

New Hampshire Electric Co-op TODAY

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MARCH 2009

Your Electric Co-op's Newsletter



FEATURE ARTICLE:

Letter From The President

Dear Co-op Members,

From the local weather to the national economy, it's been a rough winter. A lot of Americans, including our fellow Co-op members, have seen their lives changed by this worsening economy. When you're struggling to keep your head above water, I know that getting a high electric bill in the mail doesn't help. That's why I want to explain why electric rates are high in New Hampshire and what we're doing at the Co-op to get the maximum value from your dollar.

1. Natural Gas Drives Electric Prices

The cost of the electricity you use accounts for more than half of your monthly bill. In New England, chances are the electricity you're using was generated by a natural gas-fired power plant. Almost all of the generating plants built in New England over the past decade have been natural gas-fired because of their low capital costs, fuel supply availability, high efficiency and low-carbon emitting operations. According to ISO New England, about 40% of the region's electricity is produced by natural gas. Unfortunately, this leaves regional electric prices vulnerable to swings in the cost of natural gas, which has more than doubled since 2000.

2. Fewer Customers Per Mile of Line

By definition, rural electric cooperatives serve less populated areas of the country. This means there are fewer members to share the cost of maintaining the distribution system. While the state's largest electric utility averages about 35 customers per mile of energized line, NHEC averages less than half of that – about 15 members per mile of line. As a result, Co-op members bear a proportionately higher amount of costs than ratepayers served by most investor-owned utilities.

3. Investing for the Future

Could we lower your electric bill by a few dollars a month? Yes, but at the risk of being penny wise and pound foolish. NHEC is in the early years of a \$30 million, five-year plan to automate all 80,000 electric meters in our system. This means that soon your electric meter will be able to report its own reading via a 2-way communications network that runs the length and breadth of the state. It will also allow us to take advantage of smart grid technologies to offer you better services, energy efficiency programs and appliances that make smarter use of electricity. With better information from your meter, we'll be able to explore new and creative rate structures to further incentivize the efficient use of energy. Automated meters will also provide accurate, real-time information during power outages, allowing us to zero in on problems a lot faster. As we continue to upgrade the company's outdated communications infrastructure, we are looking to partner with other utilities to defray the total cost.

The hard times won't last forever. When things turn around, your Co-op will be well-positioned to benefit from the investments we're making today.

Best wishes for a safe and prosperous spring!

Fred



Get Whole House Comfort from a Space Heater

Convectair Heaters Are Efficient, Economical, Safe

Providing gentle, even heat throughout any room, Convectair heaters are equipped with an efficient electronic thermostat. And because they mount to your wall and feature automatic overheat protection, there are fewer safety concerns.

The Co-op sells three 120 volt plug-in models of Convectair heaters at special members-only pricing. Check out the models below and call to order...1-800-698-2007.



Jazz

Warms towels and bathrooms in no time. Perfect for people who like the comfort of quick heat and the silence of basic convection heat.



Calypso

Small on size and big on efficiency, the Calypso is equipped with an electronic thermostat for basic heating, a fan-forced heater and a timer for quick heat when you want it. It's recommended for all bathrooms.



Apero

Using natural convection to heat the entire mass of air in a room, the Apero ensures an even temperature throughout the room. And with a built-in electronic thermostat that's precise to one-

fifth of a degree, it will make sure the comfort level you set is the one that you get.

See the difference convection heat makes:
www.nhec.coop/products



Dollars For Scholars

The New Hampshire Electric Cooperative Chapter of Dollars for Scholars will be offering six \$1500 scholarships (one of which will be reserved for a student attending a vocational/technical institution) in a program designed to enhance the education and resulting careers of member students.

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

Friday, April 10, 2009 at 4:30 p.m.

- Applicant must be a member of the NH Electric Co-op, or be residing with a parent or legal guardian that is a member of the NH Electric Co-op.
- Applicant must be at least a senior in high school at time

application is made. College students and nontraditional students are eligible and welcome to apply.

