



## CONSERVE ENERGY TO SAVE ON YOUR SUMMER ELECTRIC BILLS

A hot and dry summer is being predicted for this part of the country, based on 2022 forecasts. And, compared to the 2021 summer season, which was neither hot nor dry, it is anticipated that more electricity (kilowatt-hours - kWh) will be used this summer due to the projected extreme weather conditions. When high temperatures are coupled with high energy usage – there is no question about it - this summer will likely be long remembered.

When more electricity is used and everything else remains the same, electric bills go up because of the increased usage. However, everything isn't the same for this summer.

Generally, the cost of fuel (wind, solar, hydro, coal and natural gas) makes up well over half (nearly 60%) of the cost of electricity per kWh. While some of these fuel types are about the same price as last year - some are not. Last summer, natural gas was a little below \$5.00 per MMBtu delivered to WFEC's power plants, while this summer, costs have just about doubled, explained WFEC CEO Gary Roulet. This increase is also

being experienced at the gas pump.

When natural gas prices go up, usually utilities can shift to coal generation to offset some of the cost. While the cost of coal is still priced similarly to last year, the ability to deliver over the rail system has been slow to recover from the "pandemic". Consequently, for the next few months, it will be difficult to accelerate and increase rail transportation. So, during these months, natural gas will be used as the primary fuel for electricity generation, instead of using more coal and reducing natural gas usage. The result – it will cost more per kWh of electricity, while at the same time, there will be more usage.

One way to help offset high energy usage at homes or businesses is through conservation efforts, particularly during the hottest parts of the afternoon and evening hours.

Another difference from last summer is the cost and supply of materials used to operate power plants and maintain transmission and distribution systems. Not only do these materials cost more,

but some are also in very short supply. As recently stated by Roulet, "When considering the summer months, it is hard to predict any other direction than strong energy (kWh) costs".

Above-average summer temperatures will contribute to high electricity peak demands as well as the potential for outages. The North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) assessment for this region is "elevated" during excessive temperatures, but also indicates this region has adequate resources and energy.

"It never hurts, though, to be prepared," commented Roulet.

What does all of this mean? Higher electric bills are very likely, along with the possibility, under extreme conditions, for some power service interruptions to be experienced. "WFEC's focus, as always, will be to keep the lights on and bills as low as possible," Roulet said.

*This article is courtesy of Western Farmers Electric Cooperative, SWRE's power supplier.*

## CEO's Message



CEO, Jeff Simpson

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### Southwest Rural Electric

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Rebecca Chambless, *Power Source* editor

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### Bill Pay Options:

SmartHub App  
[SWRE.com](http://SWRE.com)

1-833-890-9510 (*Automated Line*)

### Outage Reports:

1-833-590-0353  
SmartHub App

# THE BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY SOLAR

Have you ever walked out of your house on a sunny day and thought, “I wish I could harness the sun’s energy to power my home”? Maybe you have noticed solar panels on top of homes in your community, and maybe you have even seen a solar farm here or there. If you have considered solar as a part of your home’s energy mix—but have been dissuaded by high costs or maintenance requirements—we are happy to tell you that solar energy is more accessible than you might think!

SWRE has two Community Solar Farms located in Frederick (Highway 183 & Airport Road) and Vernon (Center Drive near the Madison Crossing Apartments). Members can purchase a share (equal to one panel) in quantities of 1-25. After the shares are purchased, participating members will receive a credit on their monthly SWRE bill based on their portion of the field’s production. SWRE has approximately 1,340 shares available for purchase. The contract period for Community Solar is 25 years. Participants do not own any of the panels or infrastructure.

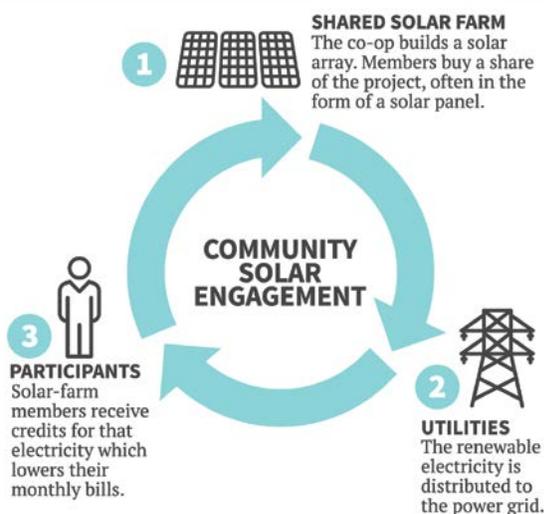
Community solar programs harness natural energy from the sun and often cost less than installing a solar system at your home or business.

If you are a homeowner, participating in community solar keeps you from having to worry about zoning restrictions or appealing to your homeowners’ association.

The community solar model is easy to understand. SWRE builds a solar array—a group of solar panels in an empty lot or field—then, you purchase a share of the energy produced, often in the form of one or more solar panels. The energy is distributed to the power grid and solar-farm members receive credits that lower their electric bills.

Participating in a community solar program also eliminates maintenance costs and concerns that can be a hassle for those who own and maintain their own residential solar system. With community solar, SWRE takes care of installation, maintenance and insurance fees, making it easy for members to participate.

## HOW COMMUNITY SOLAR WORKS



To learn more about community solar and other programs we offer, contact Member Services at 1-800-256-7973.

Jeff Simpson  
CEO

# KNOW THE SIGNS OF A SCAM

It's no secret that consumers with a water, gas or electricity connection have long been targets for utility scams, but fraudsters have changed their tactics since the Covid-19 pandemic. As consumers became more reliant on technology for work, school and commerce, scammers noted these shifts and adapted their tactics to this changed environment.

