

OPD5 WATTS UP

Est. 1935

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

JULY 2019



OPD5 BOARD VOTES TO ADJUST POWER USAGE RATES

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UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

August 21, 2019
3:00 p.m.
Mesquite Office
Engineering Building
Board Room

September 18, 2019
3:00 p.m.
Overton Office
Board Room

October 16, 2019
3:00 p.m.
Mesquite Office
Engineering Building
Board Room

Board meetings are subject to change. Please check our website, Facebook page or twitter feed a day prior to the meeting for a copy of the agenda.

At its regular monthly meeting on June 19, 2019, the Overton Power District #5 (OPD5) Board of Trustees approved a rate adjustment for residential, small commercial and large commercial customers. The Board voted unanimously to give back a projected \$544,350 annually to ratepayers.

Two years ago, OPD5 entered into new power purchase agreements. At the same time, they engaged the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) to conduct a comprehensive rate study. The new rate adjustments are based on the findings of that study and careful evaluation by OPD5 staff. The result is a small overall rate reduction for most customers with some changes to the monthly base charge.

OPD5 General Manager Mendis Cooper explained that the adjustment is designed to pass on recent district cost reductions to customers while balancing the need for the district to expand its infrastructure to meet community needs and to reduce exposure to day-long outages. "It was important for us to pass some of our cost reductions back to customers. However, we didn't want to do so much that we would lose our ability to make the planned system improvements that will ensure the reliability of our system. Those improvements are vital to the future of the district and the community."

Residential customers will see a slight increase to the base charge of about \$5 per month, but the cost per kilowatt hour (kWh) rate will be reduced by about 7 percent. General Manager Cooper explained during the meeting, "The average customer that uses 1,200 kWh should save around \$15-20 per year on their (overall) power bills."

Small commercial customers who use more than 1,000 kWh per month will see their monthly base charge increase from \$21.00 per month to \$40.00. The kWh charge will be reduced by about 20 percent so customers will see about a 9 percent net savings to their power bills. A new "rate class" is also proposed for small commercial businesses with low power usage, less than 1,000 kWh hours a month. These businesses would continue under the existing base and power usage rate.

The large commercial customers would also see an increase in the base charge and a decrease on the per kWh rate. The overall projected savings is estimated at 2 percent on their power bill.

The board members supported the rate adjustments and the staff's efforts. OPD5 Board President Judy Metz commented, "I think it is well thought out. I appreciate all the work that has gone into it both by our staff and with the assistance from CFC." Metz then made a motion to approve the rate adjustments, which was approved unanimously. The new rates will take effect on September 1, 2019.

Cooper concluded, "I hope our customers recognize that they haven't seen a rate increase since 2012. Here we are seven years later, and we aren't raising rates, we are adjusting them lower. At the same time, we are going to make improvements to our system to provide even better and more reliable service for our customers."

Energy Conservation



HEAT WAVE SAFETY TIPS

By Keith Buchhalter, OPD5 Public Affairs Specialist

The next three months are the hottest months of the year. It is important to be aware of the dangers associated with hot temperatures, such as heat stroke and heat exhaustion. At OPD5 your well being is very important to us, in this edition we want to share with you some guidelines for keeping you safe in hot weather.

1. Drink plenty of water or juice, even if you are not thirsty. Avoid alcoholic or caffeinated drinks as much as possible, as they can contribute to dehydration.
2. During periods of extreme heat, the best time to run errands or be outdoors is before 10:00 AM or after 6:00 PM, when the temperature tends to be cooler. Take a bottle of water with you when you are out and about.
3. Know the warning signs of heat-related illness. Dizziness, nausea, headache, rapid heartbeat, chest pain, fainting, and breathing problems are all warning signs, if you experience them, seek help immediately.
4. Avoid exercise or strenuous activities, particularly outdoors, when it's very hot outside. If an activity is unavoidable, rest often. Whenever possible, stay indoors or in the shade.
5. When it's hot out, wear light-colored, lightweight, loose-fitting clothes.
6. Eat cooling snacks like homemade popsicles, frozen peas, or slightly frozen grapes. Try eating more cold foods, like salads and fruits. They contain water and are more refreshing in hot weather than hot foods.
7. Rest regularly in the shade and drink fluids frequently.
8. Never leave kids, seniors, or pets alone inside a vehicle.
9. Frequently check on the young, elderly, and those with health conditions.
10. When outside, wear a hat or visor, sunglasses, and sunscreen.

