

# THE GRID

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or Toll-Free:  
1-888-661-CMEC (2632)  
**Office hours:**  
Monday-Friday  
7:30a.m. - 4:30p.m.

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Kent Metzger .....Gays
- Vice Chairman**  
Bill Voyles .....Sullivan
- Secretary**  
Andrew Fearn ....Charleston
- Treasurer**  
Thomas Sherman ...Humboldt
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Colt Roderick ..... Trilla
- President/CEO**  
Amy Borntrager

**To Report an Outage  
call #888-661-2632**

## Find Your Name and Win \$50

Find your name hidden inside this issue of The Grid and receive a **\$50 bill credit**. Credit must be claimed by the end of each month in which this newsletter is published.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



## To All Members - A Message from Your CEO



*Amy C. Borntrager  
President & CEO*

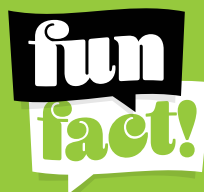
Like many of you, Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative (CMEC) has seen increased costs, including energy and related supplies, during the past few years. In 2023, we added \$.01 to the wholesale power adjustment to provide us time to finish the cost-of-service study which allocates CMEC's revenue requirement to all the individual rate classes. On the **March 2024** billing, CMEC will be resetting the Wholesale Power Adjustment and Formula Rate Plan and moving the charges into the base rates.

The cooperative has been impacted by rising interest rates, material and equipment inflation, increased fuel costs and supply chain issues. Since our last base rate adjustment in 2018, the industry has

seen an increase in cost of wire by 208%, transformers by 235%, and poles by 78%. Other economic and legislative issues have also impacted the cooperative and its ability to provide electric service at an affordable price.

The rate adjustment presented below was passed at the Jan. 4, 2024, board meeting. The average increase across all rates will be 5.8%. All of us at CMEC recognize that this impacts your home and/or business. We will continue to look for ways to operate efficiently while committing to providing our members with safe, reliable and affordable electricity. If there is anything the cooperative can do to further explain the adjustments, please don't hesitate to call.

[See rate adjustment table on 18B ▶](#)



**CMEC ended 2023 with 96 members using renewable energy. Are you considering solar or wind? Contact us first to get all the facts.**

Rate Adjustment 2024	2023	2024
<b>Rate 1 Residential</b>		
Service Availability Charge	\$50.00	\$58.00
Energy Charge	0.104/kWh	0.12799/kWh
<b>Rate 5 General Service</b>		
Service Availability Charge/Single Phase	\$36.00	\$54.00
Service Availability Charge/Three Phase	\$46.00	\$64.00
Energy Charge	0.105/kWh	0.12949/kWh
<b>Rate 7 Large Power</b>		
Service Availability Charge	\$78.00	\$128.00
Demand Charge	15.50/kW	16.89/kW
Energy Charge	0.076/kWh	0.09789/kWh
<b>Rate 16 Large Power/Peak Sharing</b>		
Service Availability Charge	\$120.00	\$128.00
Base Level Demand Charge	24.50/kW	24.50/kW
Incremental Demand Charge	8.00/kW	9.11/kW
Energy Charge	0.07/kWh	0.09789/kWh
<b>Rates 18, 20 &amp; 24 Sub Metered Service</b>		
Service Availability Charge	\$4.00	\$5.00
Energy Charge	0.07/kWh	0.10689/kWh
<b>Rate 25 All Electric Apartments</b>		
Service Availability Charge	\$50.00	\$58.00
Energy Charge First 500	0.104/kWh	0.12799/kWh
Energy Charge Over 500	0.08/kWh	0.10859/kWh

## Safety Tip

Do not trim trees/branches within 10 feet of a power line or pole. Only certified line clearance tree trimmers are authorized to trim near power lines.



Safe  
Electricity.org®

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Lengthen the life of your clothes dryer with regular cleaning. Clean the lint filter after every load, which improves air circulation and safety. Check the lint trap opening and use a vacuum to remove any lint that's fallen inside the opening.

If you use dryer sheets, check the lint filter for residue buildup. Remove any residue with hot water and a nylon brush or toothbrush. Over time, dryer sheets can leave a film on the filter, which can affect the performance of the motor.

# Biggest Energy Users

The biggest source of energy use in your home is your heating and cooling system. Whether you are using your air conditioner in the summer or your furnace in the winter, this makes up the biggest expense on your electric bill. The next highest contributor to your electric bill is your water heater. Consider how often you rely on hot or warm water to shower, take a bath or wash dishes. This energy adds up over time and may account for 14% of your household energy use.



