

## Message from Advise Guy Aaron Jackson



The summer heat is upon us. Through June and July we've seen several days where the heat index has been well over 100 degrees. Sustained temperatures at those levels strain the grid due to the high demand for electricity and they also strain our wallets, through higher electric bills.

There are two ways to lessen the impact the summer heat has on your electric bill: efficiency measures and billing/rate programs. Today I want to give you an overview of both.

### Basic Energy Efficiency & Best Practices

The surest way to lower your energy cost this time of year is through basic efficiency measures you can implement at very little cost to you.

First, the thermostat setting is the primary factor in how long your AC unit has to run. Leave it set in the area of 78 degrees for maximum efficiency.

To promote air flow, open all interior doors inside the home and all vents in all rooms; make sure your HVAC return filters are clean.

Closing shutters, blinds, and curtains is a great way to limit the solar heat gain your home absorbs during the day, making it much easier for the AC system to maintain your thermostat setting. It's also a good idea to check all windows to ensure that they are fully and tightly closed.

Use fans to move air in occupied rooms to make it more comfortable. Remember; fans cool people, not rooms, so be sure to turn off fans when you leave the room.

### Billing Programs

South River EMC offers two programs that can be very helpful during the peak summer and winter months: Budget Billing and Time-of-Use rate (Switch to Save).

With Budget Billing the member is billed on a rolling 13-month average. This means that your bill is more predictable and eliminates abrupt fluctuations. This program takes the dollar amount of the current bill, as well as the previous 12, and uses it to compute an average bill each month. The bill varies a little from month to month, but the amount should remain nearly the same year-round. This program helps eliminate the high peaks in the bill typically seen in the extreme summer and winter months. Members who have been with the cooperative at least 12 months are eligible for this program.

Our time-of-use rate encourages the member to use electricity outside of the peak use times. During the summer, the peak time is 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. and, during those four hours, the electricity cost rises drastically in order to discourage energy use. But, outside of these four hours, the cost per kilowatt hour drops to around half price when compared to the residential rate. This is a great way to save money if the ability to curtail energy use during certain times of day is possible (i.e. limiting AC runtime).

You can get more information about energy efficiency, Budget Billing, and the time-of-use rate (Switch and Save) by visiting our website at [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or by contacting the Advise Guys at [adviseguys@sremc.com](mailto:adviseguys@sremc.com)



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