Every year, Kenergy receives calls and emails from members with concerns about their electric bills. Most calls are during the winter months, and they come from folks who feel their electric bills are incorrect because they are higher than usual.

During the winter, heaters are running, we are all inside more, the TV is on, the lights are on, and the kids are inside. In other words, we all use more electricity during the winter; so, usage will typically be higher.

When trying to determine what your usage is, a rule of thumb is that any appliance or equipment that generates heat from electricity are your largest users.

If you are concerned about your bill, there are things you can do to reduce your usage and make sure your bill doesn’t rise as the temperature drops.

Here are some things to keep an eye on during the cold winter months.

**DON’T BE CAUGHT OFF GUARD!**
Monitor your energy usage during the winter months

**Electric heating appliances.** If you are heating with electricity during the winter season, it is likely the highest portion of your electric bill. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, approximately 56% of electric power used is for heating and cooling. You can save on the heating portion of your electric bill by lowering your thermostat at night and while you are away. Keep extra blankets on the bed for chilly nights. Consider purchasing a programmable thermostat.

**Electric hot water heaters.** Their heating elements draw energy regularly to keep the water at a set temperature. To conserve energy during the winter season, turn the water heater’s thermostat down to keep the water at a lower temperature but comfortable enough for your use. Insulate your tank. Valuable heat loss occurs in many hot water heaters due to lack of insulation.

**DID YOU KNOW?**
32 percent of house fires are caused by space heaters.

Place your space heater on a level, non-flammable surface.

Make sure your space heater has an auto shutoff function and never leave it unattended.

Never use an extension cord with your heater.

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![Graph: 2017 - Power Consumed by Kenergy Members (kWh)](image)

**2017 - Power Consumed by Kenergy Members (kWh)**
Total Purchased from Big Rivers Electric
Electric space heaters. These are very high users of electricity. A small heater can cost you $100 or more per month if used continuously. Avoid using them when you can.

Electric clothes dryers. You likely have more laundry in the winter because coats, pants, and heavier shirts take up more space in the dryer than the shorts and tank tops of summer. Of course, that heavy laundry needs to be dried, and the dryer is going to have to work longer to get the job done. Consider drying clothes indoors on garment racks or even hanging over your shower curtain rod.

Refrigerators and freezers. They could use more energy as the air around them in your home in the winter is warmer than during summer air-conditioning months. Maintain higher efficiency by cleaning the coils on the back and under it. If your refrigerator or freezer is an older model, you will benefit by replacing it with a new one that is energy efficient.

Lights and lamps. Shorter winter days mean turning the lights on earlier in the evening. Consider changing your incandescent bulbs to LED.

Understanding your electric usage can help you lower it. You can monitor your usage on My Account at kenergycorp.com or download the app on your smartphone. Kenergy also has Kill-a-Watt meter plugins that members can borrow to test usage for any one appliance at a time. The device can be reset as you move it from appliance to appliance. You simply pay a $50 deposit that is refunded when the device is returned.

Federal weatherization program benefits low-income families

Not everyone can afford caulking, insulation or a new furnace. In addition, many disabled and elderly are not able to perform those tasks.

But homeowners that meet income guidelines are eligible for either the Audubon Area Community Services (AACS) or the Pennyrile Allied Community Services (PACS) Weatherization Program, depending on where they live. This program, is designed to assist low-income citizens manage their utility bills by making their homes more energy efficient.

Trained technicians will perform an energy audit for qualified applicants and then caulk, weather strip, insulate or in some cases replace or repair heating/cooling units if needed.

AACS serves Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, McLean, Ohio, Union and Webster counties. PACS serves the southern portion of Kenergy’s territory, including Caldwell, Lyon, Crittenden and Hopkins counties.

For more information, call AACS at 270.686.1670 or PACS at 1.800.264.0643.
Over the last few years we have seen a decline in attendance at the evening event—the Annual Meeting. Equally, since its inception in 2009, we've continued to experience growth in member attendance on Member Appreciation Day. As a result, we will continue to make it more convenient for the members and try to meet you where you reside (at all six office locations), rather than one central location, such as the Annual Meeting format. Please read over the formatting changes, below.