ASK KATIE

What type of payments does OPD5 accept? Overton Power District #5 accepts the following types of payment: cash, check, money order, debit and credit cards. You can also setup your account on autopay online or by visiting your local OPD5 office.



Watts New

POWER STRIPS VS SURGE PROTECTORS

By Tom Tate

As the proliferation of electronics impacts our daily lives, we realize there simply are not enough outlets in our homes. This is particularly true for older homes. As a result, we end up with a number of “outlet expanders,” more commonly known as power strips.

Power strips are generic and fulfill a very simple function. They are inexpensive, and the quality, I suspect, is on par with the price. Keeping this in mind, let's look at factors to consider when purchasing a power strip or a surge protector, the power strip's more talented cousin.

Important tip: Make sure you know the amperage rating of the outlet into which you are connecting the strip and other equipment. A residential circuit can overload if you are not careful.

Purchasing a power strip:

- Look for power strips with a built-in circuit breaker. If you connect too many electronics and devices, the strip will kick out the circuit breaker rather than causing the breaker in your electric panel to trip.
- Pay attention to the orientation of the outlets. The typical design is along the length of the strip, facing the bottom or end of the strip. I recommend power strips with the outlets perpendicular to the length of the strip.
- Get a smart strip. These are becoming more common and less expensive. With smart strips, one outlet serves as a master, receiving power all the time. The other outlets do not receive power until the master device is turned on. This is ideal for home entertainment setups.

If you are connecting expensive electronics, you

may want to consider a surge protector. Here, price is even more important because a cheap surge protector can be worse than none at all for two reasons. One, they use cheap, small surge fighting components. Two, these components can fail and the strip still will provide power, all without any indication that its protective side is gone.

Like power strips, there are some key factors to consider when buying a surge protector.

- Go for a significant joule (jewel) rating. This is a measure of how much energy it can withstand.
- Cable and internet connection protection. You may want to consider this for your entertainment and computing needs as surges can enter via any wired connection. Be sure the protector is designed to handle a digital television. Otherwise, it can cause pixilation if it's only designed for analog signals.
- Indicator light that shows if protection has burned out.
- The same outlet orientation as previously mentioned.
- Power conditioning feature (for PCs, this is a nice-to-have feature but not a necessity).
- A smart capability as mentioned above.

Power strips and surge protectors are worth the investment when you follow these simple suggestions. Don't get “burned” by purchasing cheap, inefficient strips and protectors. Pun intended.

Tom Tate writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

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Heating and Cooling Tips for Manufactured Homes

If you own a manufactured home, take measures to ensure you have an efficient heating and cooling system. You can also make simple improvements that save energy and make your home more comfortable.

\$ Install ceiling fans

Install ceiling fans throughout your manufactured home. Ceiling fans are energy efficient and can be used to keep warm or cool air moving throughout your home. Be sure to turn them off when you're away. Remember, ceiling fans cool people, not rooms.

