Clinton County Connection

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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Understanding electric demand:

How members can take advantage of CCEC's cost-based rate structure

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Beginning in January 2027, Clinton County Electric Cooperative (CCEC) will transition to a cost-based rate structure. While that change may sound complicated at first, the idea behind it is actually very simple: Members will be billed based on the costs they create, and members will have more opportunities to control a portion of their electric bill based on when and how they use electricity.

Under a traditional energy-only rate structure, the primary way to lower an electric bill is simply to use less electricity overall. The fewer kilowatt-hours (kWh) a member uses during the month, the lower the bill.

But the electric system is not built only around how much electricity is used over time. It must also be built to handle how much electricity is used at the same moment. That is called electric demand, and it plays a major role in the cost of providing power.

The new cost-based rate structure is designed to better reflect those costs while also giving members more flexibility and more control over how they manage them.

Understanding the difference between energy and demand

The article we published in April explained in detail the difference between energy and demand. Energy and demand are often confused because they are closely related, but they represent two very different things.

Energy is the total amount of electricity used over time. It is measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh).

Demand, on the other hand, measures how much electricity is being used at a specific moment. It is measured in kilowatts (kW).

Power plants, substations, transformers, transmission lines and distribution equipment must all be sized to handle the highest periods of electric demand — even if those peaks only occur for a short period of time.

How the cost-based rate structure helps create fairness and opportunity

We understand that moving to a cost-based rate structure and introducing the demand billing component to members monthly bills is something new and may be a little confusing, but it provides fairness and opportunity.

A cost-based rate structure benefits electric cooperative members by aligning electric rates more closely with the actual costs required to serve each member. Instead of recovering most system costs through energy usage alone, a cost-based rate structure recognizes both how much electricity a member uses (energy) and when or how intensely it is used (demand).

This approach improves fairness because members pay more closely in proportion to the costs they place on the electric system. It also creates greater transparency by helping members better understand what drives electric costs and giving them more control over their monthly bill.

By encouraging members to reduce or shift usage during periods of peak demand, a cost-based rate structure can also help lower overall system costs over time. Reducing peak demand can lessen the need for expensive investments in power generation, transmission, substations and distribution infrastructure, helping the cooperative continue providing safe and reliable service at the lowest reasonable cost for all member-owners.

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Electric demand continued from 18A

How members can control electric demand

The good news is that electric demand is often manageable once members understand what creates it. Demand is largely influenced by how many large electrical loads are running at the same time.

For example, a member may not use an unusual amount of total energy during the day, but if several high-energy appliances operate simultaneously, demand can spike significantly.

Some of the largest contributors to residential electric demand include:

- Air conditioners and heat pumps
- Electric resistance heat
- Electric water heaters
- Electric dryers
- Ovens and ranges
- EV chargers
- Pool pumps

The key to controlling demand is often not eliminating usage altogether but managing when certain appliances operate.

A new opportunity for members

One of the advantages of a cost-based rate structure is that it gives members additional ways to influence their electric bill.

As I stated earlier, under an energy-only structure, members generally have one option: Use less electricity.

However, under a cost-based rate structure, members have more flexibility and control over how they manage their electric costs. In many cases, members may be able to use the same amount of electricity, or even more electricity, while still lowering their monthly bills by shifting usage away from periods of highest demand. By spreading electric use more evenly throughout the day, managing peak demand, and making small operational adjustments, members can reduce the strain they place on the electric system during high-demand periods. This not only creates opportunities for members to better manage their own costs but also helps reduce stress on the electric grid during times when electricity demand is at its highest.

Simple ways members can reduce demand

Many members may be able to lower demand by making small adjustments to when electricity is used. Some examples include:

Avoid running multiple large appliances simultaneously. Instead of running the dryer, oven, dishwasher and EV charger all during the same hour, spreading those activities throughout the day can reduce peak demand.

Shift usage away from peak hours. Summer system peaks often occur during late afternoon and early evening hours. Winter peaks are often early in the morning.

Using large appliances outside those periods may help reduce demand contributions.

Adjust thermostat settings. During extremely hot or cold days, even small thermostat adjustments can help reduce system demand.

Programmable or smart thermostats can also help manage usage more evenly.

Use energy-efficient equipment. High-efficiency HVAC systems, water heaters and appliances often use less electricity and may operate more efficiently during peak periods.

Monitor usage through the SmartHub app. The SmartHub app utilizes metering information from CCEC's advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) to give members the ability to see their actual electric use. Members can track how their electricity use trends over time, helping them better understand when and how they use electricity. This information allows members to make informed decisions and adjust usage patterns in ways that may help lower their monthly electric bills.

Visit www.cceci.com to learn more about SmartHub and the tools available to help manage your electric use.

