




Nobles Cooperative  
Electric

® Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

January 2024  
Vol. 16 Issue 1

## Tips to stay warm and save energy this winter

**Q: My winter energy bills are typically higher. Can you offer advice on how to lower bills during colder months?**

**A:** Colder weather can increase energy use and bills since heating accounts for the highest wintertime energy consumption in most homes. The amount of energy used to heat your home depends on your equipment, how you use it and the efficiency of your home's shell—the building (28-15-22) components that separate the indoors from the outdoors.

It's important to know how your home is heated so you can make informed decisions on your energy use. It also helps you prepare for upcoming bills and avoid surprises that impact your budget. A forced-air furnace is the most common type of heating system and is fueled by natural gas, propane, oil or electricity. Heat pumps are growing in popularity and available for forced-air systems. If you have a forced-air system, check the filter regularly and replace when it's dirty. Ductless heat pumps, or mini-splits, boilers, radiant heat, baseboard heaters and electric resistance heaters are other common heating system types.

If you don't know what type of system you have, find the model number of your equipment and look it up online. You'll find information about the kind of system, how efficiently it operates and recommendations for servicing it, which can improve system efficiency.

We use energy to make our homes comfortable. The easiest and lowest-cost way to save money on heating is to keep your thermostat as low as your comfort will allow.

The U.S. Department of Energy recommends a thermostat setting of 68 degrees in the winter while you are awake and lower when you are asleep or away from home. Adding an additional layer of clothing, slippers or a hat can keep you comfortable in a cooler home.

Do you use electric resistance space heaters to heat a room or small section of your home? If so, you may see an increase on your electric bill. For example, let's say you use a 1,500-watt electric space heater to warm your living room while you watch TV or read a book. Operating that space heater for two hours a day at about 10 cents per kilowatt-hour will cost you about \$9

*Cont. on page 3*

## Energy saving tip

During winter months, ensure your home is well sealed and properly insulated to reduce the need for excessive heating. Seal air leaks around your home and add insulation where needed to save up to 10% on annual energy bills. Install weather stripping on exterior doors and apply caulk around windows. Check attic insulation levels and hire a qualified contractor if additional insulation is needed.

Source: [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov)

## Mark your calendar

Jan. 30 ..... Electric bills due

Feb. 14 ..... Happy Valentines Day!

## January Auto Pay Winner Shirley Hiskes

Take a minute to sign up for Auto Pay and you may win a \$25 bill credit. A winner is chosen each month.

## Find your location number and win a \$10 credit

If you find your location number (as it appears on your monthly electric bill) in this issue, you will receive a \$10 credit.



General Manager  
*Adam Tromblay*

### Looking back at 2023

The year 2023 was a year of great change with the highlight of welcoming the city of Bigelow as new members. They became part of the cooperative family in September. Because Bigelow is close in proximity to the cooperative's existing service area, Nobles Cooperative Electric (NCE) will enhance their reliability and improve response times.

Last year we chose a new software platform (NISC) that will incorporate every aspect of every department of the cooperative. We expect full implementation to take place late this year. When you take an organization the size of NCE and implement NISC in about a year's time, it takes a lot of communication, hard work and commitment from our employees. We know that these new tools will make us a better cooperative that will continue to improve our business efficiencies and member satisfaction.

NCE added new employees in 2023: Mike Reemtsma was hired as our chief financial officer (CFO), Shannon Bakke, a member services representative, and Electrician Leighton Gehl.

A new Worthington Substation was also built that replaced our old Worthing-

ton substation. (21-4-27) It will help with redundancy and more capabilities.

### 2024 Workplan and Budget

Your board of directors recently approved our work plan and budget for 2024. Here are some things we have planned this year:

- Continue to provide quick, timely and efficient response to calls during and after work hours.
- Spend over \$4 million on improvements in our service territory (Murray and Nobles Counties).
- Install and/or rebuild 15 miles of line.
- Continue to look for new ways to support the communities we serve.
- Upgrade load management controls
- Research the possibility of rebranding by changing our name and/or logo.



**ELECTRIC CO-OPS  
FOCUSED  
ON PEOPLE  
NOT PROFITS**

### May 2024 rate adjustment

NCE's goal has always been to provide reliable electricity at the lowest cost possible. Continued increases in the cost to deliver safe, reliable power prompted NCE's Board of Directors to approve changes to the cooperative's rates that will take effect starting in May. These (18-3-73) changes will be reflected on bills received in June and will include a cost per kilowatt-hour increase of \$0.005 and a service charge increase of \$4.

This decision was not easy. NCE's rates remain one of the lowest in the state. The board works in the best interests of our members. You can count on us for reliable electricity and reasonable rates that we deliver to 6,957 members' homes and businesses daily.

