescent lamps start at a lower light output. Depending on the ambient temperature, it may take anywhere from several seconds to several minutes for the lamp to come up to full brightness.

Should I be concerned about using CFLs in my home?

CFLs are safe to use in your home. No mercury is released when the bulbs are in use and they pose no more danger to you or your family than traditional incandescent bulbs when used properly.

How do I safely dispose of a CFL?

It is best to recycle your CFL. Recycling programs exist for mercury in older non-digital thermostats and mercury thermometers, but residential CFL recycling programs are just now appearing. If recycling is not an option in your area, place the CFL in a sealed plastic bag and dispose the same way you would batteries, oil-based paint and motor oil at your local Household Hazardous Waste Collection site. If that is not an option for you, seal the CFL in a plastic bag and place with your regular trash.

What should I do if I break a CFL?

If a CFL breaks, carefully sweep up all the fragments. Wipe the area with a wet towel and dispose of all fragments, including the used towel, in a sealed plastic bag. Follow disposal instructions above. If possible, open windows to allow the room to ventilate. Do not use a vacuum.

For more info: Visit http://www.energystar.gov/ia/partners/promotions/change_light/downloads/Fact_Sheet_Mercury.pdf

Paying over the phone? Please consider....

While paying your bill over the phone with a credit card is a popular option for New-Mac customers, those waiting to do so on the last day of the month

can avoid long waits on hold (due to high call volumes) and assist the cooperative through the following options:

1. Customers can leave their

payment information and phone number on a voice mail, and when the payment has been processed, they will receive a

See *Phone payments*, page 3

○ Rebates: Incentives available in 2009

Continued from page 1

ing-and-cooling unit, keep in mind the rebate program qualifications – **because only qualifying purchases will be rebated.**

In order to qualify for a rebate, New-Mac must receive a completed rebate form and a copy of the purchase receipt within **90 days of the date of purchase.** Rebate forms are available online at newmac.com, at both the Neosho and Anderson offices, or by calling 451-1515 or 800-322-3849. The rebate program has been approved through Dec. 31, 2009.

Take Control & Save
A Cooperative Effort for Energy Efficiency

In order to receive a rebate, purchases must meet these qualifications:

CLOTHES WASHERS – \$100

- must be submitted within 90 days of purchase
- must be *Energy Star* rated
- only for homes with electric water heaters

DISHWASHERS – \$50

- must be submitted within 90 days of purchase
- must be *Energy Star* rated
- only for homes with electric water heaters

WINDOW AIR-CONDITIONING UNITS – \$50

- must be submitted within 90 days of purchase
- must be *Energy Star* rated

WATER HEATERS – \$50

- must be submitted within 90 days of purchase
- must have an energy rating of .9 or better
- only for replacement of another electric water, or for a new home

AIR-SOURCE HEAT PUMP – \$150 PER TON

- must be submitted within 90 days of purchase
- must be *Energy Star* rated (14 SEER)
- must be dual fuel (having natural gas or propane for back-up)

GROUND-SOURCE HEAT PUMP – \$300 PER TON

- must be submitted within 90 days of purchase
- only for new installations
- does not include repair work on existing ground-source units



Rebates are available on energy efficient water heaters (at left) and heat pumps (below).



Ease budgeting in 2009 with Levelized Billing

Most folks would agree that it's easier to budget for something when you know what to expect. However, electric bills, due to the heating and cooling of homes, are prone to fluctuation and consequently are somewhat unpredictable.

Well, if that fluctuation is something you could do without, New-Mac offers a payment option which evens out the peaks and valleys of energy use. Through a process called Levelized Billing, each month your bill is based on an average of your electric bills over the previous 12 months.

Levelized Billing consists of 11 equal payments and one adjustment payment per year. Since household usage typically varies from year to year (due to weather, improvements, additions, etc.), the twelfth payment is used to make up the difference between the estimated and actual usage.

Most residential members with a good credit history are eligible for this program.

If you would like to take advantage of Levelized Billing, call New-Mac at 451-1515 or (800) 322-3849.

○ Phone payments

Continued from page 2

call that day. Some return calls may occur after normal business hours, however New-Mac will return a call that day.

2. Customers can leave their name and phone number, and a billing clerk will call them in order to process the payment.

3. Customers can call a few days earlier with their payment information and request that New-Mac not process the payment until the last day of the month.

4. Customers can sign up for automatic payment, and their bill will be processed on the 25th of each month.

Energy Partners'
Recipe of the Month:

PEANUT BUTTER
FUDGE

Submitted by New-Mac member: **Mary Fort**

1½ cups sugar
½ cup canned milk
pinch salt

1 Tbs. white corn syrup
¾ cup peanut butter
1 Tbs. vanilla

Mix and cook sugar, canned milk, salt and corn syrup on low flame stirring to make sure it doesn't scorch. Check for soft ball stage. Then add peanut butter and vanilla. Beat until it loses shine. Pour in buttered dish.

