

City Changes Rate Structure

City Council voted to change the rate structure at the first of 2018. The City used to have two rates, one for Summer and one for Winter. The reason cities typically have two rates is because it costs more to generate power in the Summer and warmer months vs. the Winter and milder months. For that reason the rates we charged our consumers was a reflection of the cost of power that we pay to MEAG.

In order to help consumers in the Summer months, when bills can sometimes run high due to usage, we decided to go with one flat rate year-round. That way even though your usage may go up during the cold and hot seasons, your rate will be stable to help avoid higher spikes in cost.

You can also apply for the budget billing option with the City. You must have resided at your residence for at least one year and your account must be current. If you are interested in applying for budget billing, you should call Debbie Danner at 706-678-3277 and she can walk you through the process. With budget billing, you will know how much your bill will be on a monthly basis.

6 Things That May Be Affecting Your Power Costs

1. **Your appliances and light bulbs aren't energy efficient.** Since appliances account for one of the biggest chunks of your electricity bill, it is crucial that you are not running old models.
2. **Your home needs new insulation.** Another big part of our electric bill is due to heating and cooling of your home. Even if you have energy efficient units, if your home is not properly insulated, your system just can't keep up when temperatures are extremely cold or hot. Vintage windows can also be the culprit. Replace old windows, add insulation to attic and crawl space, also install weather stripping around doors and watch your energy bill come down.
3. **Weather has been extreme in your area.** Again, heating and cooling your home accounts for approximately half of your electric usage. Since you are not in control of the weather, it is best to program your thermostat to safeguard against spikes in your energy consumption. If you do not have a programable thermostat, they are worth the investment and are reasonably inexpensive. If you raise your thermostat just 1 degree in the Summer, you could save 3% on your electric costs. Lower it 1 degree in the Winter and you could save up to 5%. You have the control of your power bill at the tip of your finger!
4. **Your water heater needs some help.** You can run hot water from your tap in under 30 seconds because your water heater is constantly warming

the tank. Even though you may not be using the hot water, your heater will always keep the water at the temperature you set. But you may not need your water temperature so high. Lowering the temperature of your water heater saves you money because you don't need as much electricity to maintain the lower temperature setting. You can also save money by adding a water heater insulation jacket to the outside of your water heater. That keeps the temperature locked in.

5. **You're keeping too many devices in standby mode.** When you turn off your computer, DVR, Play Station, and other devices, they usually go into standby mode instead of completely powering off, when they're left plugged in. Your devices don't sleep. They are constantly performing updates, downloading content and wasting energy. Unplug all devices when not in use.
6. **You're not running your appliances efficiently.** Are you not seeing the savings you hoped for even after switching to energy efficient appliances? You may not be running them efficiently enough to notice optimum energy savings. Many people forget to clean their appliances. Just like your vacuum works over time when it's clogged with dust and grime, your appliances have to work harder when they are not maintained well. When they have to work harder, they use more electricity. Things you can do today to make your appliances run more efficiently:
 - a. Change your air filters
 - b. Clean your refrigerator's condenser coils
 - c. Line/Air dry laundry as often as possible
 - d. Always wash/dry a full load of clothes
 - e. Turn off the heated dry on dishwasher
 - f. Don't overcrowd your fridge or freezer
 - g. Always Clean the lint trap in your dryer

What About My Water/Sewer Bill?

- A running toilet. A running toilet can use approximately 6,000 gallons of water every month. That will cost you almost \$25 a month for water alone. Another \$25 for Sewer.
- Busted pipe in the yard or under the house. If you notice a spike in your water usage, you should walk around your yard and look under your house for possible leaks.
- Someone is using your water when you are not home. Believe it or not, this happens. People will use your spigot in your yard for their own water usage.

****IMPORTANT**** If you have a water leak and get it repaired, bring proof that the repair is complete to Kim Evans at City Hall. The City will relieve the sewer charge off of your highest month's bill as a courtesy.