

Advance Pay

energy use guide



 **Coastal Electric Cooperative**
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 



“There’s no way my house used that much electricity!”

We hear you, and we’re here to help! The more you know about where your electricity dollars are going, the better you can manage your usage and save money.

Let’s start with your total cost. The amount deducted from your prepaid account each morning is how much electricity you actually used during the previous day (measured by your meter), plus taxes and any miscellaneous charges that apply (such as outdoor lighting and the facilities charge). These charges combined average about 15 cents per kilowatt-hour.

Now, let’s find out how the electricity you use adds up.

**In this brochure, “per hour” means per hour of continuous running.*





heaters and ac

The largest single energy user in most Coastal Georgia homes is space heating and cooling. In fact, heating and cooling typically accounts for almost half of each member's total power bill.

For heating, we recommend a thermostat setting of 68 degrees or lower to reduce your usage – and your bill.

The 5-kilowatt electric resistance heaters, or heat strips, in electric furnaces use about 65 cents of electricity per hour*. That can really add up during a cold snap! And, the higher the temperature is set on the unit, the more it runs.

Electric heat pumps typically cost around 45 cents per hour*. When outside temperatures dip to around freezing, or when the thermostat is suddenly raised more than 2 degrees, the strip heat may engage, raising the heat pump's cost to operate. A typical high-efficiency heat pump with auxiliary electric heaters could cost \$1.10 per hour*. Larger strip heat configurations will add to that number.

Heat pumps operate much more efficiently than electric furnaces, so they save the owner money in the long run.



Though electric space heaters come in a variety of sizes and styles, they are generally not designed to act as the sole heat provider for your home. Most of these portable heaters operate at 1,500 watts. That equates to 1.5 kilowatt-hours of use per heater, or around 20 cents per hour*. Operating several space heaters in your home during cold weather can make energy dollars disappear quickly.

On average, the cost to operate your air conditioner is about 45 cents per hour*, depending on the size of the unit.

On hot days, the higher you set your thermostat, the less your system runs, and the more money you save. We recommend setting it no lower than 78 degrees. Using ceiling fans or box fans can allow you to save money without sacrificing comfort.

It is vital that you regularly replace your air conditioner's filter. Clogged filters reduce the system's ability to cool your home, and over time, it may lead to damage and costly repairs.

We recommend having the HVAC system inspected and maintained no less than once per year.

water heating

About 20 percent of the electricity you use runs your water heater.

Most water heater tanks made within the last 15 years use 4,500-watt elements to heat water to the desired temperature. That costs about 58 cents per hour*. It takes about one hour to reheat a tank that has been completely emptied. Because they are poorly insulated, older tanks require more electricity to maintain the desired temperature.

The recommended setting for water heater thermostats is 120 degrees for both elements.

It's important to occasionally check your water heater for visible signs of leaks. Over time, the tank may begin to leak around the water inlet and outlets at the top or sides, or around the base. Mobile home water tanks may be more difficult to check, as most are located in sealed closets and are not easily accessible.

Before making any adjustments or checking water heater settings, switch off the power to it at your breaker panel. If the panel is not properly labeled, or if you are uncomfortable performing the check, we recommend calling on the expertise of a plumber or electrician.





washing and drying

Washing and drying clothes costs about \$1.25 per load, if you use cold water. Using hot water costs slightly more, depending on the size of the load, as well as the equipment. Newer appliances cost less to operate than older, less efficient ones, but the difference is not significant enough to justify buying new units while the older ones still work.

'ghost' appliances

TVs, DVD players, gaming stations, computers and other such appliances cost little to operate unless they are left on continuously.

Even when turned off, many continue to draw a small amount of electricity. We recommend plugging these appliances into a power strip that can be switched off during long periods of no use.





lighting

Lighting accounts for about 10 percent of your power bill. To save money, turn off lights when you're not in the room. Use LEDs, and upgrade fluorescents to newer T8 fixtures and bulbs. To test lighting color differences, check out lighting displays at your local hardware store. We suggest daylight colors for bathrooms and dining areas, and softer colors for dens and bedrooms.

helpful tools

To better track your daily usage, download the Coastal Electric Cooperative app from your app store. It is free for Android and Apple phones. With the app, you can make payments and opt in to receive usage alerts. For assistance setting up your account, contact our helpful member service representatives at (912) 884-3311.

You may also request a free home energy evaluation, which includes a customized efficiency report and suggestions to reduce your electric bill. Contact Jason Smith at (912) 880-2232 to schedule an evaluation.





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