


# Norris Electric *News*

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Norris Electric Cooperative

8543 N St Hwy 130  
Newton, IL 62448

**Phone:** 618-783-8765  
or **Toll-Free:**  
1-877-783-8765

**Report an Outage:**  
1-877-783-3221

**Office Hours:**  
Monday – Thursday  
7 a.m. – 5 p.m.

### Chairman

Gordon McClure .....Jasper

### Vice Chairman

Ron Viehman.....Lawrence

### Secretary/Treasurer

Dan Strine ..... Wabash

### Directors

Ava Lemmon .....Crawford  
Brandon Graves ..... Richland  
Kurt Holscher .....Crawford  
Dave Thoele ..... Effingham  
Scott Weiss.....Lawrence  
Justin Parcel..... Clark  
Dave Sheppard.....Jasper  
Ted Helmink ..... Cumberland

### General Manager

Tamara Phillips



## Sarah Danielle Semple

April 8, 1986 – December 30, 2024

It is with heavy hearts that we share the passing of our beloved coworker, Sarah Semple. Sarah grew up in Effingham County. Sarah joined the Norris team in 2012, bringing her skills and knowledge to our Engineering Department. She was most recently working as our mapping technician.

Sarah had a deep love for reading and was always excited to share her collection of books with fellow book lovers in the office. She loved recommending a good read or discussing her latest literary finds with anyone who was interested.

Her loves for the St. Louis Cardinals, chocolate chip cookies, Dr. Pepper, bowling and cross-stitching were other parts of her that we'll always remember, and

she often shared stories about her niece and nephew — two little ones she absolutely adored.

Sarah will be remembered fondly by everyone who had the privilege of working with her. Our thoughts and deepest sympathies are with her family and loved ones during this incredibly difficult time. Sarah leaves behind her parents, Charles and Lynn (Wessel) Semple of Teutopolis; brother, Kevin (Caitlin) of St. Louis; grandmothers, Mary Semple of Effingham and Norma Wessel of Highland; niece, Norah; and nephew, Miles.



# Important update regarding payment options

In response to the rising costs in today's economy, we are implementing a change designed to keep billing costs low. Over the years, Norris Electric Cooperative (NEC) has introduced a variety of payment options to make it more convenient for our members. Due to the availability of these options, the board of directors has decided to discontinue the collection of electric bill payments at local banks. As of **May 1, 2025**, banks will no longer accept payments for Norris Electric Cooperative.

Below are alternative payment methods available to you:

- 1. Automatic draft** — NEC will automatically draft your checking or savings account the day before the due date. An ACH form is available at your bank or the Norris website for your convenience.
- 2. Bank online payments** — Set up an electronic payment through your bank, which will transfer funds directly to NEC.

**3. Over the phone** — You can make payments anytime through our automated payment center by calling **877-783-8765**.


**4. Online payments or mobile app** — Pay through our website at [www.norriselectric.com](http://www.norriselectric.com) or by downloading the Norris app from the app store.

**5. Norris Electric Office** — Payments can be made in person during our office hours, Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. A secure drop box is available outside the office for payments after hours.

**6. Mail** — Payments can always be mailed to our office.

Should you have any questions or need further assistance, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Thank you for being a valued member of Norris Electric Cooperative.



