



MESSAGE FROM THE COOPERATIVE

Balancing costs & reliability

Co-op works to keep power affordable for members

From year to year, we all experience rising costs in our daily lives. The prices we are paying for groceries, car repairs, interest rates on loans, and other everyday needs continue to rise. Energy costs are no exception. The cost Holmes-Wayne Electric pays for the power we purchase, as well as the cost to deliver it to you, continues to increase.

One advantage of being served by an electric cooperative is that our wholesale power costs are more stable than those in the competitive power market. Because our generation cooperative, Buckeye Power, owns and operates its own generation resources, we are less exposed to the dramatic price swings that can occur in wholesale electricity markets, where power is bought and sold through competitive biddings and auctions.

Instead, cooperatives operate under a cost-based model. Just as Holmes-Wayne Electric's rates are based on the actual cost of delivering electricity to our members, the wholesale power rate reflects the actual cost of generating electricity, maintaining our power sources, utilizing the transmission system, and delivering that power to local cooperatives. While this approach helps reduce price volatility, it does not eliminate the impact of rising fuel costs, inflation, infrastructure investments, and growing electric demand, all of which increase the cost of producing and delivering reliable power.

In the past six years alone, we have seen a 26% increase in our overall cost of power and since 2011, we've seen the cost of transmission increase by more than 78%. When combined with higher equipment costs, extended lead times, and continued investment in grid reliability, these challenges demonstrate why electric rates must be periodically evaluated through a comprehensive cost-of-service and rate study. These studies provide Holmes-Wayne Electric's Board of Directors with the information needed to make thoughtful, informed decisions that balance the cooperative's financial stability with its commitment

to providing safe, reliable, and affordable electric service.

HWEC is currently collaborating with our longtime partner and nationally recognized consulting firm, GDS Associates, to complete an analysis of our current rate structure. Recommendations will be made to the board of trustees if changes are needed to our retail kilowatt-hour rates, capacity/demand charges, and/or our monthly consumer charge, the monthly service fee that generates revenue needed to provide electric service to each meter in our over 2,300-mile system.

While considering the need for any adjustments to our rate structure, we remain empathetic to the real needs of our communities, from fixed-income families to growing farms. The Holmes-Wayne staff and Board of Directors carefully consider the impact on our members before making these types of decisions and remain committed to providing resources that can help manage energy costs, including:

- Information on improving energy efficiency through this magazine, our website, and social media platforms.
- Levelized billing to help smooth seasonal fluctuations in electric bills.
- Payment arrangements and information about available energy assistance programs for members experiencing financial hardships.

Holmes-Wayne is not a corporation driven by profits — we are a not-for-profit, member-owned cooperative. Every decision we make is guided by what is in the best interest of our members and the communities that we serve. Even as we take a closer look at our rates, HWEC will remain one of the most competitively priced electric utilities in Ohio. We are proud to serve you, and I assure you we are committed to providing you with reliable power at an affordable price.