CCEC's online rate calculator

Beginning in May, CCEC made an online rate calculator available to help members better understand how the transition to a cost-based rate structure may affect their monthly electric bills. By entering information from their monthly bill, members can compare their electric costs under CCEC's current rate structure to what their costs would be under the proposed cost-based rate structure if it were in place today. The calculator also helps members see how changes in electric usage patterns may reduce demand and potentially lower monthly electric bills over time.

Visit www.cceci.com to access the online rate calculator.

Moving forward together

CCEC understands that any change to electric rates raises questions, and that is why 2026 will be focused heavily on member education and communication before the new rate structure takes effect in January 2027.

The transition to cost-based rates is not about increasing overall revenue for the cooperative. It is about improving fairness and transparency by aligning rates with the actual drivers of electric system costs.

As a locally owned, locally governed cooperative, CCEC remains committed to providing safe and reliable service while being

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Clinton County Electric Cooperative's Annual Meeting of the Membership will be held on Thursday, Aug. 20, 2026, at Central Community High School in Breese, Ill. Registration will begin at 6:30 p.m., and the business meeting, including trustee elections, will begin at 7:30 p.m.

Our office will be closed on Friday, July 3rd in honor of the Fourth of July.

Electric demand continued from 18B

responsible stewards of the resources entrusted to us by our member-owners.

By understanding electric demand and making informed decisions about energy usage, members will have more tools than ever before to take control of their electric costs under the new cost-based rate structure.

Next month, this section will be devoted to CCEC's annual meeting coming up in August. However, in the September section, I'll discuss how the cost-based rate structure can help support grid reliability.

If you have questions in the meantime, please contact our office at 800-526-7282.

Avery Beer wins IEC Memorial Scholarship

Pictured: Clinton County Electric Board Member Jeff Schulte presented the Thomas H. Moore Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship to recipient Avery Beer.

Clinton County Electric Cooperative (CCEC) is proud to announce that Avery Beer of Mascoutah High School is one of 16 winners of this year's Thomas H. Moore Illinois Electric Cooperatives (IEC) Memorial Scholarship. She is the child of Mark and Sara Beer of Mascoutah. Avery competed for the scholarship with 268 other students from across the state. The $3,000 awards are given each year to 16 children of electric co-op members, employees or directors. Another scholarship is reserved for a student interested in lineworker's school and will be announced at a later date. Avery will be recognized during the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives' annual meeting on July 30, 2026, in East Peoria.

Candidates were judged on grade-point average, college entrance exam scores, work and volunteer experience, school and civic activities, and a short essay demonstrating their knowledge of electric cooperatives.

CCEC awards scholarships

Clinton County Electric Cooperative (CCEC) proudly offers two $1,000 scholarships to senior students from Carlyle, Central, Christ Our Rock, Highland, Mascoutah, Mater Dei, Patoka, Sandoval and Wesclin high schools. The following students, whose primary residence is served by CCEC, were awarded $1,000 scholarships this past May:

Carlyle High School	Addison Gansauer, daughter of Paul and Jennifer Gansauer Abigail Steinkamp, daughter of Eric and Jennifer Steinkamp
Central High School	Grace Henrichs, daughter of Bryan and Emily Henrichs Sophie Markus, daughter of Adam and Amber Markus
Christ Our Rock Lutheran High School	Evan Beal, son of Jonathan and Kerri Beal Alivia Childress, daughter of David and Heather Childress
Highland High School	Kaitlyn Fuhler, daughter of Russel and Marlene Fuhler
Mascoutah High School	Avery Beer, daughter of Mark and Sara Beer Mackenzie Stein, daughter of Brock and Jamie Stein
Mater Dei High School	Taylor Robert, daughter of Timothy and Julie Robert
Wesclin High School	Lucas Flanagan, son of Michael and Jennifer Flanagan Raymond Pfeffer, son of Gregory and Stephanie Pfeffer

Congratulations to all CCEC's 2026 scholarship recipients!

How to SAVE ENERGY in your HOME OFFICE

Small changes = lower bills + more comfortable workspace

Bright ideas for lighting
- Swap old bulbs for LEDs.
- Use task lighting such as a desk lamp.
- Turn lights off when you leave and use daylight when possible.

Cut always-on power
- Use a power strip or smart strip to shut off power.
- Avoid leaving printers on all day.
- Unplug chargers and equipment when not in use.

Use power management settings
- Reduce screen brightness.
- Use sleep mode on computers and monitors.
- Skip screen savers; they don't save energy.

! **Tip:** Laptops use less energy than desktops.

! **Safety tip:** Don't overload outlets or daisy-chain power strips. Use a surge-protector power strip.