

What sets co-ops apart from other power providers

In the U.S., electricity is delivered through three types of power providers: investor-owned utility companies, sometimes called IOUs; public power systems, and electric power cooperatives. Although the three types share many characteristics, how they operate — and how that affects the users of the power they deliver — is strikingly different.

The biggest single difference is the profit motive. Public power systems and electric co-ops are not-for-profit organizations. That means their primary motive isn't to make a profit, but to deliver electricity to the homes and businesses they serve at the most reasonable cost.

Decision-making is another differentiator. Investor-owned utilities are large corporations that may be headquartered hundreds of miles away from the folks who pay the bills. Once again, co-ops are different. Their operations are managed by a volunteer board of directors made up of members. Those directors represent their neighbors and have an obligation to consider other members' concerns and preferences.

Infrastructure needs represent another key difference. Co-ops average just 7.98 members for each mile of power lines, compared to 32.4 customers per mile for the other types of power providers. Co-ops have to

manage significantly more infrastructure for the number of homes and businesses they serve.

Electric cooperatives also work closely with neighboring co-ops and their counterparts across the U.S. That's because they're committed to the Seven Cooperative Principles, one of which calls for Cooperation Among Co-ops. Close relationships improve every co-ops' ability to serve their members.

Electric co-ops are committed to serving their members, representation for members and their needs, helping one another, and providing the best service possible. These key differences truly set them apart from others.

Think Energy Smart - TOD rates can help

We have surpassed two years since Time of Day electric rates have been in effect for residential and small commercial services. I have spoken to many members about ways to use this new rate structure to their advantage. If you are able shift any of your electric consumption to off-peak hours (10 p.m. to 6 a.m.), you will see savings on your electric bill. Every kWh shifted to off-peak usage will result in a savings of 7.8 cents. Below is a list of devices that do not require 24-hour or on-demand operation, which you may want to consider operating off-peak by adding a timer, programming a start time, or manually operating outside of peak hours:

- Dehumidifiers
- Dishwashers
- Space heaters
- Electric water heaters
- Swimming pool pumps
- Electric clothes dryers

A realistic goal for most residential homes is to strive for 30% of your energy to be consumed off peak. You can track your progress monthly by dividing the off-peak reading on your electric bill by the total kWh reading.



Bruce Warnecke
 ENERGY SERVICE ADVISOR

Join us for BINGO at Hancock-Wood

Fall BINGO event at the co-op

Members are welcome to join us for a fall bingo event on Tuesday, Oct. 7, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the co-op office. Win gift card prizes and electric bill credits! Members can register by calling our office at 800-445-4840. Seating is limited to 50 members.

This is a member-only event and you must be 18 years or older to attend.