



RURAL
MISSOURI

Sac Osage Electric Cooperative

News

February 2012

P.O. Box 111, 4815 E HWY 54
El Dorado Springs, MO 64744
Telephone: 800-876-2701

Visit us on the Web - www.sacosage.com

Electric Bills to Increase

Sac Osage Electric Cooperative has announced that it will implement a rate increase for all consumer rate classes beginning with the March billing period. The cooperative has faced significant increases in the costs associated with construction and maintaining meter availability to our members. The meters that the cooperative provides each consumer has an embedded cost before electricity ever flows through it. These operational costs include ever increasing transportation expenses, escalating costs of construction materials such as steel and copper, and the increased costs of technologically advanced smart meters.

The cooperative has absorbed these mounting costs for several years, but the existing monthly service availability charge could no longer recoup these added expenses. The largest single component of the new rate design is a \$5.00 increase in the monthly service availability charge for all classes of service, except the seasonal residential rate. The seasonal residential meter availability charge will increase \$2.50 per month. The last time the monthly service availability charge was adjusted was in 2007.

The new rates will be reflective of the electricity used in March and billed in the April billing statement. The average 1,000 kwh monthly residential bill, which includes the service availability charge, will increase from \$122.00 to \$125.00. Your actual electric bill, based upon the new rates, will vary for each individual consumer depending on the class of service and the usage level within each class.

The Board of Directors approved the overall 3.9% increase following a rate study concluded by a Springfield consulting firm. The additional revenues will allow Sac Osage Electric to meet the financial requirements of Rural Utilities Services, our primary lending agency.

In a related action, the Board of Directors reduced the current Power Cost Adjustment to zero cents. Therefore, the PCA will no longer appear on your monthly electric bill effective with the March billing.

You can find our new rates posted on our website, www.sacosage.com. Information pertaining to every rate class can be found under the member information tab. Below, you will see some examples.

Each residential class billing example includes the monthly service charge. Taxes not included				
Monthly electric usage:	0 Kwh	500 Kwh	1,000 kwh	2,000 kwh
Previous Residential Bill:	\$20.00	\$76.00	\$122.00	\$196.00
New March Residential Bill:	\$25.00	\$80.00	\$125.00	\$202.00

Energy Star® Rebates

Heat pump rebate requirements CHANGE January 1, 2012. Clothes washer & dishwasher rebates ENDS June 1, 2012.

Effective January 1, 2012, to qualify for a rebate, dual-fuel air-source heat pumps and ground-source heat pumps must meet the higher Energy-Star energy efficiency minimum ratings shown below. For a complete outline of requirements of our rebate program or to download an application, logon to our website at www.sacosage.com, or give us a call at our 1-800-876-2701.

IMPORTANT - Completed application AND invoice/receipt must be submitted within 90 days of purchase.

Dual-Fuel Air-Source Heat Pump Rebate (16.5 SEER minimum and must have a gas backup)
\$300/ton Ground-Source Heat Pump
Rebate (19.1 EER minimum)
\$750/ton new install
\$300/ton replacement unit

Energy-Star Clothes Washer
Rebate = \$100
(Must be connected to an electric water heater. Rebate ends June 1, 2012)

Energy-Star Dishwasher
Rebate = \$50
(Must be connected to an electric water heater. Rebate ends June 1, 2012)



Scouting Inspiration

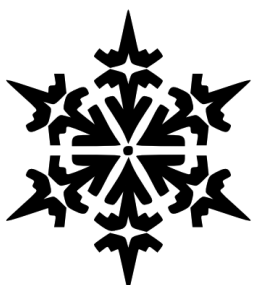
The story of Scouting in America actually starts in England in 1909. William D. Boyce was lost in a dense London fog when a boy offered assistance. He guided Mr. Boyce to his destination and refused a tip for his efforts, explaining that he was a Scout. Upon finishing his errand, Boyce asked the boy



to take him to the British Scouting office, where he met Lord Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of Scouting. Boyce was impressed by what he learned in England and resolved to bring Scouting to America. On Feb. 8, 1910, Boyce and three other men founded the Boy Scouts of America.

