



RuralHILIGHTS

Local News from Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative

When temperatures drop, energy costs rise

Temperatures have been on a roller coaster this winter, with a warmer-than-normal December followed by many frigid days in January. Consumers may feel an extra chill when they receive their winter energy bills since most of a home's energy use is related to heating during the winter months.

The extremely cold weather means your heating system has run a lot to keep you warm. Even homes with gas furnaces will use more electricity during cold weather because the furnace fan runs more, and you may have some extra space heaters in use around the house.

Chances are you've been stuck at home more often than usual, too. When you're home, you're

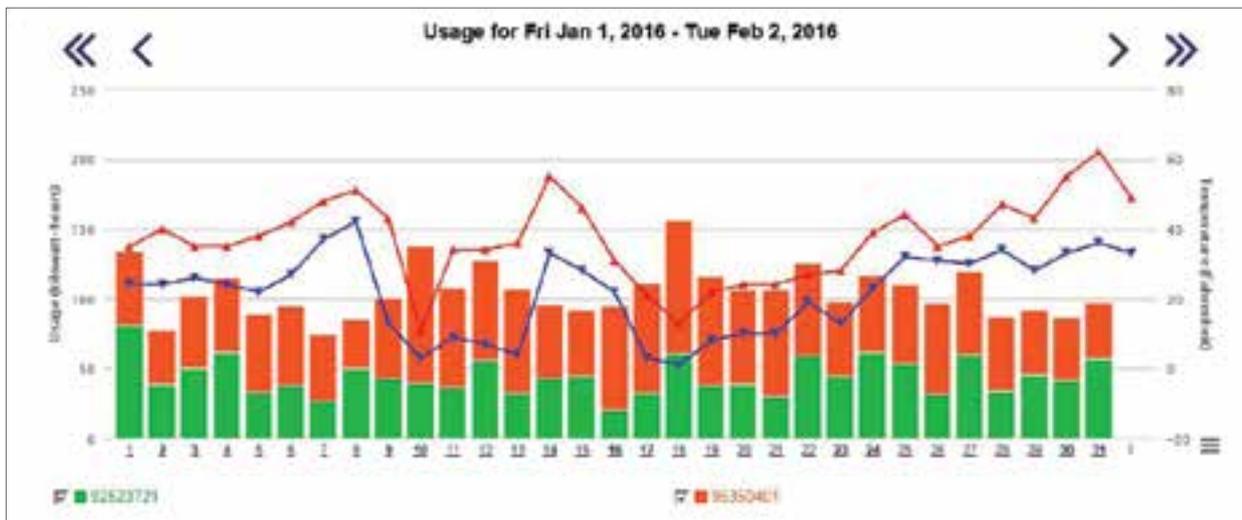
using lights, TVs, computers and appliances that will add to your electric bill.

You can view your daily electric energy use, compare it to previous months, and even see what time of day you're using the most power with our free SmartHub online portal. Local temperature data is also shown so you can see how the weather plays a significant role in your energy use.

You can log in to your SmartHub account, or sign up for SmartHub, at our website www.recc.coop. With your own password, you'll have secure access to your account information.

You can also download the SmartHub app on your mobile device, for access anytime and anywhere.

Besides energy use reports, SmartHub lets you check your account balance, make payments from your bank account or credit card, and update your account information. There's also a quick link to RECC's Outage Maps that show where any outages are occurring and how many members are affected.



SmartHub shows your daily and hourly kWh use, along with temperature data for our area. This account has a Dual Meter for electric heating and water heating energy, shown in orange, while lighting and other general-purpose energy is shown in green. The blue and orange graph lines show daily high and low temperatures during the month. (The temperature scale is shown on right side.)

Nominating Committee to meet March 8

The Board of Directors has selected nine co-op members to serve on the Nominating Committee, which will meet on Tuesday, March 8 at 6:30 p.m. at the co-op's office in Auburn. The committee will select candidates for Director elections in three districts, to be held at the RECC Annual Meeting on June 9, 2016 in Chatham.