\$ Option for smaller budgets

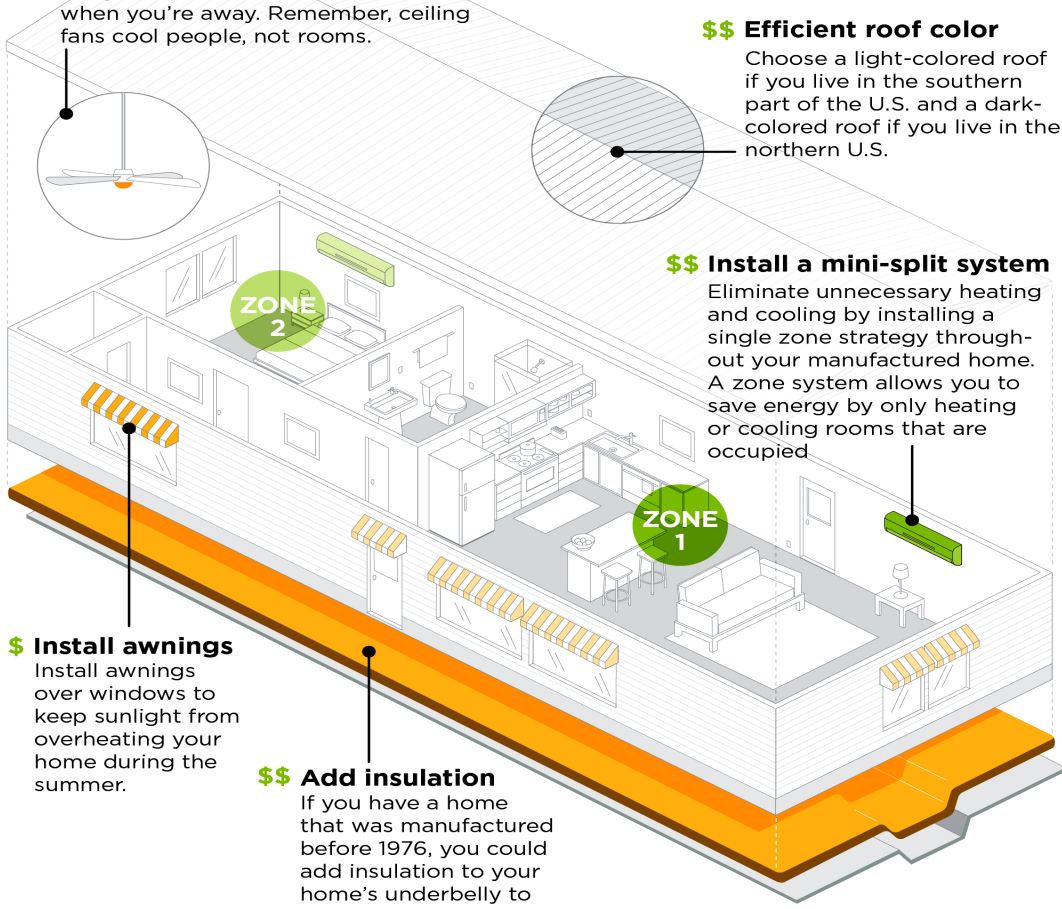
\$\$ Option for flexible budgets

\$\$ Efficient roof color

Choose a light-colored roof if you live in the southern part of the U.S. and a dark-colored roof if you live in the northern U.S.

\$\$ Install a mini-split system

Eliminate unnecessary heating and cooling by installing a single zone strategy throughout your manufactured home. A zone system allows you to save energy by only heating or cooling rooms that are occupied.



\$ Install awnings

Install awnings over windows to keep sunlight from overheating your home during the summer.

\$\$ Add insulation

If you have a home that was manufactured before 1976, you could add insulation to your home's underbelly to reduce any heat loss.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK, FOLLOW US ON TWITTER AND INSTAGRAM @OPD5

Our Facebook page and twitter feed are valuable resources to provide our customers with news and updates whenever an unplanned power outage occurs.

You can access both thru our website, they are setup in a way that does not require you to have a Facebook or twitter account to view the information.

We also post great tips on energy conservation, safety and emergency preparedness on Instagram.

Please remember, in the event of a power outage, do not report it via Facebook or twitter, we can't guarantee the delivery of messages received via social media to the right personnel in a timely manner.

In case of an unexpected power outage, please call us at (702) 397-2512 or (702) 346-5710. Overton Power District No. 5 has personnel on standby 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, including weekends and holidays to respond as quickly as possible in the event of an emergency.

**Our offices will be closed on :
September 2 - Labor Day**
Regular office hours will resume the next business day after the Holiday is observed.

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