Annual Meeting
We will continue to have an annual business meeting that will be held immediately following the regular board meeting on June 12, 2018. The meeting will be held in Owensboro in 2018. More information about the time and location of the business meeting will be published in the Member Matters newsletter and on the Kenergy website. Kenergy members will be invited to attend, but this will be a business meeting only. There will be no buckets, no bulbs, no meal, no entertainment and no door prizes. The buckets and bulbs will be given at Member Appreciation Day in October.

Scholarships
The scholarship application process will change to an online application process for the entire month of June. During the first week of July, a random computerized drawing will be held for 3 - $1,000 scholarships and 24 - $500 scholarships. The winners will be contacted and the results published in your monthly newsletter, Member Matters. The online method will be more convenient, will require no travel for members, and will provide more opportunity for members to apply. The member applicant will simply go online, watch a 3.5-minute video, answer multiple-choice questions from the video, and complete the short application form.

Member Appreciation Day
October is national cooperative month. As a result, Member Appreciation Day will continue to be held that month—on October 4, 2018, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at each office (Henderson, Owensboro, Hanson, Hawesville, Hartford and Marion). We will offer a light meal and hand out buckets and bulbs to each member. A nice door prize will also be awarded at each of the six locations.

Ingredients

1 lb lean (at least 80%) ground beef
1 cup Progresso™ plain panko crispy bread crumbs
½ cup finely chopped yellow onion
¼ cup finely chopped fresh Italian (flat-leaf) parsley
2 teaspoons salt
½ teaspoon pepper
¼ teaspoon ground allspice
1/3 cup milk
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1 egg
1 tablespoon butter
1 carton (32 oz) Progresso™ chicken broth
¾ cup heavy whipping cream
4 cups medium egg noodles (from 16-oz bag)

Directions

1. In large bowl, mix beef, bread crumbs, onion, 2 tablespoons of the parsley, 1 teaspoon of the salt, the pepper and allspice until well combined. Add milk, Worcestershire sauce and egg. Shape mixture into 12 (2-inch) meatballs.

2. In 5-quart Dutch oven, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add meatballs; cook 8 to 11 minutes, gently turning occasionally, just until browned on all sides.

3. Add broth, whipping cream and remaining 1 teaspoon salt; heat to boiling. Stir in noodles; return to boiling. Reduce heat; simmer 15 to 18 minutes, stirring occasionally, until meatballs are thoroughly cooked and no longer pink in center (165°F), pasta is cooked and sauce is thickened. Stir in remaining 2 tablespoons parsley.

One-Pot Swedish Meatballs with Egg Noodles

2018 ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE

In THE KITCHEN

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One-Pot Swedish Meatballs with Egg Noodles
Featured Businesses Offering Discounts

**Escape Today**
10% Off One Game - Cannot stack with group discount or other promotions
527 Emory Drive, Owensboro

**Brain Injury Adventure Camp**
10% Off Corporate Team Building and Special Event Venue Rental
1001 Shooting Star Court, Robards

**Horsefeathers**
10% Off Total Purchase Code: KENERGY
Online Only

**54 Pizza Express**
15% Off Total Purchase
3101 Alvey Park Drive, Owensboro

For more details and offerings, visit online Co-op Deals at [connections.coop](http://connections.coop) or pick up a list of participating businesses or a free discount card at any Kenergy office. Become a discount provider - Call 270.689.6157 for Jeanette.

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Winter storms

**KENTUCKY WEATHER CAN BE UNPREDICTABLE. ARE YOU PREPARED BEFORE A STORM HITS?**

- Make a storm preparedness kit that includes these basic supplies — bottled water, non-perishable food, emergency blankets, first aid kit/medicine, flashlight, battery-operated or hand-crank radio, extra batteries and toiletries.
- If the power goes out, keep your refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to keep food safe and cold.
- To protect homes’ electrical equipment during an outage, turn off and unplug all unnecessary electronics or appliances. This will keep equipment from being damaged by surges or spikes when the power returns.
- If you see downed power lines, do not touch them. Call 911.