

NHEC Announces 19% Summer Bill Decrease

Costs drop in summer,
rise in winter

Press release

Driven by a steep decrease in the seasonal cost of power, summer period electric bills will be going down by nearly 19% for most members of New Hampshire Electric Cooperative (NHEC).

Effective with bills rendered May 1, the Co-op Power portion of members' bills (the cost of actual energy) will decrease by 43%. The result for the typical residential member using 500 kilowatt-hours (kWh) per month will be an overall bill decrease of 18.7%, or \$20.61 per month. The typical residential member using 1,000 kWh per month will see a total bill decrease of 21.5%, or \$41.21 per month.

The rate reductions were approved on March 29 by the NHEC Board of Directors and continue an annual pattern of fluctuations that have seen the cost of power increase during the winter months and decrease in summer months. Driving these wide price swings are seasonal variations in the regional wholesale price of natural gas, which is used to generate approximately half of the electricity produced in New England.

Over the past several years, electric

rates during the six-month summer period have been substantially lower than the winter period, when constraints in the region's natural gas pipeline infrastructure have led to price spikes. Natural gas demand increases sharply during the winter months due to its use as a primary heating fuel, which drives up the cost of generating electricity for winter delivery.

"Until natural gas pipeline capacity constraints are addressed in New England, we expect seasonal electric rate variations to continue," said Steve Kaminski, NHEC Vice President of Power Resources and Access. "Looking forward to next winter, though conditions may change, at this time our outlook indicates rates should be lower than this past winter's."

The May 1 rate change is the result of a 43% decrease in the Co-op Power rate, from \$.09504 to \$.05377 per kilowatt hour (kWh), offset slightly by a 0.2% increase in the Regional Access Charge. A complete list of NHEC rates, fees, and charges is available under the Rates and Tariffs menu at NHEC.com.

NHEC is a member-owned electric distribution cooperative serving 84,000 homes and businesses in 115 New Hampshire communities, including Andover. 

NHEC Launches New Programs to Tame Peak Demand

Cutting demand spikes
can lower rates

Press release

In an effort to curb the impact of rising peak period electricity costs in New England, New Hampshire Electric Cooperative (NHEC) is offering its members new incentives to reduce their power consumption when demand for electricity is highest.

Peak demand events occur infrequently, usually during especially hot or cold weather, but they have a disproportionate impact on electric rates. NHEC must pay "capacity cost" to generation and transmission providers for the capacity to deliver peak amounts of electricity, even though that quantity is only needed for approximately 150 hours per year.

If NHEC can reduce the amount of power its members need during peak demand periods, it can reduce rates year-round. Three "Go Beyond the Peak!" programs reward members for curbing their usage during peak demand periods. The programs are:

Peak Plus, where a member has a load control device installed on selected appliances like electric water heaters,

central air conditioning units, window air conditioners, or electric heat. The member gets an incentive for allowing NHEC to control usage of each appliance with a load control device during peak demand periods.

Peak Planner, where a member switches to an on-peak/off-peak rate plan with occasional critical peak rates during the highest demand periods.

Peak Days, where a member enrolls to have alerts sent via text and e-mail notifying them of upcoming peak demand periods so they can voluntarily reduce electric consumption.

Members with net-metered solar photovoltaic systems can participate in Peak Plus and Peak Days, but not Peak Planner.

The ultimate goal of "Go Beyond the Peak!" is to reduce electric rates for all members by reducing peak demands. Complete program information and enrollment are available at GoBeyondThePeak.com.

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Franklin Savings Bank Awards \$21,000 in Grants

Program tops \$855,000
over 19 years

Press release

Ron Magoon, President and COO of Franklin Savings Bank (FSB), announced today that the bank awarded \$21,000 in grants to seven community organizations through the FSB Fund for Community Advancement. This represents the 37th grant period for the Fund, which has awarded 175 awards in excess of \$855,000 since its inception in 1997.

"Our strong ties to the communities we serve has earned us a reputation for being an active corporate citizen," commented Ron Magoon. "As an independent, mutually-owned community bank with deep roots in the towns and cities we are proud to serve, we take the time to learn more about the needs of civic organizations and how we can become a vested partner in the culmination of their projects."

Seven local organizations received grants, including The Friends Program, \$2,000; Granite United Way, \$2,500;

Laconia Area Community Land Trust, \$5,000; Merrimack County Conservation District, \$2,000; New Beginnings, \$2,500; Newfound Pathways, \$3,000; and Voices Against Violence, \$4,000.

The FSB Fund for Community Advancement was established to provide support for projects that will enhance the lives of people in the communities Franklin Savings Bank serves. Eligible organizations are those recognized as 501(c)3 tax exempt under the Internal Revenue Code.

The Fund supports a broad range of community activities, such as economic development, affordable housing, education, healthcare, arts and humanities, human services, and programs or services that address the needs of children, adolescents, and single parent families.

The deadline to be considered for the next round of grant funding is July 1. For more information about the FSB Fund for Community Advancement as well as how to apply, please visit FSBnh.com, then select "I Want to Learn More About FSB" – "In the Community." 

ReVision Energy Expects Legislation to Boost Solar Installations

Increased demand for
new systems expected

Press release from ReVision Energy

Solar policy in New Hampshire is now on a more secure foundation. The New Hampshire Senate has passed HB 1116, legislation which increases the statewide net metering cap from 50 to 100 megawatts. Regulators have also been directed to open a proceeding to develop an alternative rate structure for net metering.

The bill is now on its way to Governor Maggie Hassan for her signature, and she has already made her support clear. "Solar is one of many clean energy resources in New Hampshire that contribute to a diverse and reliable energy supply, and businesses and families across the state are utilizing solar to lower their energy bills and to increase their energy independence. The success of New Hampshire's clean energy

economy is creating good-paying, high-quality jobs, spurring economic development, and helping combat climate change, and New Hampshire recently ranked as one of the top five renewable energy states." More than 70 solar companies work throughout the value chain in New Hampshire, which translates into more than 900 jobs statewide.

Until the bill is signed into law, ReVision Energy is accepting new solar contracts and placing those projects on utility wait lists for prompt installation once the Governor signs HB 1116 into law. A rush on demand is expected, and interested customers should contact ReVision Energy as soon as possible.

Existing net metering customers are grandfathered in the policy at a one-to-one retail rate through 2040. More than a dozen studies of the value of solar electricity have found that power exported to the grid is worth more than the retail cost of the electricity. 



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