Director positions up for election to three-year terms this year are District 1 (incumbent Clayton Bloome of Pawnee), District 2 (incumbent Chris Wilcox of Waverly), and District 3 (incumbent Jimmy Ayers of Rochester).

Members serving on the Nominating Committee are:

District 1:

Rodney Bourne
35243 Black Diamond Rd.
Pawnee, IL 62558

Gary Dunkirk
944 N. 200 East Rd.
Morrisonville, IL 62546

Raymond Squires
70 Michelle Dr.
Pawnee, IL 62558

District 2:

Kevin Duewer
10813 Pleasant Valley Rd.
Waverly, IL 62692

Jerome Johnson
961 Contrary Ln.
Waverly, IL 62692

William Points
246 Scott Rd.
Waverly, IL 62692

District 3:

James Austin
4700 Birmingham Dr.
Pawnee, IL 62558

Charles Broers
8688 Cardinal Hill Rd.
Rochester, IL 62563

Dale Fesser
6101 New City Rd.
Rochester, IL 62563

What is expected of a co-op director?

Your board of directors is chosen through elections each year at the annual meeting. Each of the nine directors is elected by majority vote for a three-year term. Terms are staggered; three directors are elected one year, three directors the next year and three the third year.

Before each annual meeting of members, a nine-member nominating committee is appointed. The committee consists of three members from each district where a vacancy on the board of directors is to be filled. This committee meets and prepares a list of nominees before the annual meeting. Nominations for a district candidate may also be made by petition, signed by 15 or more members in that district. Petition forms are available from the co-op office, and must be returned by May 10 (30 days before the Annual Meeting, which is on June 9).

Mark your calendars!

*2016 RECC Annual Meeting of Members
will be held on Thursday, June 9th.*

Following is a list of the minimum requirements:

- Directors must receive electric service from Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative at their primary residence. They pay the same rates for electric service and follow the same policies as all other members. They are not eligible to serve on the board if they have any conflicting business interest.
- Your board of directors meets regularly on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the headquarters in Auburn. Directors are expected to attend all regular monthly board meetings, usually beginning at 7 p.m. (or 6 p.m. during winter months).
- Directors attend all special board meetings, committee meetings and Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative's annual meeting. Directors should also attempt to attend one National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) meeting or director's conference every year.
- Other meetings directors attend include one and two day educational seminars. Directors are encouraged to complete their NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director's Certificate during their first term (3 years).
- Directors receive a \$150 per diem (\$200 if director has completed Credentialed Cooperative Director training, or \$225 with Board Leadership certificate). They receive the IRS mileage allowance for attendance of cooperative meetings and expenses when traveling on co-op business.
- Directors spend 23 – 35 days each year representing Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative.
- A director represents all members of Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative, not a geographic region.
- This board establishes the basic business policies, the same as the board of directors of any other corporation. The board employs a President/CEO, who is responsible for all the operational details.

Youth Tour contest deadline is approaching!

High school juniors can apply through March 18

Juniors at area high schools have until March 18 to enter the Rural Electric Youth Day/Youth Tour contest. The application form includes a summary of the student's school and civic activities and accomplishments, and a brief essay question pertaining to the rural electric program.

RECC will select two winners for a free trip to Washington, D.C., set for June 12-17. The first step in the competition is attending the Illinois Rural Electric Youth Day program in Springfield on Wednesday, April 13. After touring the Capitol and other historic sites, and meeting with their state legislators, students will have a short interview as part of the judging process.

The two RECC winners will attend the Youth To Washington trip with over 1,000 young people from



around the country.

Students can request an application kit by calling our office or through email at recc@recc.coop. We will mail an application form, rules sheet and background information to help with the essay question. Students can also learn more about the Youth Tour program by visiting www.youthtour.coop.

