

PowerLines

March 2023

*Pictured:
Sand Lake
Substation*



Electric rates up this month, first increase since 2010

by General Manager Steve Stroshane

As I've reported since the first of the year, electric rates will increase about 5% starting on March 2023 bills. Both the kWh energy charge and the availability charge will go up. Members will pay approximately \$5 more per \$100 for your electricity.

While it may seem to some that rates have increased over the years, Polk-Burnett has not needed to collect more revenue with a rate increase since 2010. For more than a decade, we've invested millions of dollars in the electric grid, improving your reliability, while holding rates steady.

Beginning this month, the co-op board approved a rate increase to cover the rising costs of building and maintaining our system, as well as purchasing wholesale electricity for our members. The cost of wire, trucks, transformers and poles have all increased significantly over the last two years, as well as contracted services such as right-of-way clearing, underground cable installation and underground utility location for construction. The cost for Polk-Burnett to purchase power from our wholesale provider, Dairyland Power Cooperative, is up 6.5% this year, as energy market prices rise to historical levels. More than half of all revenue from members (58%) is used to purchase wholesale power.

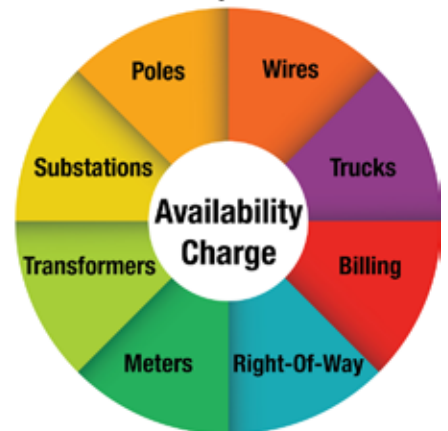
There is never a good time to share the news that rates are going up, but it's important to be open and honest, so you know what you're paying for. Our mission for the past 85 years has been to deliver safe, reliable electricity to power your lives. We will continue to deliver extraordinary service and value for your dollar.

Current and new rates are below. We've tightened our budgets and worked smarter with new technologies to minimize the impact of inflation on your bill. Your bill is affected by rates, as well as the weather and your electricity use. Please contact the co-op office if you have questions about your electric bill. We can assist with payment options, rebates to boost energy efficiency in your home and SmartHub enrollment to help track and manage your electricity use.

One of the best ways to lower energy costs and improve comfort in your home is with a home performance test. We offer rebates to help co-op members. See below and contact us to get started, 800-421-0283, x595.

March 2023 Rate Increase	Current	New
Daily availability charge	\$1.18367	\$1.219
Winter kWh energy charge	10.1¢	10.71¢
Summer kWh energy charge	11.6¢	12.3¢
Off-peak rate		
Daily off-peak meter charge	16.433¢	16.433¢
Storage kWh energy rate	6.54¢	6.67¢
Dual fuel kWh energy rate	7.4¢	7.62¢
Interruptible kWh energy rate	9.21¢	9.49¢

The cost of making power available at your location.



Shared equally by all 21,000+ co-op members.

The kWh energy charge covers the cost of power you use. The daily availability charge covers the costs to build and maintain the system, and deliver the power you need to your home, farm or business.



REBATES FOR CO-OP MEMBERS
Energy Sense

Lower energy costs and improve comfort in your home

\$350 OFF PERFORMANCE TEST FOR YOUR HOME UP TO \$1,000 REBATE ON SUBSEQUENT HOME ENERGY UPGRADES

Have your home tested by a certified energy rater, using a blower door fan and infrared camera. The energy rater will identify heat loss, evaluate insulation and provide a report with the best ways to improve your home's energy performance. Contact the co-op for a list of qualifying energy raters.

800-421-0283, x595 | polkburnett.com



Track your electricity use and save with SmartHub app

Manage your electric account, view and pay your bill, track your electricity use and report power outages on your computer or mobile device with the co-op's SmartHub app. It is free, secure and convenient. Learn more on polkburnett.com or call billing office, 800-421-0283, ext. 335.

