



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

September 2011

# MIDSTATE Connection

A Monthly Publication for Midstate Electric Members

*One call does it all.*

541-536-2126 • 800-722-7219

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## BPA Announces Power Rate Increase

On July 26, the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) announced a 7.8% average wholesale power rate increase to become effective on October 1, 2011. BPA provides 100% of Midstate Electric's wholesale power. The cost of power from BPA is by far the largest single cost the cooperative incurs and accounts for over half of the amount the members pay on their monthly electric bill.

The reasons BPA cites to justify its wholesale power increase include:

- Upgrades and major maintenance to the aging federal hydroelectric system (31 dams) in the Columbia and Snake River basins.
- Fuel purchases and repairs at Columbia Generating Station, the Northwest's only operating nuclear power plant.
- Dam improvements and habitat restoration to protect Northwest salmon and steelhead—as outlined in federal court mandates and agreements.

How the wholesale rate increase from BPA relates to the final retail rate to the members of Midstate Electric, is being evaluated. As part of the process, the Board of Directors has begun a rate study which looks at future cost of service, various rate designs and rates.

- Cost of service refers to actual costs to serve the different rate classes: Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Irrigation and Street Lighting.
- Rate design refers to how those costs are allocated across the rate classes and the various aspects such as kilowatt-hour usage, demand usage and system costs (facility charge).
- Rates refer to the actual costs assessed to the members.

Through this process, Midstate Electric's board of directors, management and employees are working together to lessen the impact of the BPA increase. As always, the goal of the cooperative is to provide the members with safe, affordable, reliable power.

## 2012 Will Require Light Bulbs to be More Efficient

For the first time in more than 100 years, the basic incandescent light bulb is getting a facelift. To accommodate new energy efficiency standards set by Congress (which require light bulbs to be more efficient starting in 2012), a new generation of incandescent light bulbs has entered the marketplace. These products boast energy savings of 25 percent and a lifespan up to three times longer than their soon-to-be extinct predecessors.

"Up to 12 percent of a typical monthly electric bill pays for lighting, so removing energy-wasting bulbs from the market will have a big impact on America's energy use," explains Erik Sorenson, a project manager with the National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA), which represents companies that make products used in the generation, transmission, distribution, control, and end use of electricity.

Retooled incandescent bulbs contain a small capsule of halogen gas that surrounds the filament, which increases efficiency and improves longevity, while retaining the shape, color choices, and dimming capabilities that consumers have favored in incandescent bulbs.

Under the federal Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, light bulbs must be 28% more efficient than traditional incandescent bulbs (which use 90% of their energy producing heat) starting in 2012, and by 2020, they must be 70% more efficient. NEMA estimates the new standards could save Americans up to \$15.8 billion per year.

There are other options. The new generation incandescent bulbs will join compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) and light-emitting diodes (LEDs) as energy-efficient lighting options. CFLs and LEDs both are about 75 percent more efficient than traditional incandescents. CFLs last about 10 times longer and LEDs about 25 times longer. But CFLs are the more economical choice at the moment. The cost of LEDs is expected to come down as the technology advances.

Sources: U.S. Department of Energy (EnergySavers.gov), National Electrical Manufacturers Association



## What Are My Lighting Options?

Starting in 2012, lightbulbs must be more energy efficient.

The three most common bulb options consumers will find on store shelves are:



**Halogen incandescents**  
Energy Savings:\* 25 percent  
Lifespan:\* Three times longer  
Annual Energy Cost: \$3.50



**Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs)**  
Energy Savings:\* 75 percent  
Lifespan:\* 10 times longer  
Annual Energy Cost: \$1.20



**Light-emitting diodes (LEDs)**  
Energy Savings:\* 75-80 percent  
Lifespan:\* 25 times longer  
Annual Energy Cost: \$1

\* As compared to traditional incandescent bulbs

Learn more at  
[energysavers.gov/lighting](http://energysavers.gov/lighting)

## Conservation Program Measures & Rebates Will Change 10/01/11

Current rebates are in effect for the following conservation measures through September. All measures must be installed and the paperwork submitted to the Marketing Department by September 30, 2011 to receive the rebate.

