



VIGILANTE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

P.O. Box 1049, Dillon, MT 59725-1049
(406) 683-2327 or (800) 221-8271

Web site: www.vec.coop
E-mail: contact@vec.coop

VIGILANTE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

2016 Rate Increase

Exploring the Residential "A" Rate

By now you have received information notifying you of a rate increase effective January 1, 2016, and what the rates will be. Rates and rate structures are complex and hard to communicate. There is a fine line between providing relevant information or bogging the reader down in detail. If you are like most people, you simply want to know why the rate increase is needed and how it will impact you financially.

The driver behind this is a 7.1 percent rate increase in our wholesale power cost from Bonneville Power Administration. Our 2015 rate structure would not allow us to absorb this type of increase while maintaining our financial obligations.

As for how it could impact you financially, the table below is a model that compares the residential "A" rate for 2015, with the rate effective January 1, 2016. This shows the monthly costs over a range of kilowatt hours (kWh) used, and the difference.

kWH	Residential "A" Rate		Difference
	2014	2016	
300	\$ 39.10	\$ 40.40	\$ 1.30
400	\$ 44.80	\$ 46.20	\$ 1.40
500	\$ 50.50	\$ 52.00	\$ 1.50
600	\$ 56.20	\$ 57.80	\$ 1.60
700	\$ 61.90	\$ 63.60	\$ 1.70
800	\$ 67.60	\$ 69.40	\$ 1.80
900	\$ 73.30	\$ 75.20	\$ 1.90
1000	\$ 79.00	\$ 81.00	\$ 2.00
1100	\$ 84.70	\$ 86.80	\$ 2.10
1200	\$ 90.40	\$ 92.60	\$ 2.20
1300	\$ 96.10	\$ 98.40	\$ 2.30
1400	\$ 101.80	\$ 104.20	\$ 2.40
1500	\$ 107.50	\$ 110.00	\$ 2.50
1600	\$ 113.20	\$ 115.80	\$ 2.60
1700	\$ 118.90	\$ 121.60	\$ 2.70
1800	\$ 124.60	\$ 127.40	\$ 2.80
1900	\$ 130.30	\$ 133.20	\$ 2.90
2000	\$ 136.00	\$ 139.00	\$ 3.00

Remember this is just a model and doesn't reflect kVa charges on some bills. However, you should be able to use the kilowatt-hour information from past statements to get an approximation of your costs with the new rate.

The decision to raise rates is never an easy one, but for our organization this increase is needed. A lot of time and deliberation went into this decision, and we feel that it is consistent with our mission of providing reliable electric service at the lowest possible cost.

Outage Notification Numbers

M-F 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
683-2327 or (800) 221-8271

Dillon

After Hours Mon. - Thurs.
Dan Snellman.....683-6222
Gary Ferris683-6321
Cody Tarter925-3326
Charles Wharton 660-1878

Weekends

683-2327 or (800) 221-8271

Whitehall

After Hours and Weekends
Marty Simons287-3950
Chuck Romerio....287-3144
John Moos266-3605

Townsend

After Hours and Weekends
John Moos266-3605
Justin Bair266-3351
Chase White459-3892
Marty Simons287-3950

2016 District Meetings

A great informational forum

Currently, we are making preparations for our Annual Meeting. This is the most important event of the year, the culmination of all the activities from the previous year. A vital part of our Annual Meeting process is the annual district meetings. District meetings serve two important functions; it is where nominations are made for district trustee, and it provides a forum for open discussion about the affairs of the cooperative.

Vigilante Electric's service territory is divided into nine districts. Each district has an elected representative on the board of trustees who serves a three-year term. Terms are staggered to maintain six experienced trustees at all times. District meetings provide members interested in running for the board the opportunity of securing a nomination. The actual election is held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting.

District meetings also provide those who are not able to attend the Annual Meeting the opportunity to meet and hear from General Manager Rollie Miller. Because the district

meetings are less formal, they provide the member with an excellent opportunity to interact with the manager and staff members who may be in attendance.

This year's district meetings are as follows:

Dist. # 1 Cardwell/Whitehall/Three Forks

January 20, 2016 – 7 p.m. Cardwell School gymnasium

Dist. # 2 Silver Star/Waterloo

January 21, 2016 – 7 p.m. Borden Hotel Conference Center

Dist. # 6 Dillon North

January 19, 2016 – 7 p.m. Vigilante Electric Cooperative

Members residing within these districts are notified by mail regarding the meeting for their district. If you would like further information regarding the district meetings or running for district trustee, please call us at (800) 221-8271 or 683-2327.

It Has Happened Again

New phone scam

In our industry it is becoming more and more common that utility customers are targeted in attempts to scam money. Now, for the second time in two years, our membership has been targeted. The following situation was brought to our attention by members. This happened the week of November 16th.

Calls were made to members of Vigilante Electric by individuals claiming to represent our organization. Members were told their accounts were delinquent and that they had to make payment in the next few minutes by credit card, or their power would be shut off.

There are a few things here that indicate a scam. Vigilante Electric Cooperative no longer takes credit card numbers over the phone, and we do not do high-pressure phone calls for delinquent accounts. The scammers employ this tactic hoping to put you into panic mode to get you to provide your credit card number for their use.

We would like to thank the members who brought this to our attention. One astute caller even provided us with the phone number that registered on her caller ID. We provided this information to local law enforcement.

