


The Nodak Neighbor

July-August 2024

Official Publication of Nodak Electric Cooperative

www.nodakelectric.com

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



**Tips for
weathering
summer
power outages**

Learn more on page 4

The Nodak Neighbor

Official Publication of the
Nodak Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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www.nodakelectric.com

*This institution is an equal opportunity
provider and employer.*

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**Happy
LABOR DAY**

**Nodak Electric offices
will be closed Monday,
Sept. 2, for Labor Day**

*In case of outages, call
toll-free 1-800-732-4373*

On the cover: A young photographer captures the beautiful sunset at Stump Lake in North Dakota.

NEW PAY-BY-PHONE NUMBER

1-855-939-3774

Residential and small commercial member-owners who wish to inquire on their account balance, or make a payment by credit card or e-check via phone, can use Nodak's **Pay-by-Phone** service. This is a practical solution for members who do not have internet access and can be used for one-time payments. The service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week by dialing our new number at **1-855-939-3774**.



EFFICIENCY: AIR CONDITIONING UNIT CHECKUP



Your air conditioning system could account for approximately 12% of your total annual home energy expenditures and up to 70% during the warmer summer months. The HVAC is the biggest energy user in your entire house. If you are like most homeowners, you are likely searching for ways to improve air conditioner efficiency and reduce costs.

Below are some tips that can help your AC unit run more efficiently and cost you less through the course of a year.

1. Unblock and vacuum your vents
2. Close all doors and windows
3. Clean around the condenser unit outside
4. Keep all heat-producing appliances away from your thermostat
5. Shade your outside condenser



Mylo Einarson
President & CEO

The value of electricity

If you're like me, there are aspects of your life that become sort of a daily routine. I get ready for work, get in my car and drive to the coffee shop on the way to the office. At lunchtime, I drive to the nearest fast-food location and get lunch. Once I finally end the day at home, I stream an episode or two of my favorite show before bed.

As we all look for ways to save money in this age of increasing inflation, I began thinking about my daily routine and how much value it provided me compared to the money I spent. A morning coffee was costing me about \$5, a fast-food combo with a burger, fries and a drink was setting me back \$10, and my Netflix subscription is about \$16 each month. All these daily expenses totaled around \$85 a week, or about \$340 monthly. And what was the real value — short-term satisfaction and a larger waistline? Even as I started going home for lunch, my coffee was still costing me about \$120 a month. This got me thinking — is this the best value for my money?

The average daily cost of electricity is about \$4.31, and the average monthly residential electric bill for members of Nodak Electric Cooperative last month was \$131. You could power your entire home every day for the price of a medium coffee. I could brew my own coffee, cook my own meals, binge watch a series and run on a treadmill for less than the cost of that drink. Now to me, that's real value.

Electricity provides benefits that we often take for granted. It goes well beyond short-term satisfaction by allowing us to charge devices and have cold food and hot water, all in a comfortable indoor climate. Besides the privilege it affords, electricity cost has also remained stable even amidst rising inflation.









As a member-owned cooperative, Nodak Electric does everything in our power to ensure your costs stay reasonable and that electricity remains a great value for our members. It's not always easy, as there are several factors beyond inflation that impact the price of electricity — some within our control but most beyond it.

The cost of our wholesale electricity can change from year to year due to supply and demand, infrastructure investment, maintenance and operational expenses. Weather patterns also contribute, affecting both demand and generation capabilities, with extreme conditions leading to heightened energy use or disruptions. Government policies, such as subsidies for renewable energy and regulations on emissions, shape wholesale power costs as well. Your electric co-op considers all these aspects, and because we're a cooperative, we consider the impact of those costs on our members as well. We've been fortunate that we've been able to keep most rates steady since 2017. Supply chain issues and inflationary pressures, however, can make it challenging to stay that course.


As our region continues to rely on electricity for nearly everything in our homes, schools, hospitals and businesses, we need it to be reliable and affordable. You can be assured, Nodak Electric Cooperative always puts you top of mind and works each day to ensure electricity remains the best value for your money.