- Air Source Heat Pump Rebate
- Geothermal Heat Pump Rebate
- Ductless Heat Pump Rebate
- Duct Sealing Rebate
- Weatherization Rebate
- Water Heater Rebate
- ENERGY STAR® Clothes Washer Rebate
- ENERGY STAR® Refrigerator Rebate
- ENERGY STAR® Manufactured Home Rebate



Please Note:

- Rebates are only available for specific periods
- Rebate amounts are determined per qualification specifications

## MyUsage.com Powers Awareness

*MyUsage.com is comprised of two very different program options, PowerPay and PowerView.*

### WHAT IS PowerPay?

PowerPay allows you to prepay for your electricity before you use it. PowerPay provides an alternative to traditional monthly billing by allowing you to decide when you want to deposit funds into your account. The beauty of PowerPay is that you can "fill up" your electric account just like you fill up your gas tank in your car - 1 gallon at a time or with a full tank.



### PAY AS YOU GO

Your prepaid balance is adjusted based on your daily energy use. When your balance gets low, you add money as it fits your budget. Participants may pay as much or as often as they wish as long as the account retains a positive balance. At a negative balance, the power will automatically turn off. When a payment is made, power will be reconnected automatically.

### HOW PowerPay WORKS

For as little as \$65, you can open a PowerPay account.\* New and existing members may participate in our program. A security deposit is not required for new members. Existing member's deposits are applied as a credit when opening a PowerPay account. Once a PowerPay account has been activated, participants elect to be notified of low balances, daily balance, pending disconnect, disconnection and reconnection via phone, email and/or text messaging.

*\* Other charges may be applicable.*

# MyUsage.com

### WHAT IS PowerView?

PowerView is an energy-awareness/monitoring service offered by Midstate Electric for members who wish to remain on traditional monthly billing but who want to take a more active role in monitoring electric use.

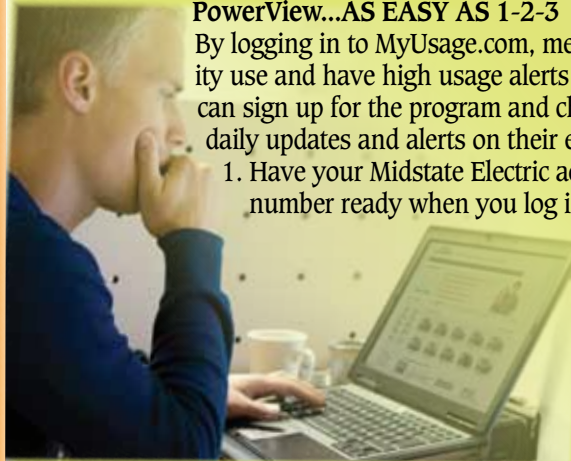
### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PowerView?

Statistics show that those who monitor or track their energy use on a regular basis, use less energy. By knowing how much energy is used every day, members are empowered to adjust their lifestyle resulting in energy savings of 10-15%.

### PowerView...AS EASY AS 1-2-3

By logging in to MyUsage.com, members can monitor daily electricity use and have high usage alerts sent via email. PowerView users can sign up for the program and choose how and when to receive daily updates and alerts on their electric account in 3 easy steps:

1. Have your Midstate Electric account number and meter number ready when you log into MyUsage.com.
2. Click to setup an account and type in your email address and select a password.
3. Click on Usage Monitor account and log on to the website to check your daily electricity use.



## Touchstone Energy® Co-op Connections® Update



The Co-op Connections Card is a member benefit that provides valuable local and national discounts, coupons and pharmacy discounts. The most used benefit of the card, the pharmacy discount has saved members \$399,069 since June 2009.

Visit [www.co-opconnections.com](http://www.co-opconnections.com) for other discounts available. If you need a Co-op Connections Card, call Marketing at 541-536-2126.

## Paperless Billing - No More Bill Stubs, Envelopes, Stamps or Checks

Life is a little easier and greener with paperless billing. With this online resource, you can manage your account at your convenience, anytime, anywhere!

*Please Note: Paperless Billing is not available to Invoice/Summary Billing Customers at this time.*



To sign up:

- Go to [www.midstateelectric.coop](http://www.midstateelectric.coop)
- Click on Pay Your Bill
- Enter Your E-mail Address
- Enter Your Password
- Click on Stop/Start Print Bill
- A Confirmation of Sign Up Will be E-mailed to You