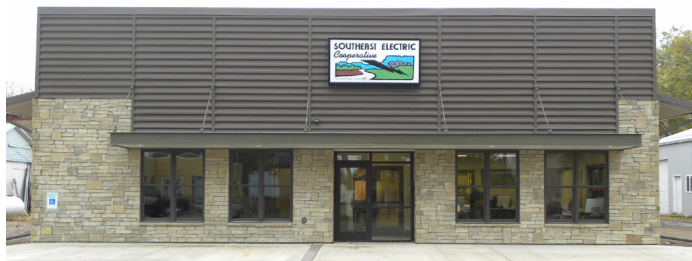


SOUTHEAST ELECTRIC Cooperative



PO BOX 369, EKALAKA, MT 59324 • PH 406-775-8762 • WWW.SEECOOP.COM

RATE INCREASE COMING IN JANUARY 2025

By **TYE WILLIAMS** |
Manager

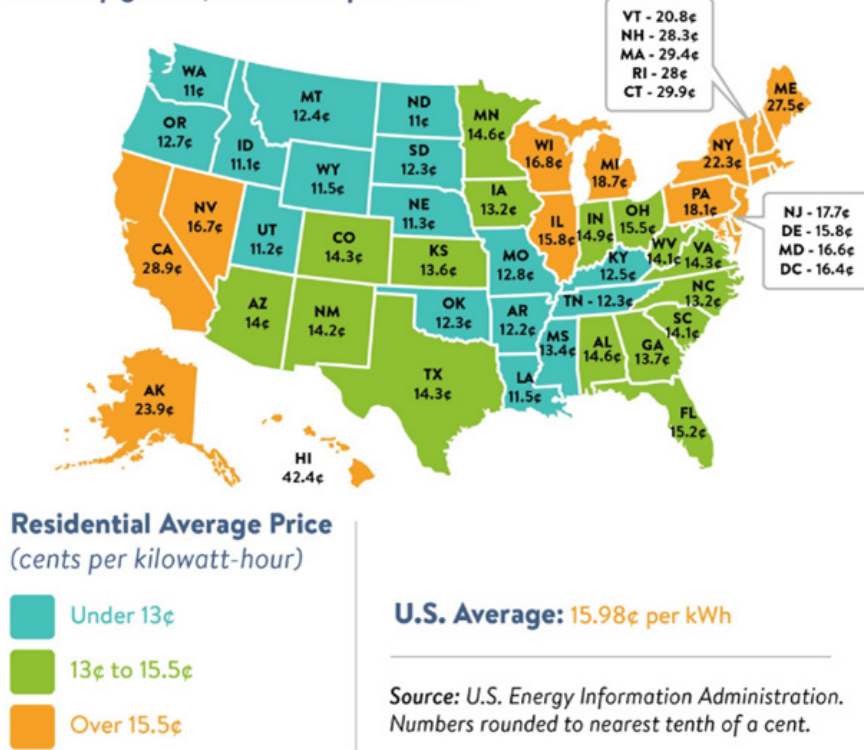


I have discussed the possibility of raising rates during our annual meeting and in different *Rural Montana* articles for the last couple of years. Over the past few years, all of us have dealt with a compounded inflation growth of 21 percent since 2020.

At Southeast Electric Cooperative, on average, we are paying 50 percent more now for materials than we did in 2020. As I mentioned at the 2024 Annual Meeting, keeping qualified staff in this tight labor market has been difficult. We have been able to keep rates steady during this time, as we have seen a 35-percent increase in kilowatt hour (kWh) sales since the end of 2020.

However, Western Area Power Association (WAPA) power, the electricity we get from the dams on the Missouri System, will increase 9 percent in January 2025, and 7 percent in January 2026. Our other supplier, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, will raise its rates by 7 percent in January 2025, with another rate increase planned for 2026. As we are forecasting continued growth in kWh sales for 2025, we do not need to match the rate increases of

Average Prices for Residential Electricity 2023 figures, in cents per kWh



our suppliers, and will be implementing an overall 2 percent rate increase on January 1.

The base charge for the residential and small commercial rates will increase by \$2. The large industrial demand charge will increase, and the

heat rate will increase from \$0.060 per kWh to \$0.063 per kWh. These changes will not affect every bill by 2 percent, as this is an average increase for our entire system. If you have questions on how the rate increase will affect your bill, don't hesitate to contact us. RM

SCHOLARSHIPS

January | 2025

Get your applications in, scholarship deadlines fast approaching

S**SOUTHEAST** Electric Cooperative encourages students and members to continue learning. Scholarship funds are a good way to help with this goal. Since 2009, Southeast Electric has awarded over \$70,000 worth of scholarships. We consider it an investment in the future of our cooperative.

2025 scholarship applications are due to Southeast Electric by 5 p.m. on January 24. The applicant or parents/guardian must be a member of Southeast Electric Cooperative, Inc. Students whose parents are part of a corporation that is a member of Southeast Electric may also apply.

Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship: Each year, Basin Electric Power Cooperative awards one \$1,000 scholarship to a student of a member consumer. The scholarship can be used to assist in paying for the costs of the student's college education. Applications must be sent to Southeast Electric Cooperative.

MECA Memorial Scholarship: Sponsored by Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association and funded from donations provided in memory of rural electric directors, employ-

ees and friends. Applications must be sent to Southeast Electric Cooperative.

Southeast Electric Essay Scholarship: Southeast Electric Cooperative Inc. will award one scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 to a deserving student pursuing post high school education. We will select a primary and alternate recipient. The essay question for 2025 is: *"It is the year 2040. What are you doing and how will you meet this objective in the next 15 years?"*

Vernon Emery Memorial Lineman Scholarship: Southeast Electric Cooperative, Inc. offers a \$1,000 scholarship to a deserving person planning to enroll in a Power Line Construction and Maintenance curriculum at an accredited tech school. \$500 has been added by the family of Vernon Emery, for a scholarship totaling \$1,500.

Applications can be mailed to PO Box 369, Ekalaka, MT 59324 or dropped off at Southeast Electric. They can also be emailed to info@seecoop.com. Information and applications are available at www.seecoop.com/scholarships or call Vicki at 406-775-8762. RM

YOUTH TOUR WINNERS ANNOUNCED

S**SOUTHEAST** Electric Cooperative Inc. is excited to announce that it has chosen two students to attend the 2025 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Youth Tour.

Corlan Laughery and Kayleigh Opstedahl/Nisley will embark on an unforgettable journey to our nation's capital in June 2025. This year the students were asked, *"What was the most important event to have occurred in our nation during your lifetime? How did it affect you?"*

It isn't surprising that both students wrote about the pandemic, although Kayleigh pointed out the immigration on the southern border, hurricanes, wildfires and the escalation of violence have also been very prevalent in the last 16 years.



They both shared how it seemed like overnight they went from going to school to doing schoolwork online and being isolated. Corlan talked about how her family often buys groceries in bulk, and how that was restricted because of supply and demand. They both found positive aspects. Corlan liked the fact that she got to spend more time with her family.

Kayleigh realized that she liked learning online. Corlan is the daughter of Carl and Camille Laughery. She is currently a junior at Carter County High School.

Kayleigh is the daughter of Libby Nisley of Broadus. She is also a junior and attends school at Powder River County District High School. Both girls are very involved in FFA and 4-H. Congratulations Corlan and Kayleigh! RM

WISHING OUR MEMBERS A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

MAY 2025 BRING YOU JOY, HAPPINESS, AND GOOD HEALTH

2025
HAPPY NEW YEAR