The Smarthub app is a great tool you can download or connect from our website, [www.cmec.coop](http://www.cmec.coop), that allows you to track or monitor your usage.

### Things to Consider

Every household is different. The quality of windows, amount of insulation, type of heating/cooling and size of space makes a difference. All appliances vary. The number of times or length of time you use

each appliance will vary. Older appliances generally use more than newer models. A laptop designed for gaming or graphics will likely use more energy. (Example: The average gaming laptop can consume 300 watts of power versus a standard laptop, which might consume 80 watts.)

We all have different lifestyles, comfort choices, and utilize our spaces differently. Some families vacuum more, take longer showers, use space heaters, or drink coffee throughout the day. Electronics, televisions, smart devices and computer systems may stay on continually. Many people work from home remotely, while others may have outbuildings, such as garages, sheds or barns, that use power.

### The Power Is in Your Hands

The easiest way to lower your electric bill is to use less energy.

We tend to add things to our living spaces that use energy rather than removing them or looking for ways to decrease consumption. Determining how much electricity your heating/cooling systems, appliances and electronics use can help you understand how much money you are spending to operate them. **Rebecca Ryan**



CMEC offers a guide called “Your Unique Energy Needs” to help reduce energy costs. You can find that guide, along with “101 Ways to Save Energy and Money” on our website, [www.cmec.coop](http://www.cmec.coop), or email [info@cmec.coop](mailto:info@cmec.coop) for a copy. Knowing how much electricity is being used and how much it costs can help you with cost-saving decisions. Do you have more than one refrigerator or freezer? How many televisions and computer devices do you have? Does your space need more insulation? What is the setting on your water heater? Are your windows sealed correctly? Becoming watt-savvy is helpful when shopping for new appliances or making decisions about lowering your home energy use.



## Farewell to Longtime Lineman

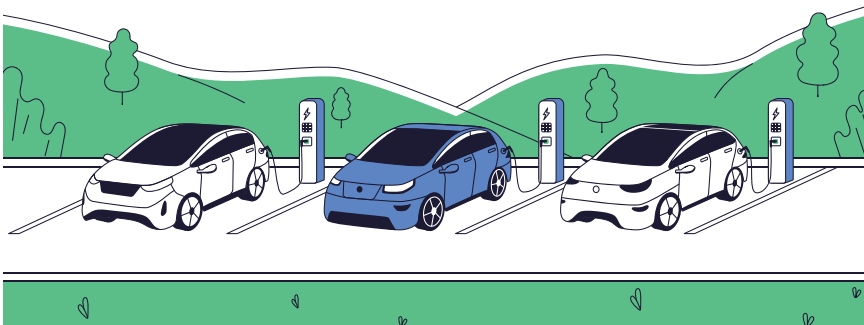
John Pickowitz retired as General Foreman with a successful career at our co-op. He was the last to retire out of a crew of five who started working at CMEC in 1978. John began his journey as summer help and retired with over 45 years of service. We thank him and all our retirees for their dedication and contributions to our members, employees and communities throughout the years.



# Charge EV

CMEC started the new year by joining Charge EV to partner with other innovative electric cooperatives to promote electric vehicles and charging infrastructure. President/CEO Amy Borntrager said, "As cooperatives, we find success when we collaborate to help plan for the future. Charge EV and other affiliates will be invaluable partners as we evaluate the future of EVs at our cooperative and within our service territory." Charge EV was created in 2020 by 31 electric co-ops throughout Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin to help promote electric vehicle adoption.

Visit [www.charge.coop](http://www.charge.coop) for more information.



*We will be hosting Coffee on the Co-op again this spring*

**Wednesday, April 24 & Wednesday, May 29**

7-8:30 a.m. at Downtown Diner, Mattoon

If you missed it last time, this is a great way to meet our CEO, chat with fellow members and ask questions. We may continue this into the summer and hope to see you there!

## 3 Ways to Help Limit Tree Trimming

Did you know electric utilities are required to trim trees and other types of vegetation that grow too close to overhead power lines? We know you love your trees, and we will do everything we can to avoid trimming them. Here's how you can help:

**1. Plant trees in the right place.** Trees that will be <40 ft. should be planted at least 25 ft. away from power lines (>40ft. should be at least 50 ft. away).



**2. Don't block pad-mounted transformers.** Plant shrubs at least 10 ft. away from transformer doors and 4 ft. from transformer sides.



**3. Report dangerous branches.** If you spot a tree or branch that is dangerously close to power lines, please let us know.



**Trimming improves safety for all. Let's work together to enjoy the beauty of trees and reliable electricity.**

Monthly Board Meeting Minutes can be viewed on our website: [cmec.coop](http://cmec.coop)