The Full Snow Moon

Historically, American Indians kept track of the seasons by giving a distinctive name to full moons that occurred during important periods of the year. Although some tribes used 12 names per year, others used fewer. The Algonquin tribes from New England to Lake Superior called the second full moon of the year the Full Snow

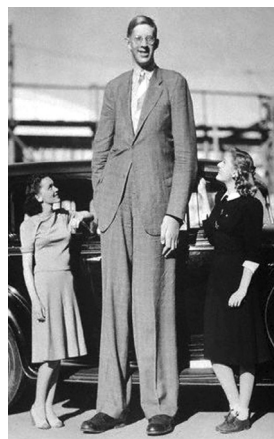


Moon, which occurs on Feb. 18 this year. Usually, the heaviest snows fall during this month. Hunting at this time was difficult, so American Indians also called this the Hunger Moon. Other names for this moon include Moon When Trees Pop, Snow-Blinding Moon and Black Bear Moon.

Gentle Giant

Robert P. Wadlow was not an exceptionally big baby when he was born on Feb. 22, 1918. He began growing rapidly, due to an overactive pituitary gland. At age 5, he was 5 feet 6 inches tall. At 9, he was 6 feet 2 inches tall and using a specially made school desk. By 16, he had hit 7 feet 10 inches. In

the face of worldwide notoriety and the considerable everyday problems his size presented, Robert remained friendly and kind to everyone he met. Robert was 8 feet 11.1 inches tall and 490 pounds when he died at the age of 22. He was big, but it was his gentle nature that made him a giant among men.



For recipes, gardening tips and weather forecasts, visit: www.almanac.com



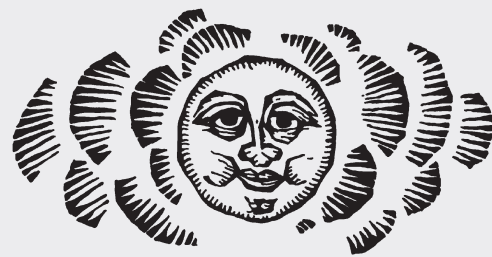
Recipe for Zucchini Sausage Squares



12 ounces bulk pork sausage
3/4 cup onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
4 large eggs
2 large zucchini, grated
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/2 cup bread crumbs
1 teaspoon dried basil
salt and pepper, to taste
1 cup sharp Cheddar cheese, grated

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Sauté the sausage, onion and garlic until the sausage is cooked. Drain. Beat the eggs, then stir in the zucchini, Parmesan, bread crumbs, seasonings and sausage mixture. Pour into a greased 11-by-7 inch baking dish and bake for 25 minutes. Sprinkle grated cheddar on top and bake for 15 more minutes. Makes 35 1-1/2-inch squares.

THE OLD FARMER'S



WEATHER PROVERBS

Stick to your winter flannels until your winter flannels stick to you.

Violent north winds in February herald a fertile year.

If the bees get out in February, the next day will be windy and rainy.

There is always one fine week in February.

If February gives much snow, a fine summer it doth fore-show.

If you walk on snow, you cannot hide your footprints.

Thunder in February frightens the maple syrup back into the ground.



HOME COMFORT

The Power to Protect

Shield your electronic devices by installing a whole-house surge protector

Dear Jim: We have many electronic gadgets in our house, and I am concerned about a voltage surge ruining them. Are there whole-house surge suppressors that will protect everything electric in our house? — Sandi S.



by Jim Dulley

Dear Sandi: People often think of only electronic gadgets — such as computers, game consoles and audiovisual items — as being at risk from electrical surges. Actually, nearly every electric item in a house today has some sort of sensitive electronics that can be damaged by a surge. These include kitchen ranges, dishwashers, vacuum cleaners, air conditioners and fans.

A common source of electrical surges is lightning during a thunderstorm. The voltage and current spikes from just a single lightning strike are enormous, and there typically are many strikes during the course of the storm. If your house and wiring experience a direct or nearby hit by lightning, even a good surge suppressor probably will not be able to protect all of your electronic items.

When a storm is forecast and you begin to hear the thunder off in the distance, unplug as many of your electronic devices as possible. This actually is a good idea anyway because many devices draw a lot of electricity even when you think they are turned off. We call this energy use a “phantom load.”

Just switching off your devices, however, may not provide adequate protection from power surges. A huge voltage surge can arc across an open switch and still fry the electronic components in an expensive device.

Many times, it's the repeated smaller electrical surges that damage the majority of electronic equipment. These can be generated by the switching on and off of inductive equipment (usual-

ly electric motors) in nearby businesses. Some of these smaller surges can even be generated by motors from your own vacuum cleaner, refrigerator compressor or clothes washer through your home's wiring.