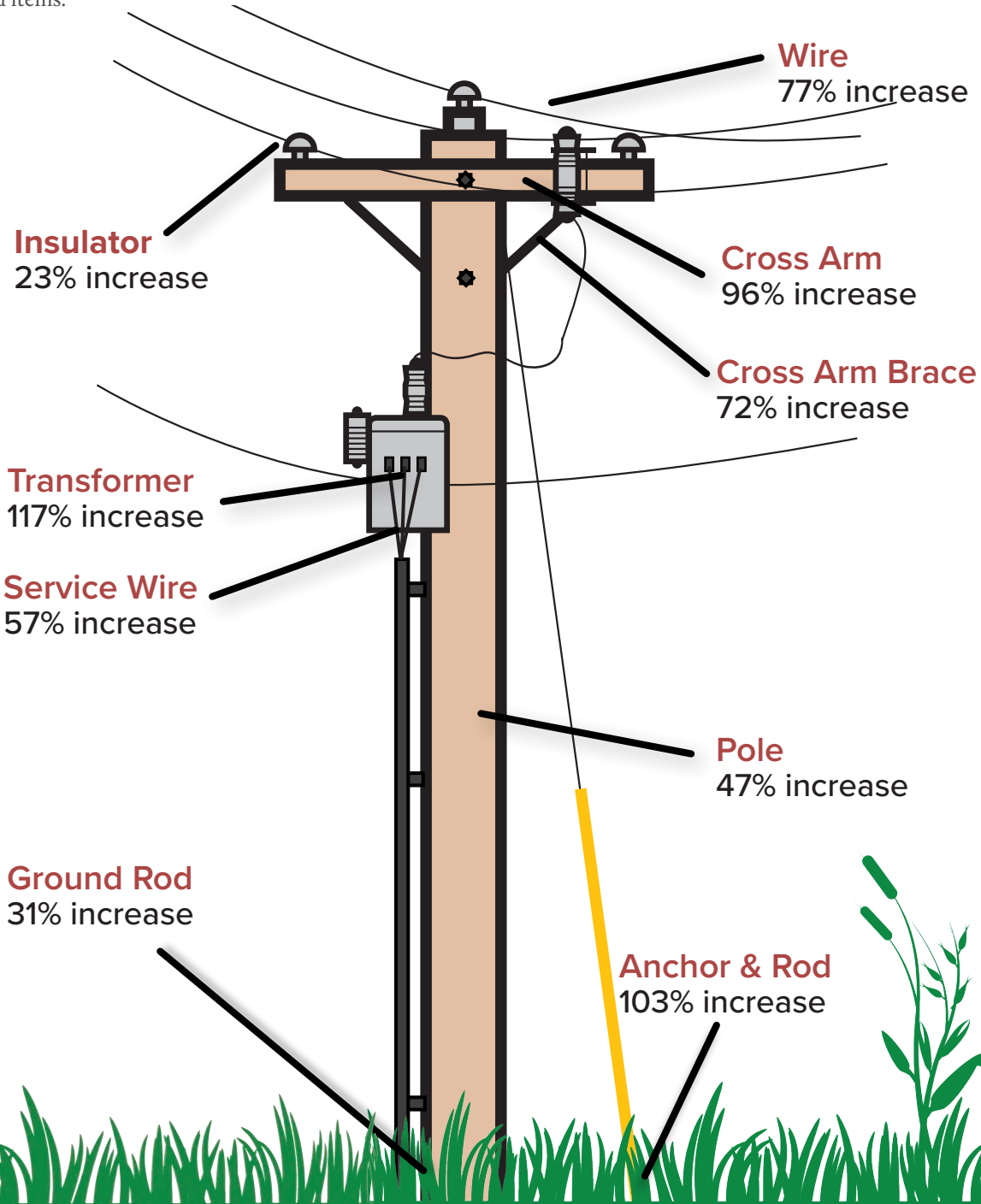


John Porter
PRESIDENT/CEO



Electric co-ops face rising costs

Just as all of us have experienced rising costs for the goods and services we use in our daily lives, electric cooperatives like Holmes-Wayne are facing increases in prices for the materials that make up the backbone of our electrical system. Here are some examples of cost inflation for commonly used items.



Material inflation from 2017 - 2025

From light switches to lifelong habits



Do you have energy-saving helpers at home? Teaching your children to build good energy habits saves money on your electric bill today and sets them up for a lifetime of smart energy use. Here's how to get your family started on a household energy-saving adventure.

Safety first

When it comes to electricity, start with safety basics. Secure cords so appliances, lamps, or other plugged-in items can't be pulled down. Use outlet covers and safety plugs to keep little hands from getting injured.

As they get older, teach children not to stick things in outlets. When they are old enough to use outlets, let them know they should never unplug by pulling the cord. When playing outside, educate them to stay away from downed power lines, keep a safe distance from all electrical equipment, and avoid the dangers of electricity near water.

