

NEW RATES IN 2023

Eau Claire Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

We have all seen the cost of living increase rapidly over the last several months. Unfortunately, Eau Claire Energy Cooperative is not immune to those increases. The cost of maintaining and upholding the electrical system has grown just like the cost of gas and groceries. The cost of things like poles, wires, transformers, and fuel for our fleet vehicles has increased along with the cost of wholesale power. We have not required a rate increase for our members since 2016. However, it is now necessary to raise rates. Eau Claire Energy Cooperative values its membership beyond measure and we appreciate members' understanding and loyalty.

Please keep in mind that Eau Claire Energy Cooperative is a not-

for-profit electric utility, meaning that the cooperative passes on both costs and credits back to its members where necessary. It has always been Eau Claire Energy Cooperative's goal to provide the most safe and reliable service at the lowest possible cost. Our rates are designed not to make a profit, but simply to cover the costs of providing that power. This rate adjustment is needed despite continued growth on the system and careful attention to cost-containment measures. Your electricity rates will continue to remain highly competitive, as all utilities in the area are facing similar cost pressures. The average household

We can't control the weather or the cost of fuel, but we can help you identify ways to save energy.

will see an increase of about \$11.50 per month based on a 1,000 kWh per month average. Please see our website or the January bill insert for details.

Wholesale power is more than 60% of our total costs. When the cost of generation resources like natural gas increases, the cost of wholesale power increases and therefore rates need to increase to offset that cost.

As a cooperative, we value your membership, and your concerns are always our main focus. As energy prices rise, it's increasingly important to be as energy efficient as possible. Know that there are four things that affect the cost of your energy bill:

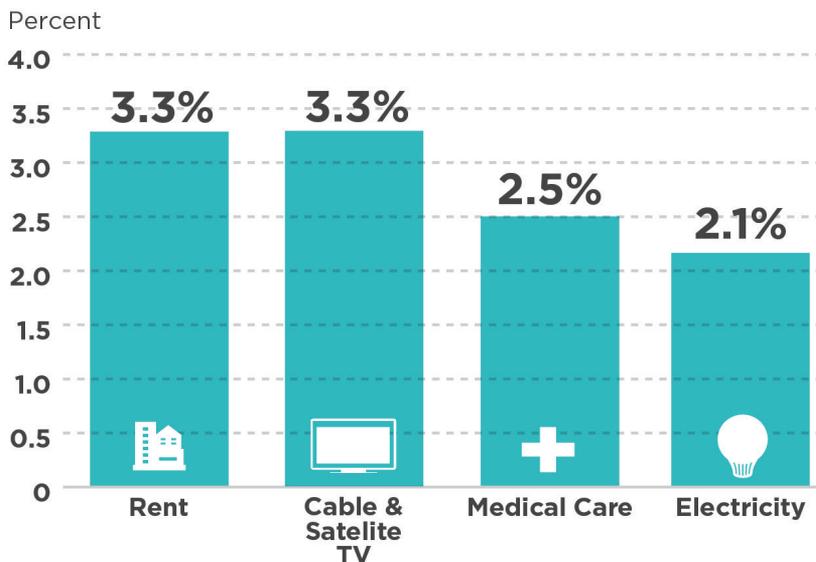
1. **Usage** – The more energy used, the higher your monthly bill.
2. **Fuel Costs** – The more it costs to generate electricity, the greater the necessity for rate increases and/or Power Cost Adjustments.
3. **Weather** – Supply and Demand. When the weather is extreme, power is more in demand and therefore wholesale costs are higher.
4. **Equipment, Material and Supply Costs** – Our local costs affect our cost of doing business.

We can't control the weather or the cost of fuel, but we can help you identify ways to save energy. You can use SmartHub, our online portal, to show daily usage, identify areas of savings, and view your bills. You can also call our office for incentive opportunities for home performance evaluations or other energy efficient upgrades to your home. There are also opportunities for energy assistance for members in need. Please call our office or visit our website for more information and where to apply.

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

The cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common expenses. Looking at price increases over the last five years, it's easy to see electricity remains a good value.

Average Annual Price Increase 2016-2021



Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Consumer Price Index



YOUTH AMBASSADORS

visit Valley Sports Academy

Eau Claire Energy Cooperative's Youth Ambassadors took a trip to Lake Hallie in November to tour one of ECEC's newest member businesses, Valley Sports Academy (VSA). General Manager Chase Hopple guided the group through the entire facility while highlighting the wide variety of current athletic training programs offered by the facility as well as explaining future expansion plans.

Interested in joining Youth Ambassadors? Throughout the school year, Youth Ambassadors meet once per month for educational learning sessions, field trips, and community service projects followed by lunch. If this sounds like fun to you, apply today!



2023 Meeting Dates

- January 18, 2023
- February 15, 2023
- March 22, 2023
- April 19, 2023
- May 24, 2023



Sign up to
be a Youth
Ambassador
today!



