



## News from Floresville Electric Light & Power System

Volume 20, Number 3

May/June 2018

### FELPS Clarifies Changes in Bill Terminology

At the beginning of the year, FELPS changed the terminology on customers' bills to show what customers pay to FELPS and what is passed through to other entities to pay for generation and transmission. Since some customers have been confused about the change in the bill terminology, it must be emphasized that the change does not affect the **amount** customers pay, except in the case of customers who have solar power.

Customers who have solar power will see an additional charge—the Reactive Power Support Fee (RPSF). All other customers see different terminology on the bill but the bottom line remains the same.

The new bill presentation shows a \$0.05 per kilowatt hour charge for wholesale power costs and appears on the line Generation and Transmission. This amount was previously included in the base rate and shown as the Power Cost Recovery Factor. So the location of the charge on the bill has changed but the amount is the same.

The Monthly Service Charge remains the same. The Distribution Charge, formerly called the Energy Charge, does not contain any charges for the cost of wholesale power. So the net effect on the bill is zero.

### Customers with Solar Power

The RPSF, which affects only customers with solar power, is related to providing power to large motor loads, such as air conditioning units and refrigerators for distributed generation customers. Reactive power is not provided by most distributed generation units, so FELPS must make investments in its system to provide reactive power.

The amount of the charge is set at \$1.02 per kilowatt per month with the total monthly charge based on the nameplate capacity of the solar system. For example a 5 kilowatt solar system owner pays \$5.10 per month and a 20 kilowatt solar system owner pays \$20.40 per month.

The fee is designed to ensure that all distributed generation customers pay their fair share of the increased costs to the FELPS system. The charge may change in the future.

If you are unsure of your solar power system's nameplate capacity, please call 830-216-7000, sub-option 1, and speak with a customer service representative.

### FELPS Funds Scholarships and Youth Activities

FELPS again will help sponsor summer youth programs in the five cities in the service area and will support scholarships to graduating seniors at each of the five area high schools.

FELPS scholarships of \$750 will be awarded at each of the five high schools—Floresville, Poth, La Vernia, Stockdale and Falls City—to assist students with tuition at accredited colleges, universities or technical institutions.

Scholarship awards and the application process are handled by the school districts. Parents or guardians of scholarship recipients must be FELPS customers and students must have good academic and disciplinary records.

FELPS will donate \$2 per meter as a match for funds dedicated by each city to provide summer youth programs in Falls City, Floresville, La Vernia, Poth and Stockdale.

### FELPS Briefs

- Please note that the FELPS office will be closed on May 28 for Memorial Day and July 4 for Independence Day. Regular office hours will resume in each case at 8 a.m. on the following business day.
- To report outages, including on holidays and after business hours (Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.), please call 830-216-7000 and select sub-option 2.
- Visit [www.felps.us](http://www.felps.us) and follow us on Facebook and Twitter to get FELPS information and to learn about services. You can report outages 24 hours a day on the Web site, a good time-saver, particularly during storms.

## FELPS Contracts Meter Reading

In mid-March, FELPS began reading customers' meters through Texas Meter & Device Co., a contracted firm. The company's contract will continue during the next three years while a new Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) System is deployed and FELPS employees are trained for other job duties.

The gradual change to an automated system will allow FELPS to use existing staff to fill needs in other areas, allow for better information to customers on their usage, allow for more billing options in the near future and provide for better load information that will assist FELPS staff in determining the needs of the electrical distribution system before issues arise.

## National Designation Focuses on Electrical Safety

Designation of May as National Electrical Safety Month calls attention to the need to practice safety around electricity.

Each year, hundreds of lives are lost and thousands more are injured in needless electricity-related accidents in homes, schools, the workplace and recreational settings. To reduce the likelihood that you and your family will become victims of an electrical accident, be sure you are informed about electricity and its dangers.

Electricity's home is in the earth. When electricity is isolated from the ground, it will always look for the most direct path back to the earth, through any material in its way.

Modern technology and more than a century of experience have given us the ability to use electricity wisely and safely. Just follow a few tips to stay safe:

- When carrying ladders, pipes or other long items, always look up to locate power lines and avoid hitting them.
- Watch where you dig to avoid hitting underground lines. Call for a locator to mark underground services before planting trees and completing other digging projects.
- Never use electric equipment around water. Take particular care in the kitchen and bathroom when using electric appliances and never use electric tools in the rain or on wet surfaces.
- Never touch a fallen wire or assume the wire is not energized. If a power line is on the ground

or hanging loose, call FELPS to report it at 830-216-7000 and select sub-option 2.

- Use ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlets in bathrooms and kitchens where water is used and for outdoors.

The Electrical Safety Foundation International provides information about electric safety on its Web site: [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org). Check this important resource for additional ways to protect yourself and your family.

## Check Savings with Efficient Air Conditioning

SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Rating) is a good number to know when buying an air conditioner. Regulated by the U.S. Department of Energy, this rating provides useful guidance for selecting energy efficient central air conditioners.

Air conditioning can account for roughly 30 percent of the total electric usage for a home. So any reduction in the amount of electricity an air conditioner uses can mean money in your pocket.

The minimum SEER rating required on new central air conditioners is 13. This number may seem low compared with the most efficient today; however, just a few years ago, the minimum was 10. The higher the rating, the more energy efficient the unit will be in using electricity.

In South Texas, where summer temperatures can be really high, buying a central air conditioner with a higher SEER rating will save you enough money to pay for the initial investment. And you will enjoy energy savings for the life of the unit, typically between 15 and 18 years.

The SEER rating of the air conditioner is only one item to consider in achieving energy efficiency:

- A home also needs to be sealed and well insulated to cut down on drafts. Use caulk and weather stripping to seal any openings.
- Duct work should be checked annually for leaks. Cover holes and leaking joints with Underwriters Laboratories (UL) tape to prevent cooled air from being forced out or unconditioned air from being drawn into return ducts.
- A programmable thermostat will allow you to save by changing the settings according to times when you are away.
- Cleaning or replacing the air filter every two weeks during the summer season will make your air conditioner operate more efficiently.



## Contacting FELPS

Floresville Electric Light and Power System

1400 Fourth Street, P.O. Box 218, Floresville, TX 78114

[www.felps.us](http://www.felps.us) Twitter: @FELPS\_Electric Facebook: [www.facebook.com/FELPS.OnLine](http://www.facebook.com/FELPS.OnLine)

Phone: (830) 216-7000 • Fax (830) 393-0362

Business hours: Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

After 5 p.m.: (830) 216-7000 (for outages, press sub-option 2, or report outages online)

The Floresville Electric Light and Power System Board of Trustees meets the last Wednesday of each month at 8 a.m. in the utility offices, 1400 Fourth Street, Floresville.