Unfortunately, scams like this will continue to be a part our world. Our advice is be a little skeptical when confronted with a call like this. If anything feels wrong about a call, especially one claiming to come from us, hang up and call our office.

Robo Calls

Pre-recorded phone messages, or robo calls, are being used more and more as part of a communication strategy. It's a means of getting information out to a targeted audience without dedicating a lot of resources. While these messages can be an annoyance, sometimes they can provide timely and valuable information.

While rarely used, Vigilante Electric does utilize robo calls under certain circumstances. Most recently, Vigilante used one to inform members of a telephone scam. Shortly after the first member contacted us regarding the scam, we drafted the following message and sent it to every member we had a valid phone number for:

"Please hold for an important message from Vigilante Electric Cooperative."

"This is Vigilante Electric Cooperative, please be aware of a phone scam asking for immediate payment to avoid service disconnection. Hang up immediately and notify Vigilante during normal business hours. Again, please be advised this is a scam affecting Vigilante Electric members."

We can also use this system to notify members of planned outages. We use planned outages to create a safer work environment for our line crew. If the need arises, we can target members that will be affected by the outage, using the recorded message to convey the date, time and approximate duration of the outage.

While this system is far from perfect, it is a viable option as part of a multi-faceted communication approach. As a member, you can help us in this effort. Please provide a valid phone number for our records, and/or an email address if this is a better means of communicating with you. You can note it on the remittance stub, which accompanies your bill, call our office or send us an email at contact@vec.coop.

Vigilante Electric to Launch New Website

In an industry such as ours, it is more important than ever to be able to communicate important information in a timely manner using an array of media formats. Today, the focal point of an effective communications program starts with an organization's website. This is why Vigilante Electric Cooperative will launch a new website after the first of the year.

This will be the second overhaul of our website, with each version designed to bring more interaction, more features and hopefully a better user experience. For the latest version, we have partnered with Touchstone Energy (TSE) and its team of web professionals. Our new site is built on a world-

class platform that is designed, hosted and backed by TSE.

The TSE platform is easy to use and update, helping us keep content current. When important issues arise, such as the latest phone scam, we can easily post details. It has vast multimedia capabilities and will expand our opportunities for interaction with members — most notable is the site's smart-phone compatibility.

Many of you may only access our website to send us an email or pay a bill online. While these functions will still be available, we hope you will take time to explore our new site and return to it for future information.

Vigilante Electric Cooperative
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative
Owned By Those We Serve

Contact Us
E-Bill
Welcome to Vig

DILLON OFFICE (800) 221-8271 OR 683-2327

Home | About Us | Community | Information | Members | Programs & Services | Publications | Rates

SERVING SOUTHWEST MONTANA'S ENERGY NEEDS

[Admin Edit Content]

For over 75 years, Vigilante Electric Cooperative has worked hard to provide consumers with a reliable source of electrical power at the lowest possible cost. As a member of **Northwest River Partners**, we join other utilities, businesses and farmers to promote clean and renewable hydropower. We take a great deal of pride in our role as a community leader. This site was created to provide you with a better understanding of who we are, and why we are different from other electrical utilities.

LOCAL WEATHER
Dillon, MT
41°
4:13 pm MST
Cloudy

LINKS
NRECA
Call Before You Dig
Safe Electricity
Action.Coop
Touchstone Energy Cooperatives

CLEAN HYDRO

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE POWER OF YOUR CO-OP MEMBERSHIP.
TOGETHERWESAVE.COM

POWERED BY: Touchstone Energy Cooperatives

SHOW IT AND SAVE

Learn Play Save **Kids Energy ZONE**

COOPERATIVE ACTION NETWORK

VIGILANTE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

The Power of Operation Roundup

It started as a simple idea 27 years ago at one co-op in South Carolina. Just round up the co-op member's electric bill to the next dollar, and then use it to do good work in your community. Today, hundreds of electric co-ops throughout the country use this idea to help members and organizations close to home.

All co-ops adhere to the Seven Cooperative Principles, including "Concern for Community." The Operation Roundup program is the perfect embodiment of this core principle. The average co-op member donates \$6, with a maximum possible contribution of \$11.88 per year. This may not seem like a large amount, but as member participation increases, it adds up to make a significant impact.

The program is always voluntary, and

at any time members can change their minds about participating. However, once folks see the good work the program does in their community, they almost always keep contributing.

Over the years, millions of dollars have been collected and distributed through this program for a wide range of activities. This can include helping other non-profit entities, to promote charitable, educational or scientific purposes, or to support other entities that qualify as tax-exempt organizations.

While each co-op must respond to the needs of its members, one of the great attributes of co-ops across the country — and the world — is their willingness to share information about the programs that have been successful. Operation Roundup is a perfect example of that cooperative spirit.

Prescription Discount Tracker

Total Paid Claims YTD	559
Total Savings YTD	\$14,793.20
Total Savings Percentage	38.27%
Nov. Paid Claims	8
Nov. Savings	\$222.48
Nov. Savings Percentage	52.09%



Affordable. Innovative. Member Focused.

It's hard to predict the future, but one thing seems certain — **new government regulations will increase the cost of electricity.**

We want to work with you to keep your electric bills **AFFORDABLE**. We're controlling costs and no matter what the future holds we'll continue to put you, our members, **FIRST**.



**Vigilante
Electric
Cooperative**

Find out how we're *Looking Out for You* at
www.vec.coop

Looking Out
for You