SEEKING NOMINATIONS FOR CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY AWARD

Do you know an Eau Claire Energy Cooperative member who has gone above and beyond to help others? Have they made a difference in the community through local service projects, non-profit organizations, or other local events? Nominate a cooperative member for the annual Concern for Community Award by February 15, 2023. The nomination form is available on our website at www.ecec.com under the "Community" tab. The award recipient will be honored at our 86th Annual Meeting on March 21, 2023.



86TH ANNUAL MEETING

March 21, 2023

Doors open at 5:00 p.m.
Meeting starts at 6:00 p.m.
Dinner to follow
At the Florian Gardens



FIVE WAYS TO FIGHT THE WINTER CHILL AND SAVE ENERGY

We all have our favorite season. Some people love crisp, cool weather and bundling up under a favorite blanket, while others prefer the warm temperatures summer brings and all fun outdoor activities that go with it. But there's one thing we can all agree on: high winter bills

are never fun. Eau Claire Energy Cooperative is here to help you find ways to manage your home energy use and keep winter bills in check.

Here are five tips to help increase your home's energy efficiency this winter:

1 Mind the thermostat. This is one of the easiest ways to manage your home energy use. We recommend setting your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower) when you're home. When you're sleeping or away for an extended period of time, try setting it between 58 and 62 degrees; there's no need to heat your home when you're away or sleeping and less active.

2 Button up your home. The Department of Energy estimates that air leaks account for 24% to 40% of the energy used for heating and cooling a home.

Caulking and weather stripping around windows and doors is another simple, cost-effective way to increase comfort and save energy. If you can feel drafts while standing near a window or door, it likely needs to be sealed.

3 Use window coverings wisely. Open blinds, drapes or other window coverings during the day to allow natural sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to keep the cold, drafty air out. If you feel cold air around windows, consider hanging curtains or drapes in a thicker material; heavier window coverings can make a significant difference in blocking cold outdoor air.



During winter months, set your thermostat to 68 degrees when you are home. Photo Source: Mark Gilliland, Pioneer Utility Resources

4 Think outside the box. If you're still feeling chilly at home, think of other ways to warm up—beyond dialing up the thermostat. Add layers of clothing, wear thick socks, and bundle up under blankets. You can even add layers to your home! If you have hard-surface flooring, consider purchasing an area rug to block cold air that leaks in through the floor.

5 Consider your approach to appliance use. When combined, appliances and electronics account for a significant chunk of our home energy use, so assess how efficiently you're using them. For example, if you're running the dishwasher or clothes washer, only wash full loads. Look for electronic devices that consume energy even when they're not in use, like phone chargers or game consoles. Every little bit helps, so unplug them to save energy.

If you're taking steps to save energy but continue to see increases in your bills, give us a call at 715-832-1603 or take advantage of rebates on home performance evaluations. ECEC's energy experts can help identify areas and other factors impacting your home energy use and recommend next steps for savings.

Winter months often bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. By being proactive about saving energy, you can increase the comfort of your home and reduce monthly bills. Visit our website at www.ecec.com for additional energy-saving tips.

Absentee ballots available after February 10, 2023

If you are unable to attend the 86th ECEC Annual Meeting, you may request an absentee ballot from the cooperative and vote for director candidates.

Choose one of three ways to request your absentee ballot. We MUST receive your request in our office by 12:00 noon on March 3, 2023.

- Fill in and mail this request form to the address below
- Submit a request online at www.ecec.com
- Or, call 715-836-6461

Eau Claire Energy Cooperative
Attn: Corporate Secretary
P.O. Box 368
Fall Creek, WI 54742-0368

Eau Claire Energy Cooperative Absentee Ballot Request (please print)

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone # _____

MEMBER ADVISORY COUNCIL

January 23, 2023

At the cooperative office
8214 US Hwy 12
Fall Creek, WI 54742

Meeting begins at 5:30 p.m.,
adjournment at 7:30 p.m.

Please call 715-836-6461 by
noon on January 23 to RSVP

Preventing Home Electrical Fires



Fire departments respond to an average of **46,700** home fires each year caused by electrical failure or malfunction.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA):

Over a recent 4-year period...



30%

happened in cold weather months (Nov. – Feb.)

Fires caused

an estimated average of:



390 Deaths
1,070 Injuries



Wiring and related equipment were involved in the **greatest number of home electrical fires.**

Lighting, a lamp or a bulb was involved in the **second largest number of fires.**



WARNING SIGNS of electrical issues:

Damaged cords and flickering lights

Discolored outlets and switch plates

Frequently tripped circuit breakers or blown fuses

Hire a licensed contractor to ensure that your home's wiring is **installed to code** and functioning properly. Learn more at:

Safe Electricity.org

Eau Claire Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Monica Obrycki, President and CEO

Taylor Skibba, Marketing and Communications Coordinator

8214 Hwy 12, P.O. Box 368, Fall Creek, WI 54742-0368

www.ecec.com   

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m.–4 p.m. Mon–Fri

Non-emergencies: 715-832-1603

Emergencies & outages: Toll FREE 800-927-5090
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Diggers Hotline: 811 or 1-800-242-8511
Call 3 working days before you dig.