Teaching energy habits

Keeping safety in mind, you can teach age-appropriate energy habits.

Turning off fans and lights when you leave rooms is always a good habit to instill. Fully powering down TVs, computers, and gaming systems reduces energy waste.

Keeping the refrigerator door open is a common energy waster for kiddos — and some adults. Show them they can take a quick look inside and scan their options. If they need time to decide what they want, they can close the fridge while making up their minds.

Closing your home's doors is another tip to keep heated or air-conditioned air inside the home.

Hot water is another saver to consider. In addition to reducing wasted water, using less hot water helps you save on your energy bill. Heating water is typically the second-highest energy use in a home, behind heating and air conditioning. Reduce energy use by turning off the water while hand-washing dishes, taking short showers, and not overfilling the bathtub.

Gamify your bill

Review the electric bill with older children. Be sure to focus on energy use, which is shown in kilowatt-hours on your bill.

It's also a good opportunity to teach budgeting and household finances. If you save money on the electric bill, you may be able to do something fun with that money instead. Consider a trip to mini golf, getting ice cream, or choosing a longer-term goal to fund a weekend family trip.

Make it a game. Consider a family reward for using less energy than the previous month or the same month of the previous year, or an individual reward for the one who guesses how many kilowatt-hours you used that month. The winner gets to pick the movie for family night.

Exploring energy efficiency and conservation with your children doesn't have to be a chore. Find fun ways to build lifelong energy habits and save energy around your home.



Nine ideas to

SAVE ON YOUR BILL

It's no secret that energy prices are on the rise and the amount of non-renewable energy resources, such as coal and natural gas, is on the decline. Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative strives to put energy- and cost-saving solutions into the hands of our members, and there are actions you can take to save on your energy bill. Little changes can make a big difference over time in the amount you pay for energy.

Saving energy is saving money. Tactics to save energy come in all shapes and sizes, including steps you can take today at no cost. Or, you can spend a little money to achieve greater savings and make some minor investments in your home to help save even more. Here are some ideas to help you save.

No-cost savings

Using a toaster oven instead of an electric range can save you money over time. The cost for using the oven for an hour is about \$1.42, while a toaster oven costs about 18 cents. Better yet, using a slow cooker for an hour costs about 1 cent.



In summer, turn up your thermostat to save, and take advantage of ceiling fans to improve comfort. In the winter, turn up the thermostat and instead of using a portable space heater, you can save by using an electric blanket. The difference over time can add up!



Close shades and drapes during the day to help keep your home cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter. This will reduce your heating and cooling energy use, which is often the largest part of your bill.



Looking for more ideas? Check out energy-saving tips on our website!

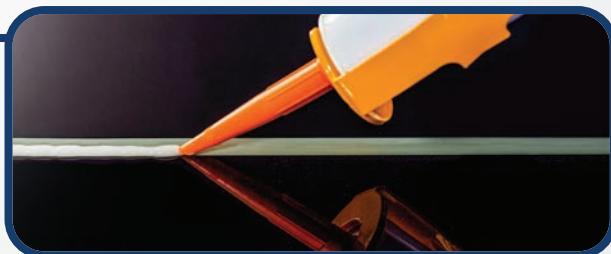
Visit www.hwecoop.com and choose Electric Service, then Energy Advice to access energy efficiency tips, home energy calculators, and more.

Budget-friendly ideas

Traditional lighting can account for up to 12% of your monthly energy use. Replacing your incandescent light bulbs with LEDs can slice lighting costs by about 75%.



Air sealing is an inexpensive way to lower energy costs and improve comfort. For the cost of a few cans of caulk or foam, you can seal gaps and holes in walls, floors, and ceilings. Look for cracks around windows and where wires and pipes pass through walls.



