

# Power for your life

## Prepaid electric service

### What is prepaid electric service?

Food. Gasoline. Even cell phone minutes. We pay for those and most other goods and services before we actually use them. Now, pay-as-you-go electric service, also called prepaid electric service, is growing in popularity for electric cooperative members.

Although prepaid programs vary depending on each cooperative's technology and rules, most share certain characteristics. Members pay an amount up front, and the cooperative uses an in-home monitor, phone, text or e-mail message or a special website to let them know when they're almost "out" of electricity. If a payment is not made prior to the account balance reaching zero, the electric service can get powered off.



*Your power. Your plan. Your choice.*



*Some, but not all, prepaid services use in-home monitors such as this.*

### Why would I want prepaid electric service?

Prepay works best for people who want to take control of their electric account and energy use. Prepaying can offer a good solution for members who move around a lot, own rental properties, are in college or the military, or are facing financial difficulties. For starters, it eliminates the need for deposits, late fees, and disconnect and reconnect fees.

Prepaid plans give you:

- *The flexibility to pay what you can afford when you need electricity.*
- *The clarity of knowing just where your energy dollars are going.*
- *The benefit of saving energy and money.*
- *The power to control your energy bill.*

If it is easier to make daily or weekly payments instead of a larger monthly payment, prepaid services may be right for you.

## The power of convenience

Let's face it, everyone appreciates convenience. And with many people's busy schedules these days, some need it. With prepaid electric service, you pay your bill according to your, not the cooperative's, schedule. Whether it is more convenient for you to pay a day in advance, a week, a month or even a year in advance, you get to choose!

## The power of clarity

With a standard electric billing cycle, members receive an electric bill for all the electricity they used in the past 30 or so days. The payment is then typically due 10 to 20 days after a member receives the bill. By the time the member pays the bill, it can be several weeks since they have actually used the electricity.

It can be hard enough remembering what you did and what the weather was like a week ago, let alone a month. With prepaid service, you will always be able to monitor what you are spending your energy dollars on, because you can pay for it as you use it.

## The power of saving money

Members who prepay generally use less energy than those on traditional billing arrangements because they're more aware of how much power they're consuming. By monitoring your consumption on a regular basis, you will begin to notice patterns in your day-to-day usage. As you monitor your use, you will begin to see when you are using more energy and find ways to lower your electric bill.

Some websites will even send members an e-mail with a graph detailing their electric use to warn of high consumption patterns. Prepaying can also help members plan more accurate monthly budgets and make smaller, incremental payments. For example, if you only have \$15 to put gas in your car, you pay \$15. The same goes for prepaid electricity.

## The power is in your hands!

### How do I enroll?

To find out if you can enroll in prepaid electric service and take control of your electric bill, contact your local electric cooperative.

### Take Control & Save!

To learn more about how to save energy and money in your home, contact the energy advisor at your local electric cooperative or visit [www.TakeControlAndSave.coop](http://www.TakeControlAndSave.coop).

## How it works

- \* Prepaid service works the opposite of traditional billing. The program allows you to choose how much and how often you want to pay *before* you use electricity.
- \* Think of prepaid electric service the same as prepaid cell phone service. You pay for it before you use it. You can purchase what you need when you need it, so you don't worry about a monthly bill.


*Statistics indicate prepay electricity programs help lower electric consumption due to member's awareness of usage patterns.*



*Prepaid service gives you freedom from your monthly electric bills by letting you prepay what you want!*



**Barton County Electric Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

91 West 160 Hwy. • Lamar, MO 64759 • (417) 682-5636 • [bartonelectric.com](http://bartonelectric.com)