

Since 1940

# WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* February 2025 NEWS

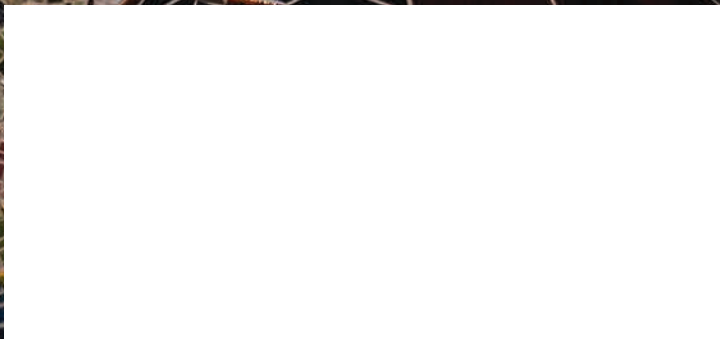
TAYLOR ELECTRIC  
*Cooperative*  
Your Touchstone Energy Partner

MILTON HOUSE MUSEUM  
BRINGS UNDERGROUND  
RAILROAD TO LIFE

**POSTCARD CALL TO ACTION INSIDE**

**BILLION DOLLAR BILL**

**KIDS AND CRITTERS**







# UNDERSTANDING FACTORS THAT IMPACT YOUR ENERGY BILLS

Kenneth Ceaglske, President/CEO

February brings some of the coldest weather of the year, and as our home heating systems work harder and longer to keep us warm, we typically see higher energy bills. There are a few key factors that affect electricity prices, as well as a few ways you can make a meaningful impact on home energy savings.

When you receive your monthly bill from Taylor Electric, you're provided with a summary of how much electricity you used during the billing cycle through SmartHub. You can even see how electricity use may have spiked on days when you used more electricity, such as a particularly chilly day or when relatives were staying with you.

But you might be surprised to learn that beyond your monthly energy consumption, there are external factors that can impact the cost of electricity.

## Fuel Prices

Taylor Electric purchases electricity from our power generation partner, Dairyland Power Cooperative, at a wholesale cost, then we deliver that power to our local communities. The cost of generating and transmitting electricity from our generation partner accounts for a significant portion of the cost to provide electric service to local homes and businesses—and the cost of fuels that are used to generate that electricity, such as natural gas and coal, fluctuate based on supply and demand. While these fluctuations can impact the cost of electricity, we work closely with Dairyland Power to plan ahead and help stabilize electricity prices for our members.

## Extreme Weather

While we can't control the weather, we can review weather patterns and forecasts to prepare for times of extreme cold or heat, when we know the demand for electricity will

increase. But when temperatures become extremely cold and the demand for electricity spikes, the price of electricity can also increase.

## Infrastructure and Equipment

To cover the costs associated with providing electricity to your home or business, Taylor Electric members pay a monthly service charge. This flat monthly fee ensures the cost of equipment, materials, labor and daily operations are covered for all members in Taylor's service territory. To ensure the reliable service you expect and deserve, we must maintain the local grid, including power lines, substations and other essential equipment.

## Energy Policy and Regulations

Federal energy policies and regulations can have a profound impact on electricity costs. As energy generation shifts to the use of more renewable sources and stricter regulations for traditional, always-available fuel sources, such as natural gas and coal plants, costly upgrades and technologies must be constructed and deployed. These additional costs are ultimately passed to consumers.

U.S. power consumption is expected to double by 2050. Across the country, electric cooperatives are working with members of Congress to advocate for smart energy policies that reliably power our local communities.

## You Have Control

While many of these external factors that impact electricity costs are out of our control, we all have the power to manage our energy use at home. The most effective way to lower use is thermostat management. Since heating and cooling account for a major portion of home energy use, adjusting

the thermostat to the lowest comfortable setting can help you save energy and money. Remember to service your heating and cooling system annually and replace dirty filters as needed.

You can also reduce energy use by taking advantage of off-peak periods, when the demand for electricity is lower. Reserve energy-intensive chores for off-peak times, such as early in the morning or later in the evening, to save energy. Be sure to seal air leaks around windows, doors and other areas where gaps are possible. This will help your heating and cooling system work less and improve the overall comfort of your home.

Taylor Electric is your local energy partner, and we're here to help. As always, we will continue working diligently to provide you with reliable power at an affordable cost.

### EFFECTIVE WAYS To Lower Home Energy Use

Outside factors, such as fuel and equipment costs and extreme weather, can impact electricity prices. But you have the power to control home energy consumption by taking proactive steps to reduce energy use.



#### Thermostat Management

Heating/cooling account for a big portion of home energy consumption. During winter months, the Dept. of Energy recommends 68 degrees or lower.



#### Utilize Off-Peak Energy Times

Plan energy-intensive chores and tasks during off-peak energy hours. Off-peak times are early in the morning or late evenings.



#### Seal Your Home

Ensure your home has sufficient insulation levels and seal air leaks around windows and doors with caulk and weatherstripping.



