

Manager's message: Affordable electricity powers quality of life



Most of us use electricity, either directly or indirectly, almost all the time. Because electricity is so abundant and available with the simple flip

of a switch, it's easy to take it for granted.

According to the Energy Information Administration, the typical U.S. household now uses more air conditioning, appliances and consumer electronics than ever before. The average home also contains 10 or more internet-connected devices. Considering everything powered by electricity, it's no wonder we occasionally might wince at our monthly bill. But keep in mind, it's no longer just the "light bill."

Electricity powers quality of life

Electricity powers our quality of life. From the infrastructure of your home (appliances, water heater and HVAC system) to charging your smartphones and powering your computers, TV and Wi-Fi router, your energy bill covers so much more than lighting.

Today, there is more demand for electricity than ever before. At home, in schools and businesses,

and in commercial sectors, such as transportation, the need for electricity is increasing.

Typically, when demand goes up, so does the price, as is the case with most goods or services, like cable or even your favorite specialty coffee. However, that's not true with electricity. Let's take a look at how the value of electricity compares to other common expenses.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the five-year national average of the cost of gasoline increased 6.1%, butter increased 6.1% and bread increased 5.5%. But the cost of electricity only increased 4.6%. Considering all the ways we depend on electricity, it still remains a great value.

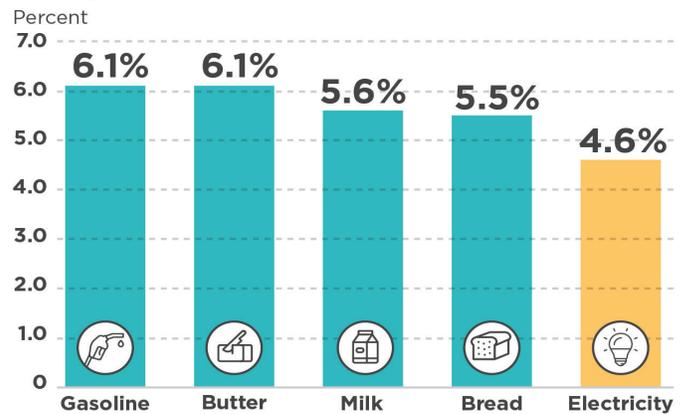
So, the next time you're enjoying your favorite podcast, TV series or movie, consider the value of electricity and how it enhances

your quality of life. We care about you, the members we serve, and understand electricity is more than a commodity. It's a necessity. That's why KEM Electric Cooperative will continue working hard to power your life, reliably and affordably. ⚡

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

Although inflation has led to increasing costs in many areas of our lives, the cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common goods. Looking at price increases over the last five years, electricity remains a good value.

Average Annual Price Increase 2017-2022



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
 Consumer Price Index

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Safety Starts with Me: Safe harvest

Agriculture is the backbone of our country, and our livelihood greatly depends on the crops provided by America's farmers. In addition to being one of the most labor-intensive professions, farming is also considered one of the most dangerous jobs in the United States.

The hard work and exhaustive labor are tough, but rushing the job to save time can be extremely dangerous – even deadly – when farming near electrical equipment.

“Every year, we see collisions where tractors and other farming equipment accidentally collide with utility poles and power lines, causing injuries and power outages,” said Tyler Jacob, a journeyman lineworker at KEM Electric Cooperative.

These dangerous accidents can be avoided by looking up and around your surroundings when operating large farm machinery. If you're preparing for harvest season, please keep the following safety tips in mind:

- **Maintain safe distances.** Always be aware of the power poles and maintain a safe distance. Keep all machinery, including combines, tractors and other tall equipment, at least 10 feet away from power lines. Remember, some power lines may be lower than others, so it's crucial to remain vigilant and make sure you are aware of their height.

- **Know the location of power lines.** Familiarize yourself with the locations of power lines and poles in the fields where you are working.

Take note of any changes or new installations since the last harvest season. Stay updated and ensure all workers are aware of the potential hazards posed by power lines.

- **Be extra cautious with tall equipment.** When operating tall machinery, such as grain augers or portable elevators, always be mindful of the height and the proximity to power lines. Ensure these tools are carefully maneuvered, and their movements are coordinated to avoid any contact with power lines.

- **Report damaged or downed lines.** If you encounter any damaged or downed power lines, never attempt to move them yourself. Immediately report the situation to the utility company or local authorities and keep a safe distance until help arrives. If your equipment makes contact with an energized line, contact 911 immediately and remain inside the vehicle until the power line is deenergized.

Safety Starts with ME (and YOU)

Each one of us has a responsibility to prioritize safety during the harvest season. “By following these safety tips and encouraging others to do

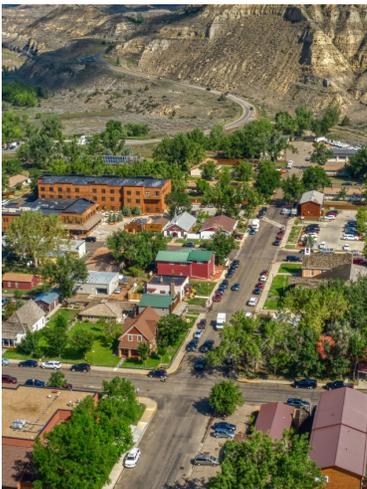
SAFETY STARTS WITH ME

Tyler
Journeyman Lineman



the same, we can create a safer work environment for everyone involved,” Jacob said. “It's important to remain vigilant, keep an eye out for potential hazards, and report any unsafe conditions promptly.”

Remember, safety should never be compromised. The harvest season is a time to celebrate the fruits of our labor, but let's ensure that we celebrate it safely. By staying aware, informed and cautious around electricity and power poles, we can make this harvest season a successful and accident-free one. ⚡



Explore it, Adore it, and SAVE!

In partnership with the Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation, KEM Electric Cooperative is once again making excursions to Medora more affordable for families.

This summer, our members are eligible for a 15-percent discount off the following reservations:

- Tickets to the Medora Musical
- Pitchfork Steak Fondue
- Gospel Brunch Tickets
- Bully Pulpit Golf Course
- Old Town Theater shows
- Lodging at the Badlands Motel, Elkhorn Quarters, Rough Riders Hotel and Medora Campground

Touchstone Energy members can use the code “TOUCH2023” for the discount. The code is good for reservations by phone, website or in-person. ⚡