

# Cooperative Review

DECEMBER 2022



## New Report Helps Save Members Money Before Receiving Their Next Bill

**W**e are always looking for new and unique ways to help our members manage their energy. For example, we provide tools and calculators on our website at [union-power.com](http://union-power.com) to help members decide what changes and upgrades they should make in their homes based on potential savings. We also offer energy efficiency tips and articles through all communication channels to promote energy savings. But what else can we do?

Recently, Union Power's Business Intelligence Analyst Marc Rizzo saw an opportunity to use our meter data to recognize when a member is consuming higher than average amounts of energy. Working with our Marketing and Energy Services Department, he developed the Energy Usage Report. This report shows mid-billing cycle consumption that is abnormal compared to usage from previous billing cycles.

Our Energy Specialist Team receives the daily report, analyzes the members' data, and proactively contacts the member to see if any significant changes have occurred since their last bill. If a problem is suspected, the energy specialist suggests ways to improve usage or repairs that could help reduce use before receiving their next power bill.

Energy Specialist Billy Brantley explains, "Our job is to notify members of the increased consumption and question if they are aware of what could be contributing to the increase. If the cause isn't coming from a lifestyle choice such as thermostat settings, it could be that repairs are needed in the home due to an unknown mechanical issue. Usually, the cause we find is related to the HVAC system, a water heater, an issue with a well pump, or a pool heat pump."

Union Power member Dave Alder is an excellent example of how the Energy Usage Report helped him determine why his home suddenly started consuming higher than normal usage. The report notified our energy specialists of an issue with this member. As a result, they



**Marc Rizzo**  
Business Intelligence Analyst

could investigate hourly usage and identify when the problem occurred. By interpreting the data, they could suspect the significant increase was due to an HVAC issue.

Manager of Marketing and Energy Services Jake Thomas proactively informed Alder about the issue and how he could improve his home's energy efficiency. Alder states, "If it wasn't for Jake, I never would have understood why my home was using so much energy since it occurred between billing cycles, and we don't see the energy consumption until we receive the power bill. Especially with my home being a newer build, I expected reduced power bills due to the newer, efficient equipment."

Jake also suggested when and what may be causing the HVAC issue, which helped isolate the problem. After some investigation, a mechanical issue with the HVAC thermostat was found to be the driving factor behind the increased consumption. Once the thermostat was repaired, Alder's daily consumption decreased by more than 50%.

"The opportunities provided from the Energy Usage Report, along with the technology we have already invested in, will allow us to take our customer service to the next level!" said Jake Thomas.



## BUILDING A *brighter future*

To learn more visit, [union-power.com](https://union-power.com)

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COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS





### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month:

Blocked air vents force your heating system to work harder than necessary and increase pressure in the ductwork, which can cause cracks and leaks to form. Make sure all air vents are unobstructed from furniture, drapes or other items to ensure sufficient circulation throughout your home. If necessary, purchase a vent extender, which can be placed over a vent to redirect air flow from underneath furniture.



# NC YOUTH TOUR

## #YT23

June 17–23, 2023

Youth Tour provides an opportunity for high school juniors to have an unforgettable experience in Washington, D.C., while learning about the history of the nation's capital and understanding how American history has shaped the U.S. today. It also provides an opportunity for students to take on leadership roles and learn what their value is as a citizen. The deadline to apply is December 30, 2022.

- Scholarships
- Monuments
- Museums
- Legislators
- Friends
- Fun

**Scholarships:** Apply for several college scholarships.

**Legislators:** Interact with our state's federal officials. Get an up-close look at our government in action.

**Visit:** See the Capitol, Smithsonian museums, memorials, and historic sites like Arlington National Cemetery.


**Connect:** Meet hundreds of other smart young leaders from around the country. Build your network, and make friends for life.

**Leadership:** Strengthen your leadership and networking skills.

**College applications:** Build your resume. Youth Tour looks great on college applications.

## How to Apply

[union-power.com/youthtour](http://union-power.com/youthtour)  
[ncelectriccooperatives.com/YouthTour](http://ncelectriccooperatives.com/YouthTour)

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NRECA YOUTH TOUR #YT23





# Fight the Winter Chill While Saving Money

We all have our favorite season. Some people love crisp, cool weather and bundling up under a favorite blanket, while others prefer the warm temperatures summer brings and all the fun outdoor activities that go with it. But there's one thing we can all agree on: high winter bills are never fun. Union Power is here to help you find ways to manage your home energy use and keep winter bills in check.

Here are five tips to help increase your home's energy efficiency this winter:

- **Mind the thermostat.** The thermostat is the easiest way to manage your home energy use. We recommend setting your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower) when you are home. When you're sleeping or away for an extended period of time, try setting it between 58 and 62 degrees; there's no need to heat your home when you're away or sleeping and less active.
- **Button up your home.** The Department of Energy estimates that air leaks account for 24% to 40% of the energy used for heating and cooling a home. Caulking and weather-stripping around windows and doors is another simple, cost-effective way to increase comfort and save energy. If you feel drafts near a window or door, they likely need to be sealed.
- **Use window coverings wisely.** Open blinds, drapes, or other window coverings during the day to allow natural sunlight to warm your home. Close them at night to keep the cold, drafty air out. If you feel the cold air around windows, consider hanging curtains or drapes in a thicker material; heavier window coverings can significantly block cold outdoor air.
- **Consider your approach to appliance use.** When combined, appliances and electronics account for a significant chunk of our home energy use. For example, wash only full loads when using a dishwasher or washing machine. Look for electronic devices that consume energy even when they're not in use, like phone chargers or game consoles. Every little bit helps, so unplug them to save energy.
- **Think outside the box.** If you're still feeling chilly at home, think of other ways to warm up—beyond dialing up the thermostat. Add layers of clothing, wear thick socks and bundle up under blankets. You can even add layers to your home! If you have hard-surface flooring, consider purchasing an area rug to block cold air that leaks through the floor.

