

Hot weather can hike bills

From the cover

time of year, there are other factors than can boost energy usage. A pool pump operating 10 to 12 hours a day also adds to the bill.

Sherman Phillips, manager of Clay Electric's Energy Services Division, offers the following tips to help you get the most benefit from your energy dollars.

1) Have your HVAC unit serviced annually. "A clean system will have a lower operating cost than a dirty system," Phillips said. "For example, a dirty coil restricts airflow and causes the unit to run longer. A clean unit provides better dehumidification."

1) A unit with the proper amount of Freon also operates more efficiently.

2) Change or clean the air filter monthly or as often as needed based on the filter media type.

3) Keep the thermostat set on 78 degrees or higher for optimum operating cost.

4) Operate ceiling fans only when a room is occupied.

5) Use a "solar" clothes line instead of the clothes dryer for drying clothes.

6) It might be time to upgrade that older refrigerator.

"Most refrigerators manufactured prior to 1995 use nearly twice as much electricity as models manufactured today," Phillips said. He added, "Eliminate that refrigerator in the garage if possible."

If you suspect you might have a serious energy-wasting problem, you might want to consider having the co-op perform an energy survey.

Clay Electric also has an Energy Smart Rebate Program and Energy Efficiency Loans to help members reduce their energy usage.

More information about these programs, and more tips on lowering electricity usage during the summer, is available in the Member Services area of clayelectric.com.

Clay makes it easy to choose your own method of payment!

You have a variety of ways to make your electric bill payment. Although you can always pay your bill by mail or by visiting one of the co-op's district offices, there are several other convenient options as well.

Electronic Payments

You can make an electronic payment on the co-op's website or by calling your local district office. If you prefer to handle the transaction over the phone, call your district office and use the interactive voice answering system. You do not have to talk with a customer service representative to make an electronic payment. You will need your Clay Electric customer number, your bank account number and the routing number of your bank.

Credit/Debit Card Payments

All debit and credit card payments are processed through Western Union SpeedPay, an independent service provider. A processing fee of \$3.65 will be charged by Western Union SpeedPay. Clay Electric does not receive any portion of this fee. To make a credit or debit card payment, call Western Union SpeedPay at 1-888-822-0545 or visit the Co-op website to pay online.

Automatic Deduction from your Account

If you'd like your payment to be automatically deducted monthly on your due date by bank draft from your checking or savings account, the Automatic Monthly Payment Plan should be your choice. You can sign up online or call/drop by your local district office.

Payment stations in the community

Fidelity Express provides payment stations for paying your electric bill at various businesses, such as convenience stores, in the co-op's service area. Fidelity Express charges \$1.50 for each transaction. A list of payment locations is available at your local district office and online.

The Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc. _____

Power Line

September 2011

Hot weather often means higher bills

Wow, it has been a hot summer and we still have weeks to go before cooler fall temperatures take over!

During August, most afternoons have hovered between 91 and 96 degrees, with a heat index of over 100. These toasty temperatures often mean higher electricity bills.

Last month there were 20 days when the temperature was above 93 degrees and more than a dozen days when it was above 95 degrees. Also, there were many nights when the temperature stayed higher well into the evening hours. This means that unlike nights when the temperature drops lower, your air conditioner is likely going to kick on and run in order to cool the home even though the sun is down.

Increased air conditioning usage and higher electricity bills are a direct result of hot weather. As outdoor temperatures climb, so does the amount of time your home's air conditioning system operates in order to provide the desired level of comfort inside your home. When the weather is really hot, AC systems seem like they're running almost continuously.

While air conditioning is often a main reason for a higher-than-normal electric bill this

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A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

MEMBER SERVICES

ONLINE ACCOUNT INFORMATION

Visit the Clay Electric website (clayelectric.com) and access your account information:

- View your bill statement
- Make a one-time payment online
- View current charges
- View account balance
- View billing history
- View estimated meter reading dates
- Request emailed bill statements (Clay eBill)

PROJECT SHARE - Help others by designating a tax-deductible amount to be added to your electric bill or make a one-time donation.

REMOTE METER READING (RMR) - Enables a co-op meter reader to obtain the meter reading without entering the homeowner's property. The monthly charge is \$3.95.

ENERGY SMART REBATE PROGRAM - Offers rebates for members who install additional insulation in their homes, or who install a high efficiency heat pump or solar water heating system.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY LOANS - Available for the purpose of installing certain energy efficiency measures, including metal roofing and solar water heaters.

SURGEBLASTER - High quality surge protection equipment at a low monthly lease.