For about \$23, you can buy a plug-in outlet Wi-Fi smart switch, which allows you to control plugged-in lights, fans, and other devices, right from an app.

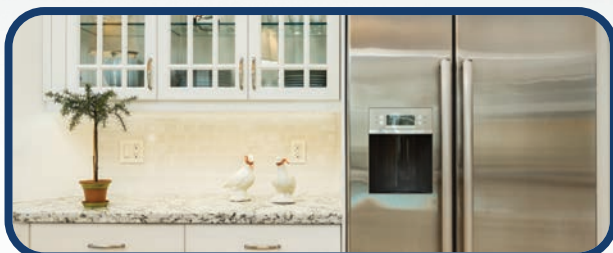


Invest to save

Spend a bit more and purchase a smart thermostat, which you can set up to an automated schedule and control from an app.



If you haven't replaced your outdoor security lights in a few years, consider purchasing a motion-sensing Wi-Fi LED bulb for less than \$100.



Consider whether it's time to buy a new refrigerator and/or freezer or replace your heating/cooling system. If you are using an old appliance, you may be using about three times as much energy to run it as you would to run one sold last year.



HOLMES-WAYNE VETERANS HONOR TRIP PARADE



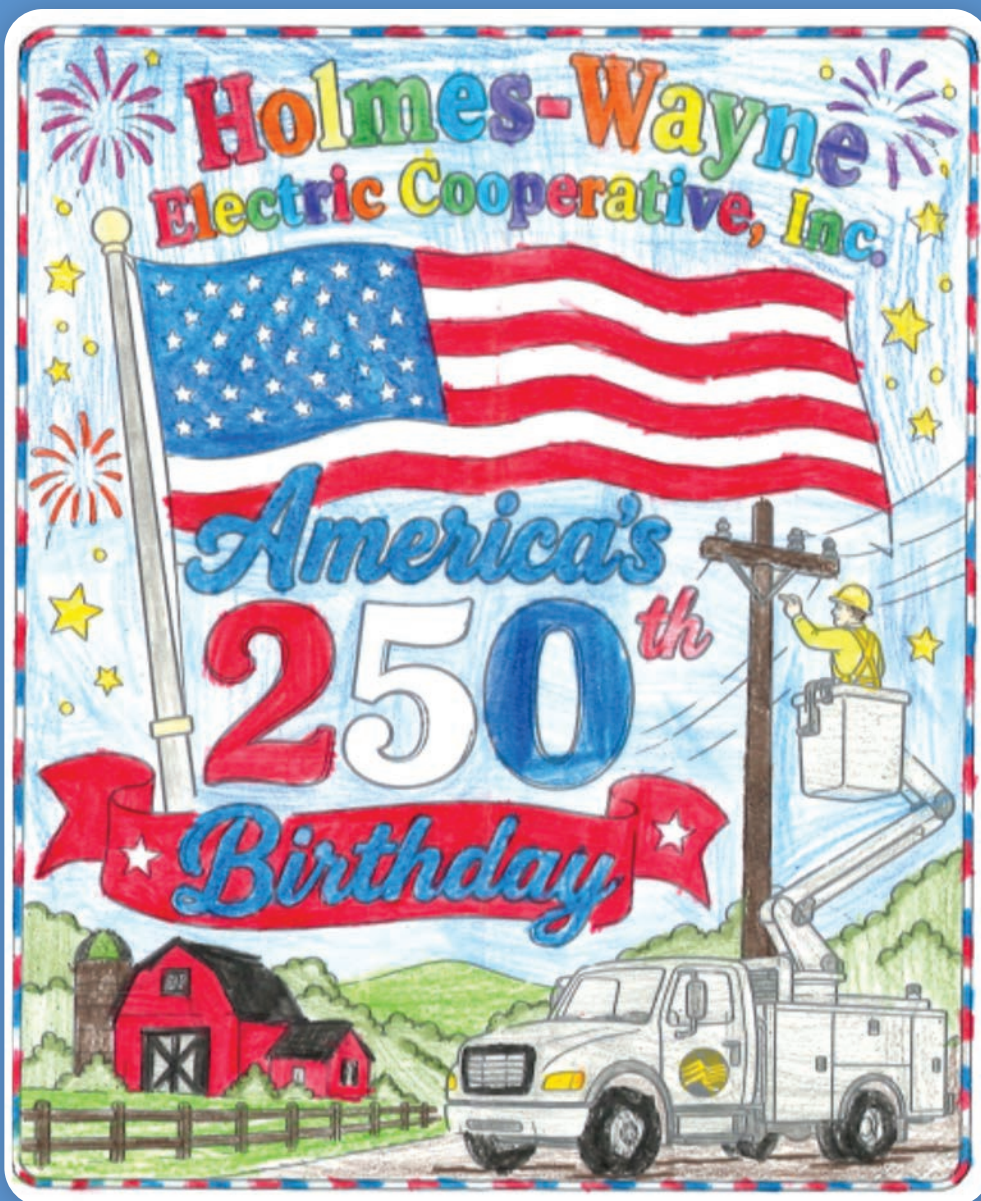
Twenty-four local veterans are returning home from an Honor Trip to Washington, D.C. Line the streets of Shreve from East of Chicago to CVS Pharmacy with signs to celebrate. Following the parade, please join us in the parking lot beside CVS for brief ceremony to honor this year's participants.