#### Maintain Equipment

Maintain your heating and cooling system by regularly replacing dirty filters and scheduling annual inspections for maintenance and necessary repairs.

# WRAPPED IN SAVINGS



**E**nsuring your home is properly insulated can improve energy efficiency and make your home more comfortable. Insulation acts like a cozy coat that reduces heat loss during winter months and a protective layer that reduces heat gain during summer months.

Many older homes have less insulation than newer homes, but even newer homes can benefit from additional insulation. While it's not the least expensive efficiency improvement, adding insulation and air sealing your home can provide the biggest bang for your buck in energy savings and overall comfort.

The most common areas to insulate are attics, ceilings, crawlspaces or unconditioned basements, exterior and interior walls, floors, and ductwork located in unconditioned spaces.

The amount and effectiveness rating of insulation required for each area varies by climate, but many websites like The Department of Energy provides easy-to-follow

recommendations. Visit [energy.gov/insulation](http://energy.gov/insulation) to learn about recommended R-values for specific areas of the home based on climate zones.

It's important to understand how insulation effectiveness is measured. Insulation is rated in R-value, which measures the material's resistance to conductive heat flow. The higher the R-value, the greater the insulating effectiveness. The R-value you'll need depends on factors like climate, type of heating and cooling system and which area of the home you plan to insulate.

Insulation is offered in a wide range of materials from bulky fiberglass rolls to cellulose materials made from recycled paper products. If you're considering installing additional insulation, talk to an expert who can offer guidance on the right materials for your budget, climate and comfort needs.

Investing in proper insulation for your home not only enhances comfort but also reduces energy consumption.

## TAYLOR ELECTRIC NOW ACCEPTS DISCOVER CARD

We're excited to announce that Taylor Electric now accepts Discover, in addition to Mastercard and Visa, for your convenience. Pay your bill with ease and enjoy more payment options!











# Snowmageddon, Snowpocalypse, SnOMG!

Whether it's a big snow storm or an everyday snowfall – there's a risk of death by shoveling. Sudden exertion after being sedentary for several months can put a big strain on the heart. Pushing a heavy snow blower can also cause injury.

**Shoveling heavy, wet snow can cause back injuries and heart attacks. So don't push yourself!**

-  Dress warmly, covering your head, fingers and toes.
-  Take it slow and stretch before you begin.
-  Stay hydrated and don't shovel after eating or while smoking.
-  Shovel only fresh, powdery snow; it's lighter.

-  Push small amounts of snow rather than lifting.
-  Take frequent breaks and do not work to the point of exhaustion.

Know the signs of a heart attack, including chest discomfort, an uncomfortable feeling of fullness and shortness of breath. Stop immediately and call 911 if you're experiencing symptoms; every minute counts.



## We Our Members



*We love serving our members!*

They are at the foundation of everything we do and the heart of the communities we serve.

*Happy Valentine's Day*

## WHAT'S IT COST?

These costs can be used as a general guide. Specific products usage/costs may vary.



### ELECTRIC FIREPLACE

4 hours per day=\$.72  
\$21.60 per month



### 900-WATT HEAT TAPE

24 hours per day=\$2.59  
\$77.70 per month



### ELECTRIC BLANKET

8 hours per day=\$.19  
\$5.70 per month



### 1500-WATT SPACE HEATER

8 hours per day=\$1.44  
\$43.20 per month



# CHRISTMAS COLORING CONTEST WINNERS



**Age group 1-3**  
Pearl Blumenshine



**Age group 4-6**  
Margaret Rymer



**Age group 7-9**  
Keilah Bowser



**Age group 10-12**  
Liam Schimon

Winners received a \$25 Chamber gift certificate. Each child received a gift for entering.  
Thanks to all of our participants!

## LOAD CONTROL RECEIVERS TO BE CHANGED OUT THIS YEAR

Taylor Electric has participated in our power supplier's, Dairyland Power Cooperative, load control program for approximately 40 years. Just under 2,000 receivers are installed on our system and control items like water heaters and electric heat. By doing so, our members receive cheaper rates for their electric heat usage and in turn, their heat is controlled during peak periods. Members utilizing the receivers for water heaters are controlled from time to time, usually early morning and early evening, for around 4-hour periods and receive a \$4.00/month credit on their electric bills.

This summer and fall, Taylor Electric Cooperative will begin a mass change out of the receivers used to implement the controls. The current receivers are old enough that replacement parts are getting harder to find. This is the reason for the change. We will contact only the members who participate in the load control program to set up an appointment to make that change out. Watch for emails and letters notifying you when we plan to be in your area.

This will be a very long process and will take a few years to complete.

If you have any questions, please contact us at 715-678-2411 or if you wish to no longer participate in the program, you can contact us now to remove the receiver.



**Kenneth Ceaglske, President/CEO**

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**Lainie Kellnhofer, Editor**

**TAYLOR ELECTRIC**  
*Cooperative*



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