

PowerLines

January 2022

Hopeful for a “normal” 2022

Let us all welcome 2022 with the hope and optimism that comes with the start of a new calendar year. The past nearly two years have been a challenge for all of us due to the pandemic. Unfortunately, COVID-19 appears to have staying power and will likely impact us for at least a portion of the new year. Your EIEC employees and directors are striving to continue to provide safe and reliable service despite the unusual circumstances.

2021 Review

Energy (kWh) sales will end the year slightly below budget. EIEC did well when considering our four core corporate goal areas.

- We achieved our member satisfaction target score of 87 (out of 100)

- EIEC met the safety goal of zero lost time incidents

- We were just short of our annual reliability goal due to two icing events in the first quarter

- EIEC met all financial goals

Money Back

Relative to financials, the Board of Directors has approved a return of approximately \$1 million of additional net operating margins to members with this billing cycle (December kWh usage). You can find your credit amount on the “2021” Margin Rebate line on your bill included with this mailing.

The balance of the 2021 operating margins will be allocated as capital credits

to be returned to members at a future date. Speaking of capital credits, during 2021 your directors voted to return approximately \$1.1 million of member patronage capital. If you received service during 1996, 1997, and 1998, you likely already received these checks within the past month or so.

District Elections

In 2022, three of our director districts (1/3 of the total) will be up for election during the annual meeting process. These districts include the far northern and southern portions of our territory. More information will be provided in future issues, on our website, and in other social media formats. If you would like more information about the election process, please contact us.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Opportunity for our Youth

After a two-year hiatus, the national cooperative Youth to Washington event plans to return this year! More information is available on page 5 and the application can be found at www.eiec.coop. This can be a life changing experience for those fortunate enough to be selected to participate.

On behalf of your cooperative employees and directors, we thank you, and wish you all a happy, safe, and successful 2022!

Sincerely,

Bob Hunzinger

In this issue:

- Know the hazards of space heaters
- Space heater recommendations
- Little changes equal big savings
- 2022 Youth to Washington
- 2021 Margin Rebate



- View your bill
- Make a payment
- Compare usage by month
- Review known issues
- Report an outage
- Update account information

SmartHub is available online or through an application on your cell phone. Sign up today!

What is the Margin Rebate line item on my bill?

Eastern Illini's Board of Directors is pleased to return \$1 million in 2021's net operating margins to members in the form of a rebate. You will find the rebate as a line item on your bill. Best wishes for a happy and prosperous new year!

Your Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative

Know the hazards of space heaters

Small space heaters are meant to do exactly as their name says: heat a small space. But unfortunately, many people use portable space heaters to heat their entire home, which can really take a toll on energy bills. Whether you should use space heaters really depends on your home's efficiency and energy needs.

If you're using a space heater to compensate for problems in your home, like inadequate insulation, drafty windows, and exterior doors, or an inefficient heating system, space heaters are not a practical solution. Your best bet is to improve the overall efficiency of your home.

If you're on a tight budget, caulking and weather stripping around windows and exterior doors is a low-cost, easy way to save energy. Depending on the size of your home, adding insulation can be a great next step. Loose fill insulation typically costs \$1 to \$1.50 per square foot. Taking these proactive energy-saving measures rather than relying on space heaters for supplemental warmth can reduce your heating and cooling bills for years to come.

Perhaps your home is energy efficient but you're cold-natured and want a specific room to be cozier than the rest. In this case, a space heater may work for your needs. A good comparison is ceiling fans. Ceiling fans in the summer are used to cool people, not rooms. A space heater can be used in a similar way during winter months. Only use a space heater in small spaces that you're occupying and, if possible, try to shut off other rooms to contain the warmth provided by the space heater. If you decide to use a space heater to heat a small area in your home, make sure the heater is properly sized for the space; most heaters come with sizing recommendations for your space.

A word about safety: the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates

more than 25,000 residential fires are associated with the use of space heaters every year, resulting in more than 300 deaths. If you must use a space heater, purchase a newer model that includes the most current safety features and make sure it carries the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) label. Choose a thermostatically controlled heater to avoid energy waste and overheating. Place the heater on a level surface away from foot traffic when in use. Always keep children and pets away from space heaters.

Consider alternative ways to stay warm like extra layers of clothing or UL-approved electric blankets. If you have hardwood or tile floors, lay down area rugs to provide additional insulation (and appeal!) and maintain warmth.

Before you purchase an electric heater, determine the square footage of the space you want to warm and whether you have a safe spot to place it. Inefficient or excessively large options will only run up your electric bill without much benefit to you or your family.

Types of space heaters include:

Metal coil and fan: Perhaps the most common and affordable type of space heater, this type uses electricity to heat a metal coil that is safely tucked inside. The fan(s) suck cold air from the room, heat it, and redistribute it at a higher temperature.

Ceramic radiant: Like the metal coil variety, these space heaters also include ceramic plates inside. They absorb and store heat, so it radiates outward, even after you turn the heater off. Quick and long-lasting radiant heat makes these some of the most efficient space heaters.

