

# HOT LINES

January 2024

News about your community and cooperative



Midwest Electric, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

419.394.4110 | 1.800.962.3830  
www.midwestrec.com

## IMPORTANT MEMBER INFO



### POWER GRID WARNING

**RELIABILITY OF ELECTRICITY AT RISK  
IF OHIO EXPERIENCES EXTREME COLD**



MATT BERRY, CEO  
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Winter is here, and we are well prepared for the usual challenges this season: frigid temperatures, snow, and ice. This year, however, our concern goes beyond the standard winter risks, like outages from snow storms. This threat is beyond our control: Electricity consumers in our region now face the possibility of outages caused by shortfalls in available electricity.

The culprit: Government energy policy. A recent report from the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) says government energy policy is the number one threat to the nation's electric grid. That policy consists of the forced closures of reliable power plants in favor of intermittent and unreliable wind and solar power.

Around Christmastime last year, bitter cold and extreme conditions during Winter Storm Elliott caused a spike in electricity demand that outstripped what was available in nearby states, and electric utilities were forced to shut down power to some residents to avert widespread uncontrolled outages. Ohio only narrowly avoided such rolling blackouts.

Industry experts now are warning that Ohio is at risk for similar scenarios if severe weather strikes again this winter. **In November, NERC released a report stating HALF of the eastern US, including Ohio, is at risk of blackouts this winter during extreme cold conditions.**

The premature closing of reliable fossil-fuel power plants has narrowed the gap between the supply of available electricity and the ever-growing demand for power. When a winter storm drives even higher demand — and threatens supply at the same time — those charged with maintaining balance on the grid may require local utilities to reduce electricity use.

Midwest Electric and our electricity generation cooperative, Buckeye Power, will closely watch conditions and stay in constant contact with the regional authority that manages our portion of the electric grid. We have plans in place to clearly and quickly communicate with members if we expect an energy emergency is likely or imminent.

#### What this means for you

In addition to the possibility of “normal” winter outages, there's an increased chance that your electric service could be interrupted by rolling blackouts.

#### We all can take steps to reduce the likelihood of this happening:

- Conserve energy, particularly on the coldest days. This might mean delaying doing laundry or running the dishwasher until temperatures rise. You might throw on an extra clothing layer and lower your thermostat by a few degrees to stay comfortable while using less electricity.
- Pay attention to calls for conservation and make extra effort to reduce electricity use if an alert goes out.

#### You can also be prepared for winter outages by:

- Ensuring the co-op has correct, current contact information for you. If the phone number or email on your account is out of date, call the office.
- Connecting to the co-op through the SmartHub app and following us on social media. We'll use these various channels to keep you informed about outages.
- Gathering supplies and having a plan to stay safe in case an outage occurs.



**GET A NEW PHONE NUMBER, CREDIT CARD, OR EMAIL? PLEASE LET US KNOW!**

Call 800-962-3830 or log into SmartHub to update your contact information so we can notify you for planned outages, peak alerts, and more.

# 2024 GRADS

Parents of high school seniors  
we are giving away

# \$11,000

in scholarships!

**Apply by Friday, Feb. 2:**  
midwestrec.com/  
scholarships

*\*Awards are available  
for both college and  
trade school*



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## Community Calendar

- ◆ Dec. 22-25 **Office closed for Christmas**
- ◆ Dec. 29 **Office closes early at 11:30 am**
- ◆ Jan. 1 **Office closed for New Years**
- ◆ Jan. 12 **Martin Sexton**, Lima Civic Center, 419-224-1552
- ◆ Jan. 19 **Champions of Magic**, Lima Civic Center, 419-224-1552
- ◆ Jan. 20 **Dean Z The Ultimate Elvis**, Lima Civic Center, 419-224-1552
- ◆ Jan. 21 **Land Before Time**, Lima Civic Center, 419-224-1552
- ◆ Jan. 20-21 **Seussical Jr.**, Niswonger Arts Center, jan@vwct.org
- ◆ Jan. 28 **Dinosaur World Live**, Niswonger Arts Center, 419-238-6722

# Midwest Electric Wants to Help You SAVE!



Change your thermostat settings to 68°F. Your savings will add up by lowering your thermostat by just a few degrees.



LED lights are more energy efficient, last longer, and are safer for indoor and outdoor use.



Close shades and drapes at night to keep heat in and open them during the day to allow the sun to warm your home.



Make sure your furnace filters are clean. Dirty filters can impact your home comfort and increase your energy bill.



Ceiling fan direction matters! Make sure your ceiling fan is blowing upward and set on its lowest setting.



Minimize use of space heaters. They can cost more than \$100 per month to operate! Turn them off when leaving the room.

Our expert team is here to help you conserve energy and save on your monthly bill. During the cold winter months, it's not uncommon for your energy bill to increase as your family uses more electricity to keep the house warm.

Midwest Electric offers **FREE** energy audits to members! Our friendly energy advisor is available for in-home visits to help identify savings opportunities and improve your home's efficiency. To schedule your free energy audit, give us a call at 1-800-962-3830.



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For more ways to save on your monthly bill, visit us at [www.midwestrec.com/energy-audits-and-tips-homes](http://www.midwestrec.com/energy-audits-and-tips-homes)

## TAX NOTICE ON THIS MONTH'S BILL

Your December electric bill will include information to use in your income tax filing: your total annual contribution to the Community Connection Fund. This will be on

the right side of your bill under the Detailed Charges, about halfway down, and will say "YTD Roundup Amount" next to the dollar amount (typically between \$4-\$12). This is tax deductible and represents the 12-month total of your monthly round-up contributions to benefit our local community. Thank you for your generosity!