



October 2024

Newsletter

ELECTRICITY PROVIDES POWERFUL 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 has also remained relatively cost-stable even amidst rising inflation.

As a member-owned cooperative, OCEC 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 electricity can fluctuate 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. We consider all these aspects when adjusting rates, and because we're a cooperative, we consider the impact of those costs on our members as well.

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

Where Do You Find Value?

Did you know the average daily cost of electricity is \$4.57, or about \$140 per month?

Electricity fuels our daily life essentials, from heating/cooling equipment to entertainment devices and appliances. Think of how vital power is compared to other everyday purchases. **That's real value.**



Morning To-Go Latte



Fast-Food Combo Lunch



All-Day Power

Sources: Energy Information Administration, MoneyGeek and CNET

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OCEC WELCOMES NEW EMPLOYEE

We are excited to welcome Royce Verkuehlen to the OCEC team as our new Controller. Royce brings us three and a half years of experience as a financial systems implementer in the utility and broadband industry at NISC. When asked to tell us a little about himself Royce noted “In my free time I enjoy golfing and mountain biking. My fiancé and I are new to the Pacific Northwest moving here from North Dakota in the spring of 2023, our shared hobbies include hiking and paddle boarding. If we aren’t outside, we are usually spoiling our two cats.” Welcome to the team Royce!



OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY MONTH

Did you know the average household with internet access owns about 17 connected devices? That figure covers a wide range of electronics, including smart phones, computers, streaming devices, smart speakers, home assistants and more. Given our increasing reliance on internet-connected technologies, the likelihood of new cyber threats is ever-present.

October is National Cybersecurity Month, and while good cyber hygiene should be practiced year-round, we’d like to share a few cybersecurity tips to help you bolster your online safety.

- Learn how to spot and report phishing attempts. Phishing occurs when criminals use phony emails, direct messages or other types of digital communications that lure you to click a bad link or download a malicious attachment. If you receive a suspicious email or message that includes urgent language, offers that seem too good to be true, generic greetings, poor grammar or an unusual sender address, it could be a phishing attempt. If you spot one, report it as soon as possible—and don’t forget to block the sender. (If you receive a suspicious work email, report it to the appropriate IT contact. Suspicious messages that are delivered to your personal email or social media accounts can also be reported.)
- Create strong, unique passwords. When it comes to passwords, remember that length trumps complexity. Strong passwords contain at least 12 characters and include a mix of letters, numbers and symbols. Create unique passwords for each online account you manage and use phrases you can easily remember.
- Enable multi-factor authentication when available. Multi-factor authentication (also known as 2-factor authentication) adds an extra layer of security to your online accounts. These extra security steps can include facial recognition, fingerprint access, or one-time codes sent to your email or phone.
- Update software regularly. Software and internet-connected devices, including personal computers, smartphones and tablets, should always be current on updates to reduce the risk of infection from ransomware and malware. When possible, configure devices to automatically update or notify you when an update is available.

Let’s all do our part to stay cyber smart and create a safer digital world for all. Visit staysafeonline.org to learn about additional cybersecurity tips.

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