COMING FRIDAY, JUNE 9, 2023

POLK-BURNETT, CENTURIA

MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY, 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Lunch, bucket rides for kids, giveaways and prizes!

85TH ANNUAL MEETING, 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.
In person and online

Operation Round Up awards \$9,000 to help community programs



Thanks to the participation of co-op members, Operation Round Up grants will support ag education and summer school programs for youth, services for senior citizens and adults with disabilities, as well as a local food shelf.

Funding for Operation Round Up is donated by members of Polk-Burnett Electric Co-op who round their monthly electric bill up to the next even dollar amount. Grant winners are selected quarterly by a committee of co-op members, with donations awarded to nonprofits that enrich our local quality of life, including:

Unity FFA and Interfaith Caregivers of Polk County highlighted here.

See all winter Operation Round Up winners and learn how your nonprofit can apply on polkburnett.com. The next deadline to apply is June 1.

Participating members donate an average of just 50¢ per month, but when combined, it adds up to make a big difference in our community. Thank you!



Do you know a local nonprofit that would benefit from an Operation Round Up grant? Community and youth organizations can receive up to \$1,500! All local nonprofits are invited to apply on polkburnett.com. The next deadline is June 1.

Co-op begins outage text alerts for members with cell number on account

Beginning this month, Polk-Burnett will launch a new outage text alert program for members. If we have your cell phone number, we'll send you a text alert when the power goes out at your location.

1. Receive a text when the power goes out at your location.
2. Receive text updates with outage cause and estimated restoration time, when possible.
3. Receive a text when power is restored at your location.

"A text is a simple way to let you know about an outage at your home, business or farm," said Operations Manager Jesse Seering. "We know that power outages are inconvenient and can cause problems for you and your family. You've told us in recent surveys that you want better communication when your lights go out. We listened and responded. Our goal is to restore power safely and efficiently, while keeping you informed."

Members will receive your first text when you have an outage at your location. You will not be charged for text messaging, and you can opt out at any time. Make sure your account information is up to date, especially your cell number, to receive a text if your power goes out. Update your account on SmartHub, polkburnett.com (My Electric Account menu) or call 800-421-0283, ext. 335.



March can be our snowiest month. If your lights go out, see live outage map on polkburnett.com. Report outages on SmartHub or 800-421-0283.



Keep away from fallen power lines, trees and branches near power lines.



It's dangerous to build or landscape near utility equipment

Do you have building plans this spring?

Warning: Gardens, landscaping, decks, fences and buildings are a safety hazard if built too close to underground transformer boxes, power poles and other utility equipment:

- ✓ Life-threatening contact with high-voltage equipment can occur when landscaping and structures are too close to electrical equipment.
 - ✓ Obstructions limit access for linemen working to keep the power on at your home or business. Co-op crews need access to utility equipment to perform routine maintenance and emergency repairs.
 - ✓ Decks, fences, structures and landscaping built too close to utility equipment can be damaged when crews and trucks need access to work on equipment.
- All structures and landscaping should be a safe distance from utilities to prevent damage.

For your safety, keep away from electrical equipment. Thank you!



Simplify your bill payment

Sign up for auto pay from your checking or savings account.

It's the easiest, most hassle-free way to pay your electric bill.

No paper. No need to update credit card changes or expiration dates.

Convenient, secure and free!

Enroll on SmartHub or polkburnett.com or give us a call. We're happy to assist.

Be safe when using a portable generator: Portable generators provide great convenience during a power outage. But they can be extremely hazardous if used improperly. **DO** install carbon monoxide (CO) alarms and position generators outside, at least 25 feet from doors, windows and vents. Make sure your generator is properly grounded with a portable GCFI to prevent electrical shock. Always use a three-pronged extension cord rated to handle the load of a generator. **Do NOT** operate a generator indoors! Do not overload a generator with more devices plugged in than it can handle. And **do not connect a generator to household wiring unless you have a transfer switch** installed. Without a transfer switch, power can backfeed into power lines and electrocute lineworkers making repairs. Please call us if you have questions about the use of generators; we're here to help, 800-421-0283.

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