Infrared: These larger and more expensive space heaters use electromagnetic waves to heat objects in the room. In other words, your furniture, walls and you are heated up safely, so the increased temperature radiates out from everything.

Radiator-style oil: If you like the appearance of old-fashioned radiators or need something larger without a fan, consider an oil-filled space heater. An upside is that these radiate a lot of heat after they are turned off. The downside is that the unit can get quite hot and increase the risk of burns.

Dispose of old space heaters with exposed coils, those that are dangerous to use (e.g., worn or cracked cords) or those that operate inefficiently. Many that are available today have safety features that older versions do not, such as timers, auto shut-off and tip-over prevention.

No matter what type of heater you choose, there are safety precautions you should follow. These will help prevent house fires, property damage and injury.

- Use a space heater with a minimum of three feet of clearance on all sides.
- Do not put a heater in a doorway or high-traffic area in the home.
- Place the heater on a flat surface.
- Purchase a space heater with built-in safety features.
- Do not plug a space heater in using an extension cord.
- Never leave a space heater on when you leave your home. Unplug your space heater when it is not in use.
- Keep pets and small children away from space heaters.

We know when it's cold outside, many use space heaters to keep warm. Always use safety precautions around space heaters. Keep in mind that space heaters may increase your monthly energy bills.

SAFETY TIPS WHEN USING ELECTRIC SPACE HEATERS

Space heater recommendations

1 PLUG DIRECTLY INTO OUTLET

Plug the space heater directly into a wall outlet. Never use an extension cord or power strip. Not only is it a tripping hazard, it is an extreme fire hazard due to the high current.

2 LEVEL SURFACE

Place the space heater on a hard, flat & level surface. Be sure to avoid high traffic areas. Try to buy a heater with an automatic shut off in case it tips over.

3 KEEP 3FT DISTANCE

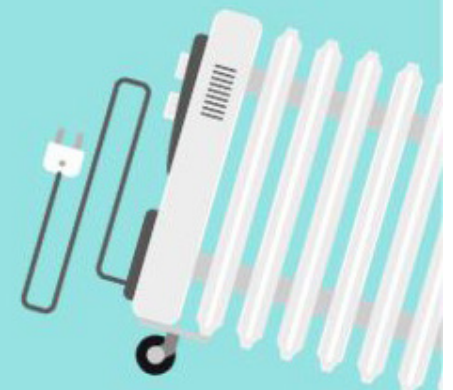
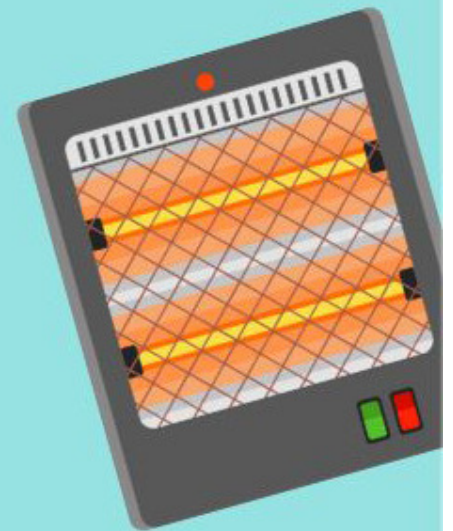
Keep all flammable objects such as papers, blankets, curtains, beds, toys, furniture, and rugs at least 3 feet away.

4 TURN IT OFF

Do not leave your space heater unattended. Never use space heaters while sleeping. When leaving a room always turn off the appliance.

5 INSPECT CORDS

Check the cord before each use to ensure it is plugged securely into the wall outlet and is not frayed, pinched or damaged in any way. Do not run the cord under a rug. Also, check for a UL certification label to ensure it adheres to current safety standards.



TEN WAYS TO START OFF 2022 SAVING ENERGY AND MONEY

Little changes can add up to big savings

1. Replace any light bulb, especially ones that burn more than one hour per day, with a light emitting diode (LED) bulb.
2. Seal from the inside. Air sealing is an inexpensive way to lower energy costs and improve comfort. Seal gaps and holes in walls, floors, and ceilings with caulk or foam sealant. Look for cracks around windows and where wires and pipes pass through.
3. Plug electronic devices such as cable boxes, printers, and TVs into power strips to turn off during vacations or long periods without use. Smart power strips will save you money.
4. Close shades and drapes during the day to help keep your home cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.
5. Change your central HVAC system filter when dirty. Dirty filters can impact your home comfort and increase your electricity bill.
6. A one degree increase in heating set point or reduction in cooling set point can increase energy use by 3 – 5%.
7. Have your duct work checked for leaks. Leaks at the return, air handler and supply can be a major source of high bills. If you own a mobile home, check at the grill, cross over duct, and down flow air handler, for leaks.
8. Set both the upper and lower water heater thermostats to 120 F.
9. An electric space heater can cost more than \$100 per month to operate. Minimize their use. Turn space heaters off when leaving the room.
10. Ensure refrigerator door seals are tight. Eliminate unnecessary refrigerators and other appliances that aren't fully utilized.