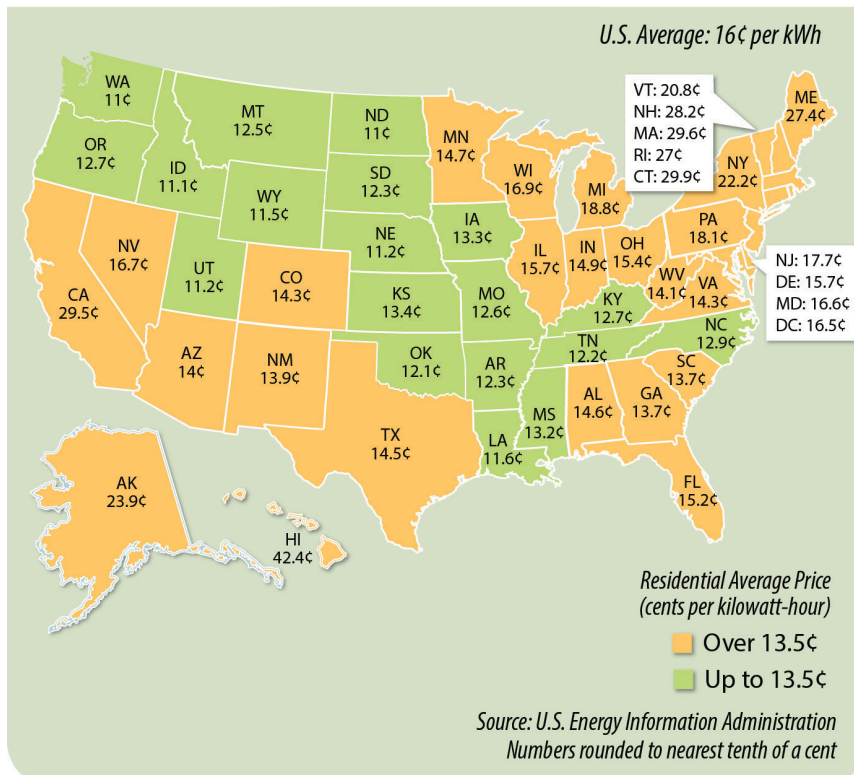
## New website design

We're excited to announce the launch of our newly designed website! Check it out to explore a fresh look, improved navigation and all the latest updates.

Visit [www.norriselectric.com](http://www.norriselectric.com) today!

## Average Prices for Residential Electricity

2023 figures, in cents per kWh




## Daylight Saving Time Begins March 9th

# 5 Tips To GO GREEN for

## St. Patrick's Day



### 1. Replace your HVAC filter.

These typically need replacing every three months, though factors like pets, climate and system age can affect the timing.

### 2. Install a smart thermostat.

A smart thermostat offers convenience, savings and efficiency by adjusting the temperature based on your schedule — reducing usage when no one is home.

### 3. Cut energy use during peak hours.

In spring, peak electricity hours are usually in the evening. Reduce usage by visiting a park, a theater or dining out.

### 4. Upgrade to energy-efficient appliances.

Look for appliances that are ENERGY STAR-certified, using 10 to 15% less energy and water than standard models, according to Energy.gov.

### 5. Save energy through rebate programs for solar, battery storage or electric vehicles.

Check with utilities and government programs for rebates and incentives to help make these technologies more accessible.

Learn more at:



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

March is an ideal time to service your home cooling system, ensuring it runs efficiently when the heat of summer arrives. Routine maintenance, like cleaning or replacing filters, checking refrigerant levels and inspecting parts, can improve your system's energy efficiency and lower your energy bills. By addressing potential issues early, you can avoid costly emergency repairs and extend the lifespan of your unit. Scheduling service in the spring helps you beat the peak-season rush, giving you faster access to qualified technicians. A well-maintained cooling system can save energy and keep your home comfortable all summer long.





## Utility scams in this age of AI: How to spot and avoid fraud

Someone calls claiming to be from your utility company. They say your service will be cut off if you don't pay them immediately. Real utility companies don't do this. But scammers want to scare you into paying before you have time to confirm what they're telling you. And scammers are now using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to craft frauds that are difficult for consumers to detect. Learn how to protect yourself.

### Beware of these common scam tactics

- Disconnection threats: Scammers claim your service will be cut off without immediate payment.
- Caller ID spoofing: Fraudsters use software to make their calls appear legitimate.
- Overpayment claims: They may say you've overpaid and ask for personal or banking information to issue a refund.
- Smishing: Scammers send fake text messages that seem to come from your utility company.
- Phishing attempts: Beware of emails that look like bills; always verify the sender's email before clicking links.

If you have any doubt about the status of your electric service, call your utility company using the customer service phone number on their website.

### Watch for the following red flags

- High-pressure tactics that demand urgent action.
- Unusual payment method requests (wire transfer, gift cards, reloadable cards or cryptocurrency).
- Poor grammar, misspellings and suspicious email addresses.

### AI use enhances utility scams

By leveraging AI-powered techniques, utility scammers can create sophisticated and convincing frauds that are hard for consumers to recognize and avoid.

- AI helps scammers craft convincing emails that appear to be from legitimate utility companies and include the use of company colors and logos.

- Scammers use AI to create realistic-looking utility company websites that are nearly indistinguishable from legitimate ones.
- AI technology can clone the voices of utility company representatives, making phone scams convincing.
- AI analyzes victims' online presence and social media to create highly personalized spam related to your utility services.
- Scammers create geographically targeted online ads that appear when users search for keywords related to their energy bills.
- Scammers use AI to launch large-scale utility scam campaigns quickly and efficiently.

According to Kathy Stokes, AARP Director of Fraud Prevention Programs, "the ability of AI to improve and scale scam tactics is the equivalent of the Industrial Revolution for fraud criminals."

### Protect yourself

- Take your time: Don't rush into payments or action.
- Verify any communication by calling your utility company directly using the number on your bill.
- Never share personal information. Legitimate companies won't ask for sensitive details over the phone.
- If someone claims to be a utility worker, request official identification.

If you suspect a scam, report it to your utility company and the FTC at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/ReportFraud).

Remember, legitimate utilities will provide multiple notices before disconnection and will not pressure you for immediate payment. If you are in doubt, let your utility company know so they can take proactive measures to both protect you and others from becoming victims.

Learn more at:

