

December 2022 Powerlines



High price of fuel and materials will increase cost of electricity

by General Manager Steve Stroshane

Due to the rising cost of fuel and materials to generate electricity, Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative is passing through a PCA charge on member electric bills.

A PCA (power cost adjustment) is a rate mechanism that helps manage fluctuating prices on the power market. When the cost to produce power or buy it on the energy market is significantly more or less than anticipated, our wholesale power provider, Dairyland Power Cooperative, passes the difference to Polk-Burnett, and we pass a *charge* or *credit* to our members.

Members received a PCA *credit* on bills in May to July 2021, September 2021 to February 2022, and August to October 2022, when the power market was favorable. In April, July and November 2022, a PCA *charge* was added to electric bills.

Natural Gas Prices

2022 Electric Power Sector Natural Gas Costs (dollars per million Btu)
Source: Energy Information Administration



The cost of fuel to generate electricity is rising.

As a member of a not-for-profit co-op, you receive power at cost. The PCA is a separate line item on your bill, which reflects the increase or decrease in the co-op's cost of power. Your PCA is based on the amount of electricity you use, and your electric bill provides transparency, so you know what you're paying for.

Rising cost of living is challenging for everyone

A PCA charge is never easy. We recognize that it affects many of you as you're feeling cost pressures in many areas of your life, from buying groceries and household supplies to winter coats and boots.

Like you, the co-op is also paying higher prices for equipment, supplies and services; the cost to deliver safe, reliable power is rising.

Material for a large project used to take four months to get, but now takes 12 to 16 months. We're doing our best to hold expenses down for members, while providing the excellent service you rely on.

We've delayed two power line construction projects to make sure we have enough material to meet member demand for new and upgraded electric services through the end of 2022. We're also gradually investing in local solar to become less reliant on volatile energy markets, and we're making system improvements and using technology to work more efficiently to save time and money, while improving services.

We work hard to hold down costs and provide safe, reliable electricity, but the rising cost of fuel to generate power makes power cost adjustments unavoidable.

We're not in business to profit

When times are good, Polk-Burnett passes a power cost adjustment *credit* back to members, and we retire Capital Credits annually. In April 2022, the board approved a special Capital Credit distribution of \$1 million, followed by our regular Capital Credits of \$2.28 million in November.

Resources to help

We're here to help. Give us a call at 800-421-0283 or visit us on polkburnett.com to learn about [prepay](#) and [budget billing](#) options. We also have [EnergySense rebates](#) to help save energy and money, while improving comfort in your home. And I invite you to enroll in [SmartHub](#) to help track and manage your energy use and cost.



5 ways to stay warm, save energy and money this winter

Winter brings some of the highest energy bills of the year. Below are tips to boost your home's energy efficiency:

1. Lower your thermostat, especially when you are sleeping or away for a period of time.
2. Seal air leaks around windows and doors with caulk or weather stripping.
3. Open window coverings during the day to let sunlight warm your home; cover windows at night.
4. Run full loads in your dishwasher and clothes washer to maximize efficiency.
5. Cozy up! Wear warm socks and sweaters, bundle up under a blanket and put down a floor rug.

Find more ways to save energy and lower your electric bill on polkburnett.com or give us a call, 800-421-0283.

Electricity is a great value, and we depend on it to power our lives

Here are just a few ways to show the value of electricity from our friends at the National Rural Electric Co-op Association:

- ✓ You can brew at home for 38 hours for the price of a \$5 cup of coffee.
- ✓ You can run your washing machine for 685 hours for the price of a \$48 pair of jeans.
- ✓ You can run your blow dryer for 333 hours for the price of a \$40 haircut.

Based on 13 cents per kWh. (Polk-Burnett's regular winter rate is 10.1 cents and summer rate is 11.6 cents.)

Well done for those of us who pay lower prices for coffee, jeans & haircuts... but you get the point!