Students will be judged on their

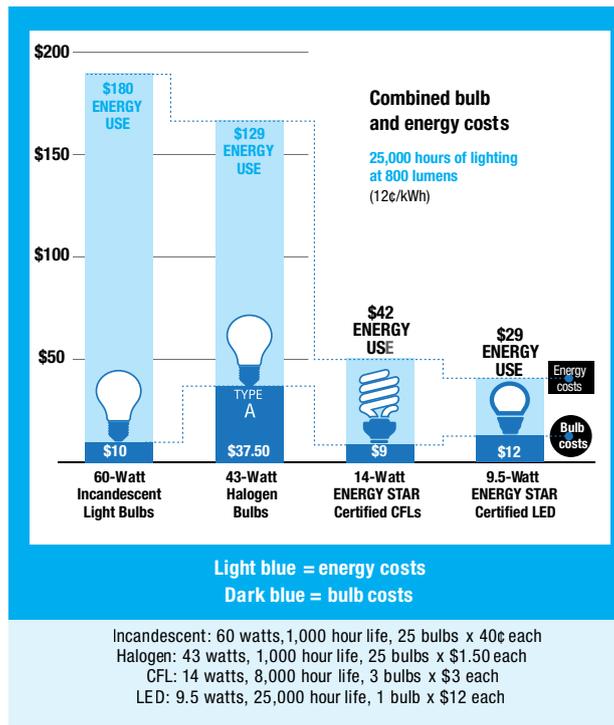
written application, personal poise and confidence, and demonstrated understanding of the rural electric program.

The Youth Day and Youth Tour programs are fun and educational, with the chance to meet other student leaders from around the state and across the country. Encourage your favorite student to apply now!

New website and information from Touchstone Energy

Touchstone Energy, an alliance of 750 electric cooperatives across the country, has introduced a great new website that combines some popular programs like our Together We Save efficiency campaign with new information on safety, renewable energy and the cooperative business model. It's all available at www.TouchstoneEnergy.com.

You'll still find helpful efficiency articles and energy-saving tips in the Together We Save section. There's also a new Home Energy Analysis Tool that points out areas of concern for a home like yours, and offers downloadable project cards to increase energy efficiency in different rooms



and in your heating, cooling and water heating equipment.

The Kids Energy Zone has videos, games and activity sheets to teach youngsters about electric energy and safety, as well as lesson plans for school teachers.

A section on renewable energy discusses the options for solar generation systems, the fastest-growing source of renewable energy. It includes questions to ask solar contractors, sizing considerations, community solar systems and other helpful information.

Whatever your age or interests, there's something for you at the Touchstone Energy site. Visit it today to explore the changing world of electricity!



Rural Electric
Convenience Cooperative

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See our web page for monthly Board meeting reports.

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

Protect your home from surges

Spring storms can bring an increased threat of power surges, which are sudden, short-lived increases in voltage. Surges may come either from lightning strikes or power lines being damaged by ice or falling tree limbs.

Your cooperative can help protect your home from the threat of power surges which could damage your valuable appliances and electronics. We offer a two-stage surge protection program for the different threats to your home equipment.

External surges

Whole-house surge protection can reduce or stop voltage surges that travel through the power lines, including indirect lightning strikes. Under our whole-house lease program, we install a meter base adapter at your electric meter or main electrical panel. The monthly lease fee is just \$4.95, with no installation charge.

The whole house unit protects your household appliances and motors, blocking any high-energy surges through your main service.



RECC's whole-house surge protection lease fee is \$4.95/month

Internal surges

Most temporary power surges come from inside the home. Whether the disturbance is natural or man-made, your sensitive electronic devices need protection at the point of use, which can be provided by quality plug-in strips. Since devices like TVs and phone answering machines are also connected to outside sources like satellite dishes and phone lines, the plug strips for those devices should include protection for the other connected wires.

RECC has a selection of plug-in protectors for your home, from single-plug cubes for your garage door opener to satellite system strips with electrical, phone and cable connections.

One standard six-plug strip is included in your lease program, with others available for purchase.

Protect your equipment now with RECC's easy lease program! Call our office at (217) 438-6197 for more details or to schedule an installation. Or e-mail us at recc@recc.coop.



RECC's office will be closed on

*Good Friday,
March 25*