Send your recipe, along with your name and customer number, to: Recipes, c/o New-Mac Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 310, Neosho, MO 64850; or recipes@new-mac.com. If your recipe is selected, New-Mac will apply a \$15 credit to your bill.

Energy efficiency starts with stopping air infiltration

With air infiltration being such a major energy problem, you surely didn't think the topic could be covered in one column, did you? As I often say in seminars, the three most important items in energy efficiency are: 1) air infiltration, 2) air infiltration, and 3) air infiltration.

Now that you have seen this in writing, you probably will never forget it. Remember, if the cold air doesn't get in your house this winter, it doesn't take much fuel to heat your house.

When we perform a blower door test in a house it is absolutely amazing how many places air can and does come into a house. If a pull-down attic stairway is located inside the house it is always an energy hog. It never seals tightly at the ceiling and both hot and cold air can enter the house at that location. In many houses, the heating and cooling thermometer is located near the energy hog. On a cold winter day, the poor old thermostat doesn't know what to do. It doesn't really know if it is in the house or the attic. Solution: Seal it, seal it, seal it. Installation of an Attic Tent (www.atticent.com) or an Energy Guardian kit (www.essnrg.com) is a great answer to that problem.

Many older homes have what we call whole-house attic fans. Hot and cold air pour into the house through the fan's louvers in the ceiling. One recent makeover home had both the pull-down stairway and attic fan in the hallway. And, yes, the thermostat was within 6 feet of both. Talk about a confused thermostat. Actually, there are very few days when such a fan is beneficial. Our preference is to simply remove the fan and louvers and finish the ceiling. However, a very simple solution is to install a sealed, insulated cover on the ceiling, attached to the louvers. Such a unit is custom-made for your particular size fan (www.eciwinc.com). It only takes a few minutes to install and you can still use the fan when desired.

If you can't remove the fan, you can

build a box out of foam board and mastic tape. Simply cut the foam board to fit and seal tightly with the mastic tape. Then place it over the fan unit. It is inexpensive, easy to install and very effective.

OK, now. No, we aren't finished yet. Just think with me for a moment. Where are some other places where air can come into your home?

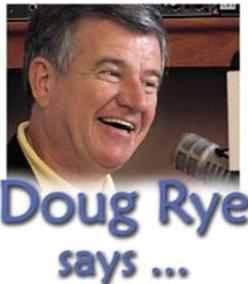
Think of it this way: Anywhere an ant can get in, air can get in. Here are a few major problem areas:

- Where your wall touches your slab.
- Cracks between the wood framing in your home's wall.
- Around electrical receptacles and light switches in your house, even on interior walls. (When the north wind is blowing, go feel the electrical outlets and switches on your north wall.)
- Holes and leaks around your sink plumbing. To heck with ants, sometimes a mouse can get through these holes.
- Gas and fireplace flues.
- Recessed lights that are not IC-rated. Between 3 and 10 cubic feet per minute of air will pass through one of these lights. A typical plastic garbage bag is 3 cubic feet. So that means that three garbage bags full of air can leak out of one of those lights every minute.
- The return air system of your heating/cooling unit. In the average house, gigantic amounts of air enter through this system.

So, how are you going to stop the cold air from penetrating your home this winter? The solution is mostly labor and a little bit of material. Now, say this with me: "Caulk it, caulk it, caulk it."

For big holes, such as those under the sink, simply use the expandable foam. For the smaller cracks, use a clear siliconized caulk. For electrical outlets and light switches, install the insulated foam gaskets and childproof plug inserts.

Installing cellulose insulation in your attic will also help reduce air infiltration from your attic space. These products can be purchased at most home centers. There



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Office Hours: Neosho — 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Anderson — 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Or visit us on the Web at
www.newmac.com.

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Services Provided to Members

Call our consumer services department for information on the following services:

Autowithdrawal Payment
Levelized Billing
Rental Light
Meeting rooms available at both locations
Credit Card Acceptance
Safety Programs (upon request)
Trade-A-Tree Program
Surge Protection
Green Power

Questions? Comments?

Contact: Mark K. Rakes
P.O. Box 310, Neosho, MO
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are also professionals who can test your home and correct the problems.

The surest way to find the leaks is through a blower door test, which reveals where all the air leaks are, even those you can't see.

Doug Rye, a licensed architect living in Arkansas and the popular host of the "Home Remedies" radio show (as heard on KBTN 1420 AM), works as a consultant for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas to promote energy efficiency to cooperative members statewide. To order Doug's video, call Doug at 1-888-Doug-Rye. More energy-efficiency tips can also be found at www.ecark.org.