\$1

ELECTRICITY VALUE MENU

							
COFFEE MAKER 9 HOURS OF USE	DISHWASHER 23 HOURS OF USE	TABLET 600 HOURS OF USE	LED LIGHT BULB 900 HOURS OF USE	ELECTRIC DRILL 600 HOURS OF USE	SMARTPHONE 1,700 HOURS OF CHARGING	TOASTER 8 HOURS OF USE	LED TV 96 HOURS OF USE

FINDING THE VALUE IN THE THINGS YOU USE EVERY DAY – THAT'S THE VALUE OF ELECTRICITY.


VALUE OF
ELECTRICITY

KEEP YOUR COOL WHILE THE POWER IS OUT

TIPS FOR WEATHERING SUMMER POWER OUTAGES

Source: [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.safeelectricity.org)

Severe summer storms can cause outages. When a power outage occurs during hot weather, take steps to maintain safety and comfort until power is restored.

High winds that topple utility poles and power lines cause many summer outages. It's important to always stay clear of downed power lines, even during cleanup efforts. Be alert to the possibility that tree limbs or debris may hide an electrical hazard.

Assume that any dangling wires you encounter are electrical and treat all downed or hanging lines as if they are energized and dangerous. If you are driving and come upon a downed power line, stay in your vehicle, warn others to stay away and contact emergency personnel. Also, when driving, be careful at intersections where traffic lights may be out.

If power to your home is out for a prolonged period, know and understand important safety precautions and steps to cope with heat until power is restored:

- Remember to call Nodak immediately to report the outage at 800-732-4373.
- Dress in loose, lightweight clothing and stay on the coolest, lowest level of your home.
- Use natural ventilation to cool homes and consider purchasing battery-powered fans.
- Drink plenty of water and avoid heavy meals, caffeinated drinks and alcohol.

- Keep refrigerator or freezer doors closed. A freezer that is half full or full can keep foods frozen 24 to 48 hours. Foods can stay safe in an unopened refrigerator up to four hours. If an outage lasts longer than four hours, remove and pack meat, milk, and other dairy products in a cooler with ice.
- Use safe alternative food preparations. A barbecue grill is an excellent way to prepare food. Always grill outside.
- Check on friends and relatives – especially children, seniors, and those with medical conditions or disabilities. These people may need to seek emergency cooling shelters.
- Close all drapes and blinds on the sunny side of your residence.

During an outage, Nodak recommends turning off electrical appliances and unplugging major equipment, including air conditioning units, computers and televisions. Power sometimes comes back in surges, which can damage electronics. Your circuits could overload when power returns if all your electronics are still on and plugged in. Leave one light on to indicate that power has been restored. Wait a few minutes then turn on other appliances and equipment one at a time.

If you use a standby generator, make sure a transfer safety switch is used or connect the appliance(s) directly to the generator output through an isolated circuit before you operate it. This prevents electricity from traveling back through the power lines – what's known as "back feed." Back feed creates danger for anyone near lines, particularly crews working to restore power.



AROUND THE CO-OP

NEW EMPLOYEES



Paul Gapp

Paul Gapp joined Nodak's Grafton crew as a journeyman lineworker. Originally from Fisher, Minn., Paul previously worked at McKenzie Electric Cooperative in Watford City, N.D.



David Larsen

David Larsen joined Nodak as a warehouse worker at the Grand Forks main office. He is originally from East Grand Forks, Minn., and previously worked for FedEx.

SEASONAL APPRENTICES

CAVALIER CREW



Owen Lundeen

(from Bemidji, Minn.)



Brady Hanson

(from Park River, N.D.)

FINLEY CREW



Robert Strand

(from Bemidji, Minn.)

GRAND FORKS EAST



Jesse Plain

(from Grand Forks, N.D.)

GRAND FORKS WEST



Luke Blazek

(from East Grand Forks, Minn.)



Conner Mercil

(from Warren, Minn.)

MICHIGAN CREW



Tristyn O'Brien

(from Michigan, N.D.)

GRAFTON CREW



Avery Rosinski

(from Park River, N.D.)

FOUR FACTORS THAT MAY IMPACT YOUR ELECTRIC BILL

Bill higher than usual?
Here are four possible causes:



Consumption

The primary factor that impacts your monthly bill is the amount of energy used. The more energy your home uses, the higher your electric bill will be. Heating and cooling systems typically account for more than 50% of your home's energy usage.