### RATE ADJUSTMENT EFFECTIVE MAY 2024

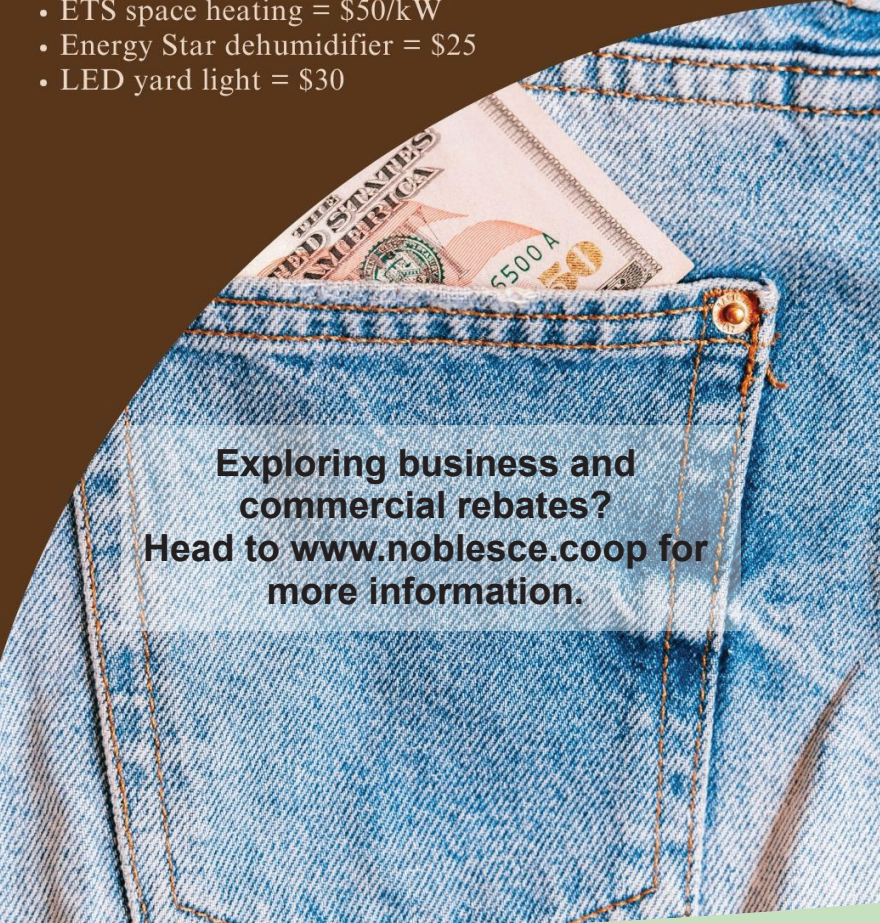
Rate	Description	Current Service Charge	New Service Charge	Current Energy Charge	New Energy Charge
1	Residential	\$ 37	\$ 41	\$ 0.075	\$ 0.080
2	Three-phase <75 kVa	\$ 67	\$ 71	\$ 0.075	\$ 0.080
4	Three-phase >75 kVa	\$ 70	\$ 74	\$ 0.057	\$ 0.062

# REBATES

TO TAKE CARE OF  
YOUR POCKET

## Residential Rebates:

- Replacement refrigerator or freezer with recycling of old one = \$75
- Energy Star clothes dryer = \$25
- LED home lighting = \$2 per bulb
- Ground Source Heat Pump = \$200/ton
- Air Source Heat Pump (installed by NCE listed quality installer) = up to \$1,000
- Ductless Air Source Heat Pump (installed by NCE listed quality installer) = up to \$500
- ETS space heating = \$50/kW
- Energy Star dehumidifier = \$25
- LED yard light = \$30



**Exploring business and commercial rebates?  
Head to [www.noblesce.coop](http://www.noblesce.coop) for more information.**

*Cont. from page 1*

## Winter tips to stay warm and safe money

a month. Operating that same space heater for 12 hours a day will cost you about \$54 a month.

If you choose to use space heaters, use them safely. Keep them 3 feet away from anything flammable, do not leave them unattended and plug them directly into the outlet, not an extension cord or power strip.

Just as we put on a windbreaker to keep cold winds from blowing through a sweater, your home also benefits from blocking air movement.