As we welcome in the new year, what New Year's resolutions are you planning to make? Surely there are many on your list, whether it includes getting healthier, saving money, saving time—or bigger endeavors, like finally adding that room on to your house or upgrading your windows or adding insulation to that drafty attic space.

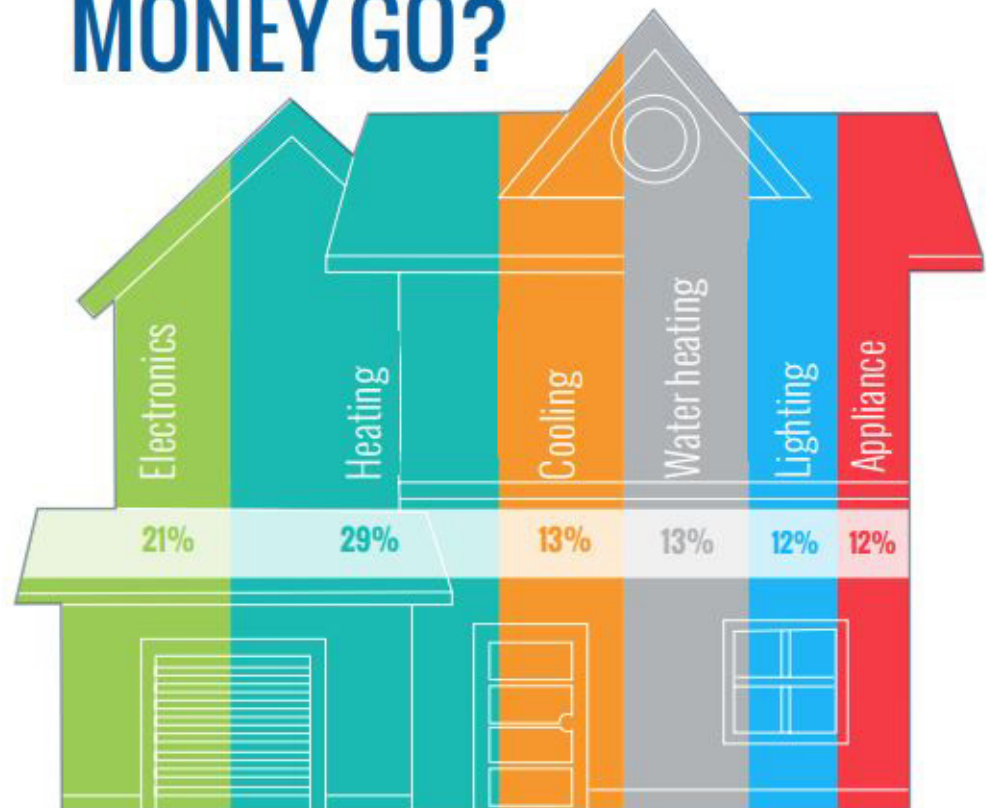
Even small changes can save you money on your electric bill. According to DOE, switching to Energy Star light bulbs can save you \$45 per year. You may want to consider purchasing an advanced power

strip to control power used by idle appliances. This small change can save you as much as \$100 per year.

Regardless of the resolutions on your radar, saving energy is one that everyone can take part in for 2022.

Anyone can resolve to save energy in even the smallest of ways—and every little bit helps. So, we hope you will consider ways to save energy and money in the coming year. Happy New Year and happy energy savings!

WHERE DOES MY MONEY GO?



Electronics include: telephone and external power adapters, consumer electronics (computer, TVs and DVD player), home office equipment, and small appliances

Appliances include: refrigerator, dishwasher, clothes washer and dryer

Source: Typical House Factoid Memo. Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. April 2013.

Annual Energy Bill for a typical single family home is \$2,060

ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORES AND JUNIORS
See democracy in action in D.C.



Win a trip to Washington D.C.!

Youth Day 2022

March 29, 2022
Springfield, Illinois

Get a firsthand look at democracy in action! Meet your elected representatives during the Illinois Electric and Telephone Cooperatives Youth Day at the State Capitol. You may even win a trip to Washington, D.C.!



Youth Tour 2022

June 17-24, 2022
Washington, D.C.

The "Youth to Washington" tour gives a few lucky students the chance to see the White House and chat with key members of Congress. Spend a week this summer in our nation's capital visiting historic sites, including the Supreme Court!

EASTERN ILLINI ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
APPLY AT: <https://www.eiec.org/youth-washington-program>

2021 MARGIN REBATE



Your Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative board of directors is pleased to return over **\$1 million of 2021's operating margins** to members in the form of a rebate on this month's bill.

The credit is based on your 11-month average electric use from January 2021 through November 2021, and is the result of lower operating costs during the year. You will find your credit amount as a line item on your bill and it will be listed as **MARGIN REBATE**. This is a tangible benefit of being a member of our cooperative!



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