Imposter scams are the number one type of fraud reported to the Federal Trade Commission. While scam artists may come to your door posing as a utility worker who works for the "power company," in today's more connected world, attempts are more likely to come through an electronic device, via email, phone or text.

## COMMON TYPES OF SCAMS

A scammer may claim you are overdue on your electric bill and threaten to disconnect your service if you don't pay immediately. Whether this is done in-person, by phone, text or email, the scammers want to scare you into immediate payment so you don't have time think clearly.

If this happens over the phone, simply hang up. If you're concerned about your bill, call us at 1-800-256-7973. Our phone number can also be found on your monthly bill and on our website, SWRE.com. If the scam is by email or text, delete it before taking any action. If you're unsure, you can always contact us at SWRE by phone, or use SmartHub to check the status of your account. Remember, SWRE will never attempt to demand immediate payment after just one notice.

Some scammers may falsely claim you have been overcharged on your bill and say they want to give a refund. It sounds easy. All you have to do is click or press a button to initiate the process. If you proceed, you will be prompted to provide banking or other personal information. Instead of money going into your bank account, the scammers can drain your account and use personal information such as a social security number for identity theft.

If this "refund" scam happens over the phone, just hang up and block the phone number to prevent future robocalls. If this scam attempt occurs via email (known as a "phishing" attempt) or by text ("smishing"), do not click any links. Instead, delete it, and if possible, block the sender.

If you do overpay on your energy bill, SWRE will automatically apply the credit to your next billing cycle. When in doubt, contact us.

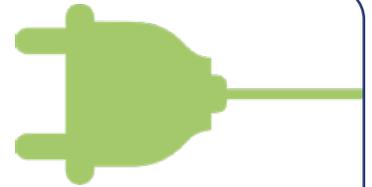
## DEFEND YOURSELF AGAINST SCAMS

Be wary of call or texts from unknown numbers. Be suspicious of an unknown person claiming to be a utility worker who requests banking or other personal information.

Never let anyone into your home that you don't know unless you have a scheduled appointment or reported a problem. SWRE linemen wear branded uniforms and will arrive in SWRE vehicles. When we perform work on our members' property or come into your home, our employees are professionals and will always identify themselves.

We want to help protect our community against utility scams, and you can help create the first line of defense. Please report any potential scams to us so we can spread the word to prevent others in the community from falling victim.

**BEAT THE PEAK**  
**3 P.M. - 7 P.M.**



Help us beat the peak! Each summer, Western Farmers Electric Cooperative, our power supplier, issues Peak Day Notices. Peak Days are traditionally called on the hottest days of the year because they are days of high energy usage. If SWRE members collectively manage energy usage on Peak Days, it can not only lower your summer electric bill, but it can have an impact on future rates.

Simple ways to conserve energy and save money:

- Don't run major appliances—dishwasher, washer, dryer, oven, etc.—between the hours of 3 p.m. – 7 p.m.
- Use your crockpot, air fryer, or grill to make dinner.
- Set your thermostat to 78 degrees and utilize your ceiling fans. Close your shades and drapes to stay cool.

## Trading Post

**For Sale:** Top-Load Kenmore Washing Machine, 10+ years old, good working condition, \$50; Long church pew, \$150; Vintage armoire-type chest with drawers and space for hanging clothes, approximately 5.5 foot tall by 4.5 foot wide, would make a good project piece, asking \$300. Call (580) 512-6674 and leave a message for dimensions, pictures, or additional info.

**For Sale:** Chicken eggs located in Jackson County, OK. Weekly/bimonthly perpetual schedule: \$5.00 dozen, buy more & save! Hens are free range, no hormones/antibiotics ever. Text/SMS "SWRE Ad" to (580) 917-8008.

**For Sale:** 2005 Arctic Cat 500 Red 4X4, 129 original miles, mint condition. Asking \$5,000. Call Earnest at (580) 706-0051 for more information.

*FREE classified non-commercial ad submissions are available for SWRE members only. Submissions must include the account holder's name and account number to be eligible. Ads are also posted on [SWRE.com](http://SWRE.com).*

*Send your ad to the marketing department by mail, e-mail or phone!*

*MAIL: P.O. Box 310, Tipton, OK 73570*

*E-MAIL: [marketing@swre.com](mailto:marketing@swre.com)*

*PHONE: 1-800-256-7973*



## TRIPLE BERRY SHEET CAKE

### INGREDIENTS:

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 2 boxes yellow cake mix | 2 Cool Whip tubs                        |
| 2 cup water             | Blackberries and strawberries (chopped) |
| 1 cup canola oil        | Raspberries and blueberries for topping |
| 6 eggs                  |   |
| Strawberry jam          |   |

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Using a flour-based Pam spray, spray a 9x13 baking dish then set aside.
3. In a stand mixer or a large bowl with a hand mixer; mix the cake mix, water, canola oil and eggs together until combined. Pour batter into the prepared baking dish.
4. Bake for 28-35 minutes; or until a toothpick or knife comes out clean.
5. Use any utensil with a rounded end to poke holes in the cake. Set aside to cool down.
6. While the cake is cooling chop up the blackberries and strawberries, set aside
7. Once the cake is cooled, grab a squeeze bottle and pipe in the strawberry jam into the holes.
8. Place the cake in the fridge for 5 minutes (to prevent jam from smearing when frosting).
9. Frost the top with the Cool Whip until cake is covered. Top the cake off with your berries.
10. Cut to serve and enjoy!

*Source: You can find this recipe by Jill at <https://kitchenfunwithmy3sons.com/triple-berry-cake/>.*

# SWRE

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