

Powerful Connections

January 2012

 Citizens Electric Corporation
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

Rates expected to increase in 2012



Van Robinson, CEO

Citizens Electric anticipates that members will see their electric rates go up slightly in 2012 due to the increasing cost of power supply. Although the exact percentage is not available at press time of this publication, we wanted to give you a heads up. We anticipate the impact to members will be approximately 5 percent. In practical terms, that means an increase of around one-half penny per kilowatt hour for a residential member. We will provide more details in upcoming publications.

As you may be aware, Citizens Electric doesn't generate its own power. We purchase electricity from Wabash Valley Power Association (WVPA), a not-for-profit generation and transmission cooperative. Since approximately 80 percent of CEC's costs are due to power supply, most of what we charge for electricity is set by factors that are outside our direct control.

WVPA generates power and negotiates with other power producers to buy electricity and then sends it to us over the nation's power grid. From there, we deliver it to your home or business. Working this way ensures that we have a reliable supply of the power you need. WVPA charges us for it through what's known as a "wholesale rate," and we pass the cost to you on your electric bill.

WVPA cites there are three primary reasons why the wholesale rate for power is increasing in 2012.

1. New environmental rules. The federal government's EPA has adopted tougher rules to reduce air and water pollution. While we certainly support efforts for clean air and water, meeting those new rules means that power producers must invest billions of dollars in new equipment. Somebody has to pay for it, and that somebody is the people who use electricity.
2. Preventative maintenance. WVPA operates several power plants, including innovative Earth-friendly facilities that turn waste into electricity. They require regular maintenance to keep them operating reliably and efficiently, just like replacing the roof of your home before leaks start to cause damage. This year, several plants will require work that will keep them operating well for years to come.
3. Fuel prices. It costs a lot more to fill your car's gas tank than it used to. The same thing is true for the fuel used by power plants. As China and India build more power plants, they need more coal. That demand increases prices all over the world. Natural gas prices appear to be climbing, too, as many power producers switch to natural gas for environmental reasons. When utilities have to pay more for fuel, they pass those costs along.

How can you protect your pocketbook from rate increases like these? The best way is to use electricity as efficiently as possible. After all, the less electricity you use, the less you'll have to buy. If you're not sure how to reduce your use of electricity, go to our website and do a self-audit by clicking on "Home Energy Saving Tools" or call and talk with our staff. We'll be happy to share practical tips that will reduce your costs and improve your home's comfort.

In celebration of the New Year, CEC's offices will be closed on Monday, January 2. In case of an electrical emergency, please call 1-800-286-2251.

Your CEC account number is changing

On Saturday, January 21, 2012, CEC is upgrading its billing software to a newer version that will add another zero to the right of the dash. Example: 64504-01 will become 64504-001. Please note: This is particularly important if you pay your electric bill online through your bank's website. You will need to update your CEC account number on the bank's website for any payments made after January 21.

This upgrade will last most of the day which will cause CEC's Online Bill Pay site to be down. In addition, remote payment sites will not be able to post your payment directly to Citizens' billing system during that time. Please call if you are in doubt about where to insert the additional zero.

Front and back cover news provided by CEC.

RURAL
MISSOURI

CEC adds pay stations in Cape County

CEC members in the southern part of our service territory can now pay their electric bills at the Cape Regional Credit Union (CRCU) along U.S. Highway 61 in Fruitland. A remote payment device at that facility applies payments directly to electric bills, as if you walked into a CEC office. And this is a free service!

Please note: You must bring your Citizens Electric bill or account number in order to make a payment.

Your cash, check, credit or debit card payment will apply immediately at any of the following remote payment stations (RPS):

CEC Remote Payment Station	Address	Hours of Operation
Cape Regional Credit Union - Fruitland	5721 U.S. Hwy 61 N, Fruitland	Lobby: Mon. – Thu., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Fri.- 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Drive thru: Mon. – Thu., 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. , Fri. – 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sat. – 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Country Mart - Ste. Genevieve	180 Plaza Dr. Ste. Genevieve	Every day from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Rozier’s Food Centre - Perryville	217 N. Main Perryville	Every day from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.



Pictured are Cody Helderman and Nancy Kennedy at CRCU’s Fruitland facility. After-hours payments can be placed in the night depository by the drive-thru, **provided the envelope or bill payment stub is clearly marked with the CEC member’s name, account number and payment amount.**

CRCU’s other locations will also accept CEC payments, but they are not applied immediately to CEC accounts.

CRCU - Cape Girardeau, 2427 Cape Centre Dr., Cape Girardeau
Lobby: Mon. – Thu., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Fri.- 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Drive thru: Mon. – Thu., 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. , Fri. – 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.;
Sat. – 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Procter & Gamble plant (P&G employees only) - Mon., Wed., and Fri.
from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Watch for new site locations coming soon.

As of February 1, 2012 , CEC’s payment drop box will no longer be available at the AmeriMart Station in Fruitland.

Payments placed in CRCU’s night depository will be applied to your account on the next business day.

Know the facts about standby generators

Before you buy an emergency generator to keep lights and appliances running during an electric outage, calculate your power requirements for essential appliances and be aware of safety concerns regarding installation and operation.

An improperly installed generator could damage your property and endanger the lives of your family and electric utility workers who are trying to restore your power. A licensed electrician must install a double-throw transfer switch for the standby generator to prevent electricity from back-feeding into Citizens’ electrical system.

The portable generator, while in operation, should be located in an unheated, covered, well-ventilated area. Do not operate the generator in a basement, attached garage or any closed area. Exhaust gases from the generator contain carbon monoxide, which is odorless, invisible and could be harmful to your health.

When selecting a generator, choose a model that will accommodate your essential appliances. You’ll need to know the running and startup wattages for the equipment and appliances. The running wattage (called rated watts) can be found on the appliance nameplate. Starting wattage is usually two to seven times the running wattage. The starting wattage for the smallest heat pumps and central air conditioning unit is greater than 10,000 watts, which is greater than the capacity of most portable generators.

For safety's sake, follow manufacturer’s instructions for installation and ventilation to keep your family and our line crews safe while they are working on power lines.

Survey Winners Announced

Thank you to all who participated in Citizens’ recent member survey. We appreciate your time and feedback. This helps us measure our performance and identify opportunities for improvement.

Congratulations to the following members who were randomly selected to win \$50 in the survey drawing: Richard Meyer Sr. of Ste. Genevieve; Edgar Ochs of Perryville; Curtis Kassel of Frohna; Terry Roth of Jackson; and James P. Jones of Perryville.