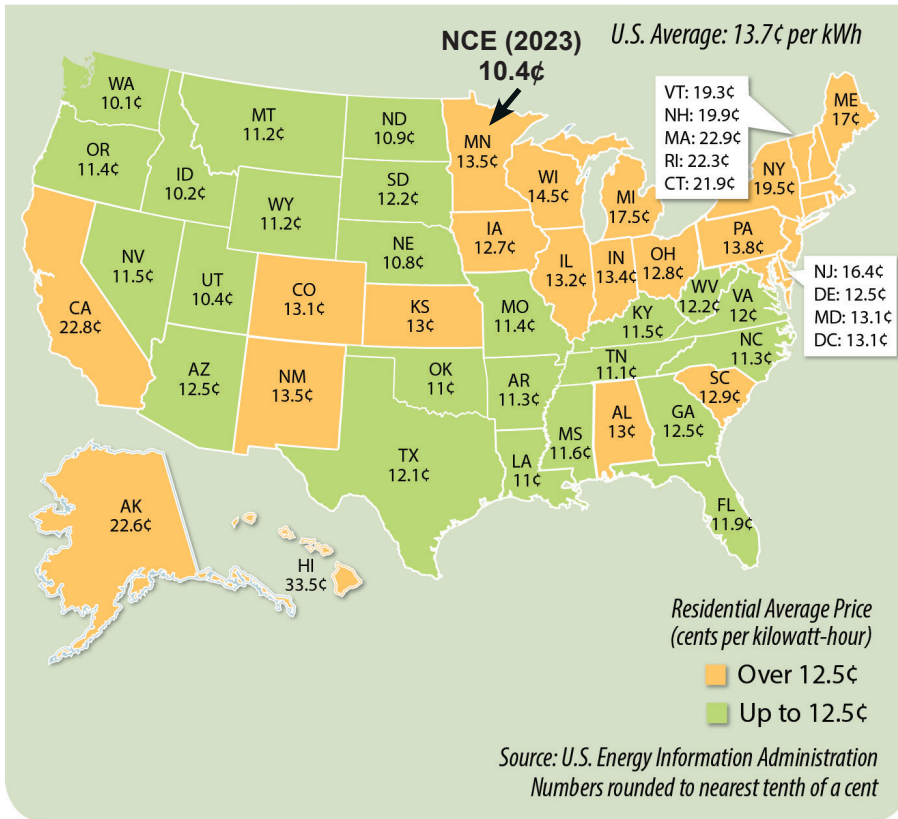
Air sealing can make a big improvement (23-33-53) in the comfort of your home as well as provide energy savings. A common air sealing practice is applying weatherstripping to exterior doors and windows. You can also seal around plumbing penetrations to help eliminate drafts. A gap often exists between the drywall or wood and the plumbing pipes and drains. Filling these gaps with expanding foam can reduce drafts in bathrooms and kitchens.

Cold, windy winter days are the perfect time to find opportunities for air sealing. Rattling doors or moving curtains can indicate air leakage. Air leakage can occur where two different materials come together, like drywall and trim work. Cracked plaster and gaps in drywall can also cause drafts. Sealing the gaps saves energy and improves comfort.

As outdoor temperatures dip this winter, take a few proactive steps to maintain comfort in your home and keep your energy bill in check.

# Average Prices for Residential Electricity

2021 figures, in cents per kWh



**Holiday Open House Winners (\$100 off electric bill)**

- Wilma Gunderman
- Marlowe Nelsen

## Country Cupboard

### Chocolate Drop Cookies

**Pearl Stene**  
Fulda

3/4 c. brown sugar	1/2 c. milk
1/4 c. white sugar	1/2 tsp. soda, mixed in a little water
1/2 c. melted butter	1 tsp. vanilla
1 egg	1 c. walnuts, chopped
1 1/2 square chocolate, melted	1 1/2 c. flour

Beat all together with a mixer. When mixture is cool, drop onto cookie sheet and bake for 8 to 10 minutes at 400 degrees. Cool and frost. Trim the (5/16-38-159) top of the cookie with 1/4 to 1/2 of a walnut. Makes about 3 1/2 dozen. Store in a tight container with wax paper between the layers.

**Frosting:**

6 T. butter	3/4 c. chocolate chips
6 T. milk	1 tsp. vanilla
1 1/2 c. white sugar	

Boil butter, milk and sugar for one minute. Remove from heat and add chips. Beat in vanilla and cool. Spread on cooled cookies.

Send your **breakfast recipes** to Nobles Cooperative Electric, ATTN: Tracey, P.O. Box 788, Worthington, MN 56187-0788. Entries must include your name, address, telephone number and NCE location number. All entries must be received by January 25. The winning recipe will be featured in the next edition of *Current Matters* and the winner will receive a **\$10 credit** on their electric bill.



## Official monthly publication

22636 U.S. Hwy. 59  
P.O. Box 788  
Worthington, MN 56187-0788  
Phone: 507-372-7331,  
507-836-6107 or 800-776-0517

### Website

www.noblesce.coop

### Email address

nce@noblesce.com

### Office hours

7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Monday through Friday  
Oct. 1 - April 30

### 24-Hour outage service

800-776-0517

### Gopher State One-Call

800-252-1166 or 811

### Electrical inspectors

Murray & Nobles County  
Luke Pieske - 507-316-8664

### General Manager

Adam Tromblay

### Board of Directors

- Ronald Schwartau, President - 734-3052\*
  - Lee York, V. President - 879-3497\*
  - Cindy Hokeness, Sec./Treas. - 478-4965\*
  - Jerry Beckering, Director - 227-4074\*
  - Timothy Bickett, Director - 605-670-5294
  - Gary Clarke, Director - 605-201-1903
  - David Dorpinghaus, Director - 605-695-7816\*
- \*Telephone prefix 507

### Next Board Meeting

January 23, 2023

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