We did it!
\$1,000,000
Awarded by Operation Round Up to nonprofit organizations that improve our local quality of life.
1998-2022
THANK YOU, CO-OP MEMBERS, FOR ROUNDING UP YOUR ELECTRIC BILLS. YOUR GENEROSITY MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES!




Operation Round Up reaches \$1 Million in giving!

Since the start of the program in 1998 through 2022, Operation Round Up has awarded \$1,000,000 to nonprofits that improve our local quality of life!

Congratulations and thank you co-op members for rounding up your electric bills.

Your generosity makes a difference in our communities.

Fall grant highlight:

\$2,000 to *Yellow Lake Food Distribution, Webster area*

See all 2022 grant winners and learn how your nonprofit can apply on polkburnett.com.



Apply for co-op scholarship by January 1

The deadline to apply for a co-op scholarship is January 1, 2023. Children of co-op members in the Class of 2023 who will continue their education after high school are invited to apply online. We will award \$1,500 scholarships to 85 students for our 85th anniversary in 2023.



EnergySense rebate deadline is January 1

Polk-Burnett offers rebates to help members improve energy efficiency in your homes. See rebate offers and apply on polkburnett.com by January 1, 2023, for purchases in 2022. Questions? Call 800-421-0283, ext. 318. We look forward to assisting you.

What's the difference between Energy Star and Energy Guide

When shopping for energy efficient appliances and completing our EnergySense rebate forms, it's important to know the difference:

The Energy Star symbol identifies products that meet government guidelines energy efficiency.

The Energy Guide estimates annual energy use and operating cost of a product.

The Energy Guide with the Energy Star symbol is required for co-op rebates. Thank you!



Consider serving on the co-op board

Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative holds elections each spring for co-op board directors. This year, board positions in co-op districts 1, 2 and 3 will be on the ballot. Members residing in those districts have an opportunity to get involved in co-op decision making by running for a seat on the board.

Applications for the 2023 board election are now being accepted from co-op members in districts 1, 2 and 3. The deadline to apply is March 3.



Co-op District 1 includes parts of Osceola, Alden and Garfield townships, and Farmington and Somerset townships. The incumbent director is Cindy Thorman of Osceola.

Co-op District 2 includes part of Osceola Township, and St. Croix Falls, Eureka, Sterling, Laketown and Milltown townships. The incumbent director is Mike Morris of Luck.

Co-op District 3 includes part of Garfield and Alden townships, and Lincoln, Blackbrook, Clear Lake, Vance Creek, Star Prairie, Forest and New Haven townships. The incumbent director is Ed Gullickson of Amery.

As a cooperative, Polk-Burnett is owned by its members and governed by a board of directors elected from its membership. Board directors serve a three-year term and attend monthly meetings to guide policy and budget decisions for Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative.

All co-op members in districts 1, 2 and 3 will have the opportunity to vote in the 2023 Polk-Burnett board election. Ballots will be mailed April 28 and members can vote by mail or online. Election results will be announced at the co-op's 85th annual meeting June 9.

Co-op members interested in running for a board position in districts 1, 2 and 3 may contact the general manager's office at Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative, 800-421-0283, ext. 313, for an application packet.

[Learn more about Polk-Burnett's board of directors and see map of co-op districts on \[polkburnett.com\]\(http://polkburnett.com\).](#)

Holiday Safety Tip

Throw away any electric lights and decorations that are frayed, damaged or worn out.

Merry Christmas

From our co-op family to yours, we wish you a joyous holiday season!

IF YOU RECEIVE AN EMAIL SURVEY, WE APPRECIATE YOUR FEEDBACK TO HELP US IMPROVE.

All members who submit a survey will be entered in a drawing for a \$50 bill credit.

Polk-Burnett is your local Touchstone Energy Cooperative. Reliable power with efficiency and extraordinary service.

Like us on Facebook. Follow us on Twitter.

800-421-0283 • polkburnett.com



Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer | Member Owned | Community Focused