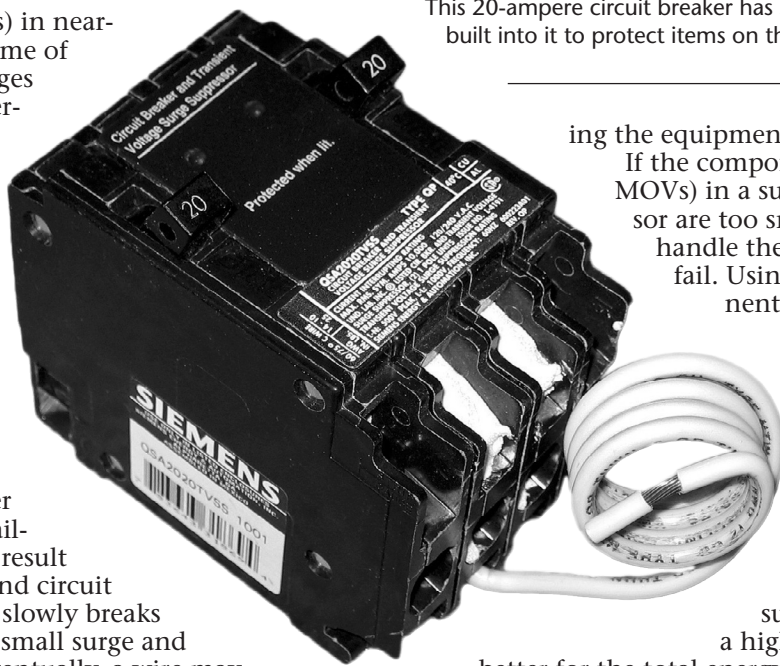
It usually takes a long time for these numerous smaller surges to cause failures. A common result is that the wire and circuit board insulation slowly breaks down from each small surge and normal aging. Eventually, a wire may short out or the electronic component begins to malfunction, and the device fails. These surges also can reduce the life of many types of light bulbs.

There are several types of whole-house surge suppressors available that are designed to protect all of the wiring circuits in a home. Some mount on the circuit breaker panel indoors or are built into a circuit breaker. These are not difficult to install, but I recommend hiring an electrician to do it for you. Others are designed to mount at the base of the electric meter. Many electric utilities sell and install these units. Check with your local electric cooperative to see if it offers this service.

There are differences in the protection provided by various surge suppressors. A common design uses metal oxide varistors (MOV) to dissipate the surge before it flows through the house wiring.

You can conceptualize this as a floodgate. At normal voltages, the gate is closed, preventing leaks. But if the voltage gets too high, the gate opens, allowing the excess damaging current to pass to ground, protect-

This 20-ampere circuit breaker has surge suppression built into it to protect items on that circuit.



ing the equipment.

If the components (including MOVs) in a surge suppressor are too small, they can't handle the surge and they fail. Using larger components, rated to handle more Joules (a measure of energy), allows the suppressor to safely dissipate a larger surge.

When comparing surge suppressors, a higher number is

better for the total energy dissipation.

Clamping voltage is the voltage that is required for the “floodgate” to open — for the MOV to conduct electricity. A lower number for this is usually better.

Even though the surge suppressor protected your electronics, a large surge may burn out the MOVs. Many models have a light on them to indicate if it is still functioning. Check it regularly and especially after a thunderstorm. On the one I use at my home, the light comes on only when the unit has been damaged by a surge and needs to be replaced.

It's also important to note that many electronic devices such as computers and entertainment systems have multiple connections — including satellite or cable, phone or network — in addition to the power connection. Any of these can serve as a path for a surge to enter the device and cause damage. Surge suppression installed on the power line doesn't guarantee protection.

For your most sensitive electronic devices, also consider using point-of-use surge suppressors for extra protection. They are not expensive and make it convenient to completely switch off the power to save electricity when the device is not being used.

When purchasing one of these surge suppressors, look for models that are tested for compliance with Underwriters Laboratories (UL) Standard 1449, or ask your local electric cooperative for advice.

The following companies offer efficient surge suppressors:

- Eaton, 800-386-1911, www.eaton.com;
- Emerson Network Power, 800-288-6169, www.emersonnetworkpower.com;
- Intermatic, 800-391-4555, www.intermatic.com; and
- Meter-Treater, 800-638-3788, www.meter-treater.com.

