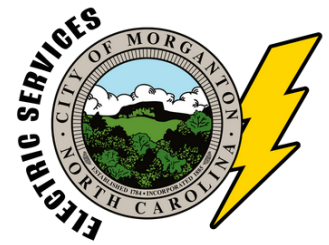


# Electric Services Newsletter

## “Avoiding Power Saving Gimmicks.”



Hello again folks! This is Brooks Kirby, the Electric Services Director for the City of Morganton. I hope each of you are doing well. The topic for this edition of the Electric Services newsletter is, "Avoiding Power Saving Gimmicks." You may ask "Why would I want to avoid something that could save me money?" There are some products out there that are not what they may seem and I would like to make you aware of the scams.

Some of you may be considering buying "Energy Saving Devices" for your home or apartment with the promise it will reduce your power bill. Before you spend your hard earned money let me share some facts with you.

The use of electricity has been slowly increasing in our city over the past 7 years. But, if you pay close attention to your power bill, your rates have been gradually going down. However, if you look at the amount of power used over the last 7 years it has been slowly climbing.

According to the detailed records we maintain, in April of 2016, the average residential customer used 626 kWh, for an average bill of \$102.91. In April of 2023, the average home used 731 kWh, for an average bill of \$82.67. This works out to a drop of 19.67% or an average \$20.24 decrease. The reason is that our rates have decreased more than the average increase in power usage.

The City is doing better than the national average as well. From the Energy Information Administration, ([www.eia.gov](http://www.eia.gov)) a branch of the Department of Energy, is the following;

In 2022, the U.S. annual average retail price of electricity was about 12.49¢ per kWh. Reading further on their website this breaks down as follows. The annual average retail electricity prices by major types of utility customers in 2022 were:

- Residential 15.12¢per kWh
- Commercial 12.55¢per kWh
- Industrial 8.45¢per kWh
- Transportation 11.66¢per kWh

In 2022, the home owners and apartment renters of Morganton were paying an average of 9.8¢per kWh in the 4 summer months and 9.3¢per kWh in the 8 winter months. This means your electric rates are an average 5.62¢per kWh lower or 37.17% less than the national average. Not bad for a small city in the foothills of North Carolina.

The reason for the lower average is due directly to the foresight the city leaders had back in the 1970s to sale bonds to become a nuclear powered city. By the way, those bonds will be paid off by 2031.

As for reducing your power bill be very careful of the claims you read about any device that the seller asserts will lower your bill. I have reviewed many of these type of products and from an electrical engineering aspect, their claims are suspect. Here is a list of some of the things they say it does...

- Best Power Saver in the Market
- Unbeatable Price (Only \$49!)
- Most Effective Energy Saver Available
- Stabilizes Home Current
- Eliminates Idle Power Usage
- Stops Electricity Overuse
- Helps Save On Electricity
- Lower Energy Consumption

There are dozens of these types of devices on the internet. As for their claims they are, at the least wrong, and at the worst deliberately lying. **The only way to lower your power bill is to reduce the power you use.** No device in the world will lower your bill like the internet claims. Only you can stabilize your home current, only you can eliminate idle power usage. Because only you can lower your energy consumption. Here are a few ways to make this happen:

- Turn off unneeded lights.
- Lower your thermostat by 1-2 degrees in the winter and raise it by 1-2 degrees in the summer.
- Add extra insulation in your attic and/or basement (crawl space).
- Replace single pane glass with double pane glass in your windows.
- Use door draft stops to reduce heat loss.

The City of Morganton offers help for you to recognize how and where you can reduce your power bill. We provide free energy audits and can test your meter if your bill is usually high. Please contact us for details at 828-438-5277. We would love to speak with you!

But most importantly, the city is constantly working to improve the reliability of your power. We are constantly working to reduce outages and shorten repair times. And we are continuously working to keep your rates as low as possible while providing the service you deserve.

If you ever need to reach the Electric Department, please call 828-438-5277. Please call or contact us with any concerns or comments.

*Brooks Kirby,*

Electric Services Director