Joe Arthur – Army
Bob Brady – Army
Ken Chamberlain – Navy
Terry Cook – Army
Paul Marthey – Army
Gary McCollum – Air Force
Bob Miller – Marines
Rich Monahan – Army
Bill Morrison – Navy
Kirby Nanna – Navy
Denny Nieman – Army
Mary Pawlicki – Army

Tim Polka – Army
Phyllis Pavlovicz – Army
Marilyn Peacock – Army
Donald Prochazka – Army
Roy Randalls Jr. – Army
Roy Randalls Sr. – Marines
Tom Rochelle – Air Force
Tim Schaub – Navy
Mark Siedel – Marines
Mark Snow – Navy
William Weinbruer – Army
Richard Wise – Army

SUNDAY, SEPT. 27, 2026, at 6 p.m.

America 250 coloring contest



Winner: Erika Joy Hershberger

Congratulations to Erika Joy Hershberger, winner of Holmes-Wayne Electric's 250th Birthday Coloring Contest. Erika is the daughter of William and Martha Hershberger of Millersburg. A big thank-you to everyone who submitted an entry. We enjoyed seeing all of the colorful, creative artwork and appreciate everyone who participated.



HOLMES-WAYNE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE LOCAL PAGES

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

September kicks off the fall shoulder season, when cooler mornings and milder evenings often mean you can give your heating and cooling system a break. Open windows, use ceiling fans, and enjoy the fresh air whenever temperatures allow. It's also the perfect time to schedule annual HVAC maintenance before colder weather arrives. Because demand is typically lower during the fall, heating and cooling professionals often have greater availability, making it easier to book an appointment. Regular maintenance can improve your system's efficiency, help prevent unexpected breakdowns, and keep your home comfortable all year long.

Source: Department of Energy



TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS ⚠️

Your smart thermostat, security camera, video doorbell, and other connected devices make life more convenient — but they can also be targets for cybercriminals if they're not properly secured. Change default usernames and passwords, use strong, unique passwords for each device, and enable multi-factor authentication when available. Keep your devices up to date by installing software and firmware updates, which often include important security fixes. Secure your home Wi-Fi network with a strong password and modern encryption. A few simple steps can help keep your personal information and smart devices safe from scammers.

Source: CISA



The Holmes-Wayne Electric Cooperative



office will be closed on Monday, Sept. 7



to observe Labor Day.



**Holmes-Wayne
Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



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