Have a question for Jim? Write to: James Dulley, Rural Missouri, 6906 Royalgreen Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45244 or visit www.dulley.com.



Photo courtesy of Meter-Treater

This whole-house surge suppressor is designed to be mounted on the circuit breaker panel. While not difficult to install, Dulley recommends hiring an electrician for the job.



Economic Development Loans Available

Sac Osage Electric Cooperative has a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) available, and we are accepting applications. We will accept and consider applications for loans from the RLF for projects that will significantly benefit rural areas. The RLF is not intended to compete with other public and private lenders but to collaborate with them to provide the financial package necessary to make the project happen. The RLF

seeks to improve the quality of life in rural areas by contributing to the long-term improvement in the economy, including job creation and retention, diversification, improving skills of the rural work force, and upgrading the public infrastructure to improve the health, safety, and or medical care of rural residents.

The Sac Osage Electric Cooperative Board of Directors reviews all RLF loan applications and has

final authority of all actions of the RLF.

Uses of RLF loan proceeds may be for buildings, real estate, equipment or working capital needs. Ineligible uses of RLF funds include pre-development costs, refinancing of existing departments, illegal activities, general improvement loans related to normal replacement needs of a business and unrelated to business expansion/job creation,

and loans to projects which have alternative sources of financing at reasonable interest rates.

The minimum RLF loan will be \$2,500 and the maximum will be \$300,000 and must include a minimum of 20% funding from other sources. If you believe you have a project that qualifies for the RLF contact Aaron Ash at 1-800-876-2701.

Employee Service Award

Experience is a valuable commodity in any workplace, especially in a cooperative where we serve member-owners every day. That responsibility is one that we take seriously, and one that is enhanced by dedicated, experienced individuals like the four employees that were recognized. Sac Osage Electric Cooperative is extremely proud to have these six dedicated employees who have given many years of quality service to the Cooperative. At the annual Christmas Awards Dinner in December, six employees were honored for their years of service at Sac Osage Electric Cooperative. These employees were presented with a cooperative service pin.

The six employees who were recognized for their years of service were: Kent Henry, Service Lineman, 35 years; John Julian, Working Foreman, 30 years; Lindell Marshall, Journeyman Lineman, 30 years; Kelly McPeak, Work Order Clerk, 25 years; Scott Witt, Journeyman Lineman, 25 Years; and Josh Heiserman, 5 years, Right-of-Way Foreman.



Front Row from Left to Right: John Julian, Kent Henry and Kelly McPeak. Back Row from left to right: Scott Witt, Lindell Marshall and Josh Heiserman. These employees were recognized for their years of service with Sac Osage Electric Cooperative.

Sac Osage Electric Cooperative directors achieve credentials in today's electric utility competencies

Gene Brockus and Neale Johnson, Directors of Sac Osage Electric Cooperative Board of Directors received their Credentialed Cooperative Director certificate from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). Today's electric utility environment imposes new demands on electric cooperative directors, particularly increased knowledge of changes in the electric utility business, new governance skills and a working knowledge of the cooperative principles. Sac Osage Electric Cooperative has a commitment to work through NRECA to sharpen the body of knowledge for the benefit of their electric cooperative consumer owners.

The NRECA Credentialed Cooperative Director program requires attendance and demonstrated understanding of the basic competencies contained in five core courses:

- Director Duties and Liabilities
- Understanding the Electric Business
- Board Roles and Relationships
- Strategic Planning
- Financial Decision Making

The NRECA Board Leadership certificate recognizes individuals who continue their professional development after becoming a Credentialed Cooperative Director. The directors who have attained the Board Leadership certificate have completed 10 credits in advanced, issues-oriented courses. After completing the program in 2011 Gene Brockus and Neale Johnson joined the other Sac Osage Electric Cooperative board directors Brad Thompson, Jim Murray, Ray Higgins, Jan Neale, Tim Minehardt, Tony Underwood, and Don Levi as certified credentialed cooperative directors.



Gene Brockus



Neale Johnson

YOUTH TOUR ESSAY DEADLINE MARCH 31st

The 2012 Youth Tour topic is:

"If chosen as a Youth Tour delegate you will be traveling to Washington, D.C. to experience and learn about America's rich history. What moment in American history do you wish you had been a part of and what would you have contributed?"