Weather

Changes in outdoor temperatures impact your bill. Sometimes we can forget about a short cold snap that happened earlier in the previous month. As temperatures drop, your home's energy usage increases. The greater the difference between the outdoor temperature and your desired indoor temperature means your heating system is using more energy.



Energy Costs

Because energy costs can change regularly, you may see a credit or charge each month depending on current energy prices and the amount of energy used. Energy cost adjustments are implemented to recover the varying cost of fuel used to generate electricity that is not recovered in the utility's base electric rates. The energy cost adjustment only recovers the actual cost of fuel and purchased energy. The cooperative makes no margins (profits) on the adjustment.



Billing Cycles

Billing cycles can vary depending on the dates billed. More days in a billing cycle may make your bill seem higher than normal. We're here to help! Reach out to Nodak Electric Cooperative at (800) 732-4373. We can review your electric bill and your usage. We can also recommend energy-saving tips and suggest billing or payment methods that may help.

HEAT UP THE GRILL
TO SAVE ENERGY THIS SUMMER

Using your grill in the great outdoors helps lower your energy bill. If you cook outside, less energy is needed to cool your kitchen.

Safe Electricity.org



"Honey Do" Electrical Safety Check

As you work on the "honey do list" around the house, take some time to check these items off:

- Test the ground-fault circuit interrupters – or GFCIs – in bathrooms, the laundry room, and other spaces where you use running water.**
 - Plug a hair dryer or any device into the outlet, turn it on, and then push the "test" button. The hair dryer should turn off.
 - Press "reset," and it should turn back on. If that doesn't happen, call a licensed electrician to check it out.
- Replace the batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Push the "test" button, and the alarm should sound.**
 - Or light a match and hold it next to the fire alarm. It should sound.
- It's air conditioning season, which means it's time to change your AC filters.**
 - Dirty filters make the AC work too hard and can even wear your HVAC system out before its time. Replace filters about once a month during the summer.

NORTH DAKOTA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE 2024 Youth Tour

Briley Zhang recently returned from the Youth Tour. In a thank you note to Nodak Electric she wrote, "Thank you so much for this amazing opportunity! This trip truly was the trip of a lifetime and I had so much fun meeting new people and making new connections – all thanks to you. I learned so much about the company and its impact on the world, and the true extent and range of all the other co-ops as well. Without this trip, I wouldn't have met the amazing people I did, or experienced all these beautiful places, or learned so much about the U.S. and the co-op business itself. I really appreciate all of you and am so grateful for you!"

The North Dakota Electric Cooperative Youth Tour has brought high school students to the nation's capital for a week in June every year since the late 1950s. Briley Zhang won this year's Nodak Electric Cooperative essay contest and received an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., courtesy of the cooperative.



LEARN MORE AT NODAKELECTRIC.COM

Minnkota Power Cooperative transmission line inspections scheduled for fall

Minnkota Power Cooperative, Nodak Electric Cooperative's wholesale power provider, will be inspecting transmission line structures that cross your property twice during the fall of 2024.

1. Vegetation management inspections will be in preparation for vegetation maintenance activities in 2025. This inspection will allow Minnkota to evaluate vegetation growth around electrical infrastructure and within the right of way. Davey Resource Group will be assisting Minnkota personnel in the patrols.
2. Pole inspections and testing are to properly evaluate our transmission system to plan for upcoming project work. EXO will be conducting the testing on the poles.

All inspections are done using ATV/UTVs. Minimum land disturbance is anticipated. The purpose of these inspections is to ensure that electricity can be delivered safely and reliably to your area, as well as prioritize project work. If you have questions, please visit Minnkota.com or call 701-795-4000.



Minnkota Power
COOPERATIVE

POLE TOP AND BUCKET RESCUE SAFETY TRAINING

Last month our lineworkers participated in the annual pole top and bucket rescue safety training. This training provides our lineworkers the opportunity to learn and practice methods of rigging and rescuing an injured or incapacitated lineworker in an emergency situation from a pole or an aerial bucket. It's the kind of skill we hope we never have to use, but don't want to be without.



Nodak Electric provides safety training to Grand Forks Air Force Base participants.



Journeyman lineman Jake Lamb with the Devils Lake crew participates in the safety training.