If you are using these five steps to save energy, but continue to see significant increases in your bills, call 704-289-3145 to speak with one of our Energy Specialists. They can identify areas and other factors impacting your home energy use while recommending steps for savings. Winter months often bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. However, by being proactive about saving energy, you can increase the comfort of your home and reduce monthly bills.





# Recapping Our 83rd Annual Meeting

**A**fter two years of virtual annual membership meetings, our employees were excited to return to normal while seeing our members' smiling faces. The morning started bright and early, with our employees greeting all the members in the parking lot as soon as they arrived. Members were greeted by familiar faces and some new faces of Union Power while enjoying a complimentary breakfast provided by Spiro's Hilltop Restaurant.

Before the business meeting started, attendees of all ages visited our various vendors at our Energy Fair and Expo, such as Farm Bureau, Visit Stanly, Carolina Country Magazine, James River Equipment, and Green Works, to name a few. Also, the Kids Festival entertained approximately 100 children who enjoyed face painting, bouncy houses, an indoor playground, and basketball.

In addition, our members had an opportunity to learn about various electric cars, including the Porsche Taycan, Tesla Model Y, Ford F-150 Lighting, and Chevrolet Bolt. With all of these amazing vendors that participated, our members got to see and learn about the benefits of driving an electric vehicle and the difference in chargers by talking to our energy specialist team.

Our members got to hear live bluegrass music performed by Terry Baucom's Dukes of Drive and view the presentation of colors by the Parkwood Air Force JROTC. General Manager and Executive Vice President Greg Andress addressed the members on stage, and we closed out the morning's events with cash door prizes.

It was great to see everyone back out and enjoying our 83rd Annual Membership Meeting.







## *Deck the halls without breaking the bank!*

Don't get your tinsel in a tangle this holiday season.  
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to learn more or  
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We are your heating, cooling, and  
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The Wells Fargo Home Projects credit card is issued by Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., an Equal Housing Lender. Special terms apply to qualifying purchases charged with approved credit. The special terms APR will continue to apply until all qualifying purchases are paid in full. The monthly payment for this purchase will be the amount that will pay for the purchase in full in equal payments during the promotional (special terms) period. The APR for purchases will apply to certain fees such as a late payment fee or if you use the card for other transactions. For new accounts, the APR for purchases is 28.99%. If you are charged interest in any billing cycle, the minimum interest charge will be \$1.00. This information is accurate as of 10/01/2020 and is subject to change. For current information, call us at 1-800-431-5921. Offer expires 12/31/22.



# Right-of-Way Clearing

During the next month, you may see our tree-trimming crews in your neighborhood: Vendors: ABC Professional Tree Services, Asplundh Tree Expert Co., Lewis Tree Service, Lucas Tree Experts, and Xylem Inc.

**Mecklenburg County:** Allen Black Rd

**Rowan County:** Duckpond Rd, Lee Trexler, NC Hwy 49, New London Rd, Panther Creek Rd, Pineview Rd, Ribelin Rd, Russell Rd, Spivey Rd, Stokesferry Rd, Webbwood Ln

**Stanly County:** Big Lick Rd, Clifton Dr, Copley Dr, Fairfield Dr, Fred Rd, Garmon Mill Rd, Griffin Green Blvd, Lucy Ln, Mattie Ln, Myrtle Dr, Oak Grove Rd, Pebble Creek Dr, Pine Bluff Rd, Polkford Rd, Renee Ford Rd, River Rd, RL Ln, Ruben Dr, Stonybrook Dr, Talley Rd, Tucker-Helms Rd, White Oak Dr

**Union County:** Allen Black Rd, Bent Oak Dr, Bonds Grove Church Rd, Brookgreen Terrace, Brownstone Ct, Crane Rd, Edgefield Ct, Fairfield Dr, Fieldstone Dr, Green Ash Ln, Hillcrest Dr, Idlewild Rd, Lake Dr, Lineview Dr, Mary Elizabeth Church Rd, McCain Mill Rd, Millhouse Ln, Millwright Ln, Old Farm Ct, Old Highway Rd, Prince Valiant Dr, Rainbow Dr, Shadow Lake Ln, S Potter Rd, Stacy Howie Rd, Stevens Mill Rd, Stoney Ridge Rd, Tom Starnes Rd, Viking Dr, W Lawyers Rd, Waxhaw Marvin Rd, Wild Rose Ct, Willowbrook Dr, Woodland Ct



For more information about Union Power's vegetation management program or tree trimming practices, please call 704-289-3145 and speak with Wil Ortiz (ext. 3323) or Carrie Lorenz-Efird (ext. 3291). Visit [union-power.com](http://union-power.com) for monthly right-of-way clearing updates and information on our programs.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

The Cooperative Review newsletter is published monthly for the members and friends of Union Power Cooperative.

Greg Andress  
**Exec. Vice President & General Manager**

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