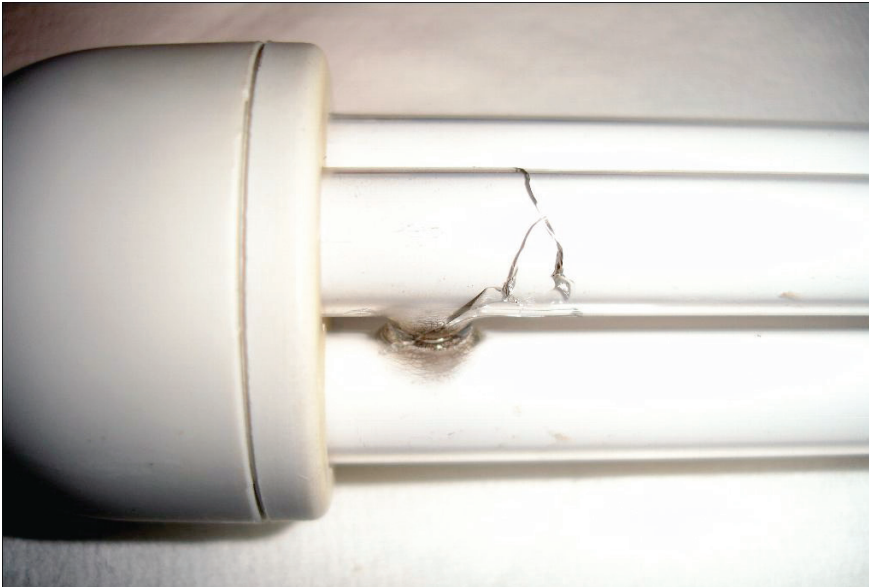
- Applicant must be enrolled, or planning to enroll, in an accredited undergraduate educational or training institution.
- Entries will be judged on the following: work experience, activities and leadership contributions, educational/career objectives, overall scholastic achievement; an applicant appraisal and a personal interview conducted by the Awards Committee.

- Applications may be obtained by calling the NH Electric Co-op headquarters office at 1-800-698-2007, or by visiting our web site at www.nhec.coop.
- The deadline for applying is Friday, April 10, 2009 at 4:30 p.m. All mailed applications must be postmarked by this date. Otherwise, they may be turned in at NH Electric Co-op headquarters by 4:30 p.m., April 10, 2009.

Please mail completed applications to:

NH Electric Cooperative DFS
Attn: Cindy Melanson
579 Tenney Mountain Highway
Plymouth, NH 03264

CFLs and Mercury



Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFLs) are a net gain for your wallet and for the environment. Although CFLs do contain trace amounts of mercury, which is a toxin, a greater quantity of mercury is released into the environment through power plant emissions when you use conventional incandescent bulbs, which require more energy.

Today, most CFLs contain less than 5 milligrams (mg) of mercury – an amount similar in size to the period at the end of this sentence. Some “low mercury” CFLs contain just one or two milligrams. To put that in perspective, a watch battery contains about 25 mg of mercury.

Disposing of CFLs:

New Hampshire law requires that CFLs be recycled once they have burned out. To recycle a used CFL:

- Bring it to a participating retailer who offers CFL recycling for free.
- Bring it to free recycling centers at either NHEC Headquarters in Plymouth, or NHEC Meredith District on Route 25 (see www.nhec.coop

for operating hours; no broken bulbs accepted).

- Bring it to your own town recycling/transfer station. Many towns will accept CFLs. For an up-to-date list of participating facilities, visit www.des.state.nh.us.

What to do if a CFL Breaks:

The EPA has outlined the process in three easy steps.

Step 1: Open a window and leave the room for about 15 minutes.

Step 2: Use disposable gloves, plastic bag or paper towel to protect your hands from broken glass. Scoop up fragments with stiff paper or cardboard. Use sticky tape to pick up smaller fragments and powder. Wipe the area clean with damp paper towels or wet wipes. Place all cleanup materials in a bag and place outside your home for trash pickup.

Step 3: Place the glass pieces in a sealed plastic container or glass jar and bring to your local recycling center. Wash your hands after performing the cleanup.

WATTS HAPPENING!

Board of Directors Meetings

The NHEC Board of Directors meets monthly at dates and locations that are available on the Co-op website at www.nhec.coop/boardofdirectors, or by calling Sharon Yeaton at 603-536-8801.

Home Energy Solutions Program

NHEC is your connection to the statewide Home Energy Solutions program. This service assists members who use electric heat to maximize the energy efficiency of their homes. Members can receive 75% off the installed cost of efficiency measures, up to \$4,000.

Measures include:

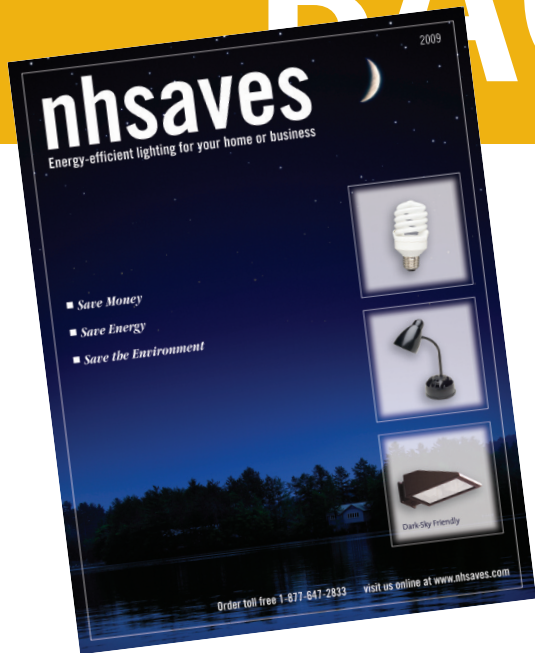
- Insulation
- Air sealing
- Thermostats
- Electric hot water measures
- Refrigerator rebates
- Lighting upgrades

More program information is available online at www.nhec.coop/residential_homeenergysolutions, or by calling Member Solutions at 1-800-698-2007.

No Rate Increase for Ice Storm Repair

Rates will not be impacted by the effort to restore power in the wake of the Ice Storm of 2008. The nine-day effort to restore power to 48,000 members cost an estimated \$2 million. Seventy-five percent of that cost will be reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Because NHEC is a non-profit cooperative, it is eligible to receive FEMA funds.

The BACK PAGE



NH SAVES! 2009 Catalog Is More Than Lighting

The New Hampshire electric utilities are pleased to present the 2009 nhsaves catalog.

The new issue features a great selection of ENERGY STAR qualified lighting and other energy-efficient products that save you money, energy and help protect the environment. nhsaves is a collaboration of the state's four largest electric utilities (PSNH, NHEC, National Grid and Unitol).

Every ENERGY STAR lighting product in the catalog is offered at an instantly-rebated price - \$2 off all compact fluorescent light bulbs and \$10 off all energy-efficient interior and exterior light fixtures, table and desk lamps and torchieres.

The catalog is also your source for innovative new products like the Kill A Watt meter and Smart Strip (see sidebar) that help you assess and cut your energy use without changing your lifestyle.

"The Power to Save in New Hampshire" is the motto of nhsaves. Since 2002, the state's four largest electric utilities have been offering energy efficiency products and programs that have yielded amazing results! Since the inception of these programs, customers of the New Hampshire electric utilities have:

- saved enough energy to power 735,000 homes for a full year
- reduced emissions by 3.3 million tons - the equivalent of taking 690,000 cars off the road for a full year
- saved \$750 million - the amount customers would have paid for energy that is no longer needed

The nhsaves catalog is available online at www.nhsaves.com. Or, call the co-op at 1-800-698-2007 and we'll send you a copy.



FRED SAID: "Spiral bulbs are the most popular style of compact fluorescent light bulb and offer the most light for the least money. One bulb will last an average of 10,000 hours - that's 6 - 8 years!!"

Who is Fred? He's Fred Anderson, President & CEO of the Co-op and he's big on energy efficiency!

RESOURCECORNER

CHECK OUT THESE NEW ENERGY-SAVING PRODUCTS AVAILABLE IN THE 2009 NHSAVES CATALOG...

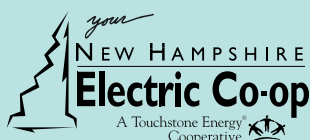
Monitor Your Electricity Usage

Do you know how much electricity your appliances really use? Simply plug this device into a three-pronged grounded wall outlet, plug your appliance, computer, lamp or other electrical product into the monitor, and you'll find out how efficient (or wasteful) they really are. The large LCD display monitors the kilowatt hour consumption of an item to show how much it costs to run. You can determine your electrical expenses by day, week or month. **\$21.45**

BITS Smart Strip Reduces Phantom Load

The 10-outlet Smart Strip Power Strip works to switch your devices on and off automatically, helping you to save money on your electric bills. Three of the outlets always have power, allowing you to plug in devices that should never be turned off such as cable boxes and clock radios. Of the other seven outlets, one is the main outlet and the other six are "controlled." Those six controlled outlets will automatically turn off whenever a 10% or more drop in current to the main outlet is detected, and automatically turn on when an increase of seven watts or more is sensed.

Simply put, plug your computer into the main outlet and its peripherals into any of the other six. When you shut down your computer, or it goes into sleep mode, all of the peripherals will also turn off. When you turn on your computer, the peripherals will all turn on automatically. **Smart Strip - 10-outlet: \$22.50; 7-outlet: \$15.00**



For member service please call

1-800-698-2007
Monday-Friday, 8-5:00
or visit us online at
www.nhec.coop

To report an outage please call

1-800-343-6432

New Hampshire Electric Cooperative
579 Tenney Mountain Highway
Plymouth, NH 03264