

**THE ELECTRIC COMPANY THAT  
DOESN'T STOP AT YOUR METER**

# Butler REC **NEWS**

FROM THE MANAGER

## Your Family is Unique

Members are looking for ways to control their energy cost. In this time of escalating energy costs the best way to do this is by being aware of how much energy you use each month and how it is being used in your home and on your farm.



R. Dale Short

We have some new tools here at the cooperative that make it easier to look at your usage on an hour-by-hour basis. By comparing your usage, we may be able to help you identify changes in your patterns of use that could save you money.

There are many components that make up how your family uses electricity. We have helpful links on our web site at [www.butler.coop](http://www.butler.coop) that you can use to determine what components make up your family's energy usage portfolio.

Follow the Touchstone Energy Savers link for energy saving tips and tools, including an online energy

audit. Take a few moments to work through the online audit. If you still have questions about electrical use and costs, call us. We're here to help!

### Lifestyle Makes a Difference

You have complete control over how you use your electricity by choosing the ingredients that are necessary for you to maintain your standard of living. The way you live and the way you use your electrical appliances may have a greater impact on your consumption of electricity than the number of appliances you use.

### Family Size

There is a direct relationship between the number of people living in a home and the amount of energy that is used. That's especially true if you have teenagers at home.

In addition, if friends and relatives are visiting,

*Continued on page 16-B ►*

## July 27 Board Meeting Open to the Members

Pursuant to K.S.A. 66-104d, please take notice that the Board of Trustees of Butler REC will meet on July 27, 2009, at 7:30 p.m. at the Butler REC office, 216 S Vine, El Dorado, to discuss and vote on a new electrical rate structure.

If adopted by the Board of Trustees, the new rate structure could modify the method used to calculate bills for consumers by possibly breaking the current kWh charge on the bill into multiple categories that might include, but are not limited to: energy, transmission, generation, distribution or others.

Bill calculation might also be affected by the time of day electricity is used in conjunction with the cooperative's peak demand for generation capacity. This is normally on the hottest days of the summer in the late afternoon hours. This rate structure, if adopted by the Board, will provide the ability for Butler REC to better promote the energy efficiency programs being implemented by the state and federal governments. This rate structure also has the potential to allow you as a customer to better control your electric costs by modifying some of your usage patterns.

The cooperative anticipates an overall increase in revenue collected from rates of just under 8 percent. Various rate classes may be higher or lower than the overall average with the highest increase for any residential rate class expected to be no more than 12 percent.

Butler REC will mail more information about the potential rate structure prior to the July 27 meeting. The portion of the meeting at which that rates will be discussed and voted on is open to the members of the cooperative to attend.

## Your Family is Unique

*Continued from page 16-A ▶*

you can expect to use more energy for cooking, baking, laundry and hot water.

### Appliance Use

The wise use of appliances can have a positive effect on your energy consumption. Ask yourself these questions:

- ▶ Do I turn off lights and ceiling fans when a room is not in use, or do I leave them on?
- ▶ Does the television set entertain the entire family, or does it entertain an empty room?
- ▶ Do I leave my computer and peripherals on for extended periods of time when not in use?

These are prime considerations that affect the amount of electricity you use to maintain your lifestyle.

### Heating and Cooling

From a comfort standpoint, most of us prefer to be relatively cool in summer and warm in winter.

Others prefer temperature extremes. Humidity plays an important part in our year-round comfort, too. If we operate dehumidifiers in summer (and to a lesser degree, humidifiers in winter), this contributes to our household energy consumption because they tend to run continuously. Portable space heaters, air conditioners and fans located in such places as the

garage and basement also contribute to your energy consumption.

By taking a look at our "comfort" lifestyles in terms of maintaining relative humidity and temperature, we can use energy wisely in many ways. These range from adding insulation, weatherstripping, caulking, changing and cleaning filters monthly and turning down the thermostat in winter and up in summer.

### Water Heating

Hot water plays an important role in everyone's lifestyle, but many people require substantial quantities of hot water, and that results in higher energy use. Ask yourself some of the following questions.

- ▶ When I take a bath, do I use hot water sparingly, or is the tub completely full?
- ▶ Do I take short showers, or do I stay in the shower until the hot water gets cold?
- ▶ Do I repair leaky faucets, or simply let them drip and waste hot water?
- ▶ Do I operate washers and dishwashers with a full load, or just whenever convenient?
- ▶ Are my hot water pipes insulated?

It is important to note that hot water usage is the second largest energy consumer in the household behind heating and cooling.

### Phantom Loads

We have a host of time and labor saving appliances available to help us do our work whenever we need their service. Some of these appliances use electricity only when you turn them on, but consider that many appliances are quietly

using energy around the clock, even though you think they are turned off!

The power supplies to your "instant on" TVs, computers and their peripherals, cordless phones, cell phone chargers, clocks on microwaves and electric ranges, etc., are examples of "phantom loads" that steadily consume electricity whether you are using the device or not.

In addition to those devices, any appliance that has a cube-shaped transformer (sometimes called AC adaptors) on the end of its cord is also creating a phantom load. That's why these transformers feel warm even though the device is off.

Another type of phantom load is the oil heater in an air-source heat pump. Even though heat pumps are an energy efficient means for heating and cooling your home, there is a steady subtle draw of electricity to heat the oil fluid in the sump of the heat pump.

Phantom loads add up to a huge waste of electricity in the U.S. that costs consumers billions of dollars per year and many billions of kilowatt-hours. The total phantom load in your home could account for substantial energy use.

### Why is My Electric Bill Higher Than My Neighbor's?

You just answered this question yourself. It's **your** electric bill, and it reflects the amount of electricity consumed by you and your family in your home or on your farm. Your neighbor may have a completely different set of circumstances—different number living in the home, different lifestyle, different size

home with a different style of construction, etc.

Your bill may also differ from your neighbor's bill due to the varying numbers and types of major appliances, as well as different heating and cooling systems.



## July Propane Extravaganza

Look for your 2009-2010 prepay contract to arrive by July 31. Members get 1 FREE year tank rental, which includes delivery, set-up, regulator, pigtail, and blocks!

**320-0324 or 877-558-5770**

## Include Home Energy Savings in Summer Vacation Plans

For consumers going on vacation this summer, the nation's electric utilities advise them to make sure their home's energy use takes a vacation as well. Simple tips can save consumers money while they are away.

### Air Conditioning

Set the thermostat to 85 degrees. If it is a programmable thermostat, use the "hold" or the "vacation" setting to keep it at that temperature.

### Electronics

Computers, CD/DVD players, TVs, and VCRs – these and other electronic appliances use electricity, even when they are not turned on. Unplug them before leaving.

### Lighting

Consumers can improve their energy savings, and their home's security, by using timers to operate lights each night. By installing compact fluorescent bulbs, or CFLs, in those lamps, consumers will be saving more energy, up to 66 percent less in each lamp, and the bulb will last approximately 10 times longer than a regular incandescent bulb.

### Water Heating

Turn the water heater's temperature down to the lowest setting. Many water heaters have a "vacation" setting for this purpose. Leave a reminder to turn it back up upon returning home.

- ▶ Waterbed owners should unplug the heater, or at least lower the temperature 10 degrees.
- ▶ Pool owners should shorten the operating time for the pool filter and automatic cleaning sweep (if applicable). A pool cover can save energy too. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, up to 70 percent of pool heat loss is by evaporation.

### Refrigerator

Adjust the refrigerator control to a warmer setting. If going on an extended trip, consider emptying the fridge and turning it off. Remember to leave the door open to prevent mildew.

For more information on how to use your energy more efficiently this summer, and all year round, consumers are urged to contact their electric cooperative.

## Suggestions for Easy Summer Cooling

- ▶ Replace standard incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs. The electricity used by standard bulbs produces 10 percent light and 90 percent heat.
- ▶ Do heat-producing chores like baking or doing the laundry after the hottest part of the day.
- ▶ Use kitchen and bathroom fans to remove heat and moisture during and after cooking and bathing.
- ▶ When replacing appliances, buy those with the Energy Star® label. These appliances conserve energy and release less unwanted heat in your home.
- ▶ Don't forget about the cheapest method of all for cooling your house. Open your doors and windows, or run window fans.

Save Energy ....  
Cut Cost ....  
Call Today



**SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SYSTEMS**  
HOME ENERGY AUDITS  
[www.sustainingkansas.com](http://www.sustainingkansas.com)  
11436 SW Thunder Rd, Augusta, KS  
316-775-5576

**There's Only One  
Water Heater  
As Faithful  
as the Marathon**

Old Faithful and Marathon provide hot water dependently, year after year, without worry. But one is owned by the government and located in Wyoming; the other is available through Butler REC.

So now you can have your very own "Old Faithful" efficiently providing hot water for a lifetime.

**Call Today  
800-464-0060  
316-321-9600**



**Butler REC**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



**Consumers Talk and Congress Listens**

The Our Energy, Our Future™ campaign takes real consumer testimonies to Capitol Hill

All across America, electric cooperative members are sitting in front of handheld video cameras and talking frankly and honestly about electric rates. Their audience? Lawmakers on Capitol Hill.

For the past several months, electric cooperatives across the nation have supported the Our Energy, Our Future™ grassroots campaign by filming consumers like you as they share stories about how affordable electricity is important to them.

These videos are posted online, both on YouTube and [www.ourenergy.coop](http://www.ourenergy.coop) so policymakers can hear and see first-hand how high prices hit their constituents.

"I know I'm working hard, and I know our electric co-op board is working very hard," stresses Jackie Jung, a member of Flathead Electric Cooperative in Kalispell, MT, in one segment. "I guess what I would ask all of you is to really give very serious consideration to helping us here and keeping those prices down, because ev-



Our Energy, Our Future™ consumer videos are posted on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/ourenergyourfuture](http://www.youtube.com/ourenergyourfuture).

erybody else is trying to do their part."

Electric cooperative consumers and other utility customers are facing a power crunch. More power is needed to keep the lights on as demand increases. But uncertainty over the impact of climate change policy, a lack of affordable low-emissions technology options, and rising costs for labor and construction materials have hobbled

efforts to meet this future demand. This threatens to not only increase electricity costs across the board, but could lead to power shortages.

We need our representatives in Congress to step in with a long-term, politically and economically sustainable energy and climate change plan—one that takes the interests of consumers and monthly electric bills into consideration.

As Congress begins to tackle energy and climate change policy, it is critical that they hear from you.

To become a part of the Our Energy, Our Future grassroots campaign and video outreach, please visit [www.ourenergy.coop](http://www.ourenergy.coop).

**WildBlue High-speed Internet  
Now Only \$199 Installed**



Stop waiting for broadband!

Call today to experience the freedom of WildBlue.



Enjoy the benefits of high-speed internet where you live. Delivered via satellite. WildBlue is up to 30x faster than dial-up. Sign up today and start surfing the web. 24 month contract required.