

OTEC Bill Has a New Look

Design gives members more details to help them better understand their energy use

OTEC recently reformatted the appearance of your monthly electric bill to make key information easier to find, while offering you a detailed breakdown of your energy-use costs during the past 13 months. The new bill format began with the June 2011 billing cycle.

On page 29 is a sample of the new bill format. Use the numbers in the circles to coincide with the numbers below for a guide to explain that section of the bill.

1. Member Sep: This is your account number, unique to your location and meter. Please have this number ready when you call OTEC or set up an online bill pay account.

2. Meter Number: This number is unique to the meter on your home or business.

3. Billing Days and KWH Usage: Total kilowatt-hours (kWh) used for the billing period. For example, the member's bill you see here is being charged for 30 "Billing Days" of power use, during which time the household used 1,836 kWh of electricity.

4. Monthly Charges: The charges for the current month, any discounts, other services and any other previous charges are all listed here. For this particular member, the charges are:

a. Previous Balance: What the member owed from the last billing period.

b. Monthly Delivery Charge: This charge is the cost associated with providing electric service to the member. It includes about half of the cost of maintaining all power lines, poles and meters, handling outages and emergencies, preparing and mailing bills, and all administrative costs associated with running your electric cooperative.

c. Residential Rate: This lists how many kilowatt-hours the household used for the month—1,836 in this example—and multiplies it by the rate OTEC charges for each kilowatt-hour.

d. Power Cost Adjustment (PCA): This is an adjustment made on your electric bill, which may go up or down depending on fluctuations in costs passed on to OTEC by the Bonneville Power Administration. On this bill example, you can see the member received a \$4.68 discount on the bill. Having a PCA charge prevents OTEC from having to constantly change

rate structures to accommodate BPA cost fluctuations, which usually occur every six months.

e. 4 Area Lights @ \$7.37 each: This line item on the bill is for a member who has OTEC area lights on the property. Any extra services you receive from OTEC will show up in this section of the bill.

f. Other (Deposit): This section lists any other charges or discounts the member is to receive. On this bill, the member owes for the initial deposit due to a connect service.

g. Connection Fee: In addition to a deposit, residential members must pay a \$45 connection fee to connect service. This fee is higher when connection of service requires a lineman or is after hours.

h. City Franchise Fee: Most cities in OTEC's service territory impose a tax on all OTEC members receiving service within city limits. OTEC must collect and remit these taxes to the city requiring the tax.

i. Total Current Charges: The total amount due from all charges and discounts.

5. Paid by Draft: Indicates this member pays each month by automatic bank draft.

6. Monthly Electricity Usage: This graph shows how much electricity the member has used month by month during the past 13 months.

7. Comparisons: This section allows the member to compare this month's current amount of electricity used with the previous month. This allows the member to compare how much he or she is spending per day on electricity. This information is a guide for members who want to decrease the amount of energy they use or understand how much is being used monthly.

8. Messages: OTEC will use this section to communicate important information from your cooperative.

9. "Previous Balance" disconnection: If an account has an unpaid previous balance, the account is subject to disconnect prior to the due date of the current bill. ■