LONG DISTANCE PHONE SERVICE - Clay has contracted with TransWorld Network Corp. (TWN) to offer members competitively priced long distance phone service. Call (877) 877-CLAY (2529) for more information.

Power Line is an informational publication of Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc. It is distributed monthly with members' billing statements. If you have questions or comments about the Power Line publication, contact Editor Kathy Richardson at P. O. Box 308, Keystone Heights, FL 32656; e-mail: KRichardson@clayelectric.com.

Clay Electric also publishes the Kilowatt six times a year (January, March, May, July, September and November). The Kilowatt is the official voice of Clay Electric and has been published continuously since 1948 as an informational and educational service for co-op members.

Clay Electric's website (<http://www.clayelectric.com>) offers online services such as payments, and information about the co-op's programs and services. Members can also write their own ads online to be published on the website's Trading Post. To enter your ad on the Trading Post, you must use your Clay Electric customer number which is printed on your electric bill statement.

Clay Electric's Board of Trustees will meet on September 22 and October 27 beginning at 12:30 p.m. in Keystone Heights.

Power generation fuel mix is diversified with coal, natural gas and renewables

Seminole Electric Cooperative, which provides wholesale power to Clay Electric and nine other electric co-ops in Florida, gets 6 percent of its electricity from renewable resources. In fact, Seminole's renewable portfolio is the largest in the state.

The power generation mix in peninsular Florida is at 56 percent natural gas, 22 percent coal, 12 percent nuclear, 1 percent oil, 1 percent renewables, 7 percent purchased power from varied sources and 1 percent from non-utility generators, according to the Florida Reliability Coordinating Council.

Seminole's preliminary 2012 budget sets its fuel mix at 57 percent coal, 37 percent natural gas, 6 percent renewable energy and less than 1 percent oil.

Seminole has shown a commitment to growing its renewables portfolio in a cost-effective way that will help hold the line on member costs.

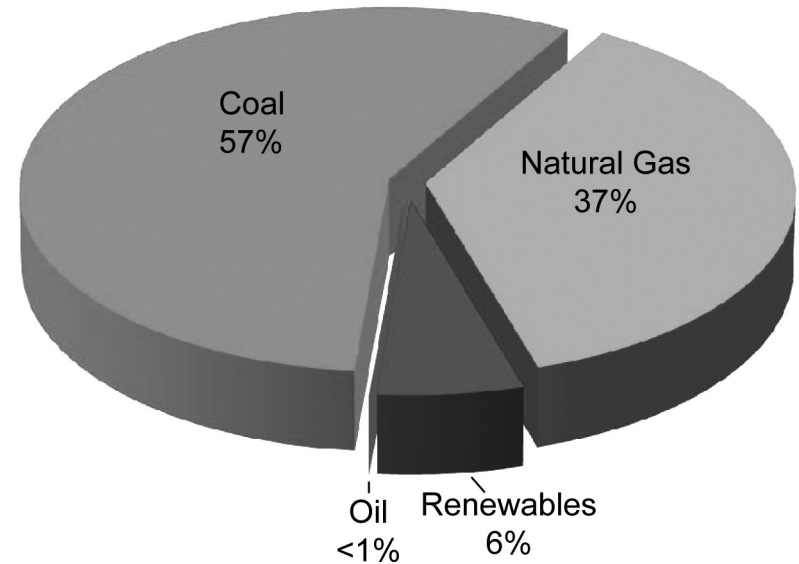
Seminole's renewable resources include biomass and waste-to-energy plants and landfill gas facilities (among the most reliable forms of renewable energy). Renewables like wind and sun are often thought of as "free" fuels, but they are intermittent because the sun doesn't always shine and the wind can come and go.

The Florida Solar Energy Center says solar panels can be counted on to produce energy only 17 percent of the time. In contrast, most of the power plants that Seminole uses to meet Clay's needs can produce power about 90 percent of the time, and their fuels like coal can be stockpiled or stored at plant sites.

Nationally, coal-based generation is at a 30-year low, largely because natural gas prices are comparatively low, according to a report from the Energy Information Administration.

The agency said the U.S. electric power sector generated about 440 terawatt-hours using coal during the first quarter of 2011. That's 46 percent of all electric power generation, down from 52 percent in 2008.

The drop was acute in the Northeast, where coal-based generation dropped from about 33 percent to less than 25 percent between 2008 and 2011.



This pie chart shows Seminole's preliminary fuel generation mix for 2012. Seminole Electric Co-op provides wholesale power to Clay Electric and nine other co-ops in Florida.