

MANAGE YOUR BILL WITH PRE-PAID METERING

The right solution for members who want to spend less time managing bills

Beginning in September, Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative (OTEC) will offer members a new way to manage their electric bills. Pre-paid metering, gives members the opportunity to pay for electric service as it is being used instead of waiting and sometimes being surprised when the monthly statement arrives.

"Pre-paid metering will not be for everyone, but we believe it is the right solution for members who want to spend less time managing their electric bills, and want to avoid late fees, costly connection charges, or large deposits," said OTEC's Director of Member and Program Services, Sandra Ghormley.

"Many utilities, like cell phone companies, have offered pay-as-you-go services for years, but, OTEC waited to make sure all features of



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their service worked before offering it to members."

"We spent a great deal of time planning and testing the software and process to make sure we could fulfill our commitment before making it available to our members," added Connie Lohner, OTEC's Office Supervisor for the Northern Division.

"Members can view their usage online and securely pay on their account any amount anytime of the day or night, increasing the ease and convenience of interacting with the cooperative," said Ghormley. "No more paper bills, no postage, no trips to the post office, no writing out checks, and no utility imposed due dates."

"It's a whole new way of doing business we think will be popular with the membership once they experience the benefits." ●

It is easy to get started:

It is easy to start a pre-paid metering account. An OTEC representative will review your application and explain details of how to take advantage of all the conveniences. Applications are available from any OTEC office, or can be sent and received electronically for our members who are on-the-go.

A one-time enrollment fee of \$10 and a payment of \$50 to establish a credit balance on your account is all that is needed to activate the service. Once the service is activated, any deposits currently on file with OTEC may be refunded or applied to the member's pre-paid metering account. There is a fee of \$5.00 added each month to cover program costs.

To encourage enrollment, OTEC is also offering a debt management service exclusively for pre-paid metering customers to help resolve past due balances and get started on the right foot.

It is easy to view your electric usage and make payments on your pre-paid metering account. The electric meter registers usage daily and reports this information through the power lines to OTEC's billing software. The software calculates the cost of any energy used and deducts this amount from the member's pre-paid metering balance. When the

account balance is low, an electronic alert is sent via email or text, reminding the member that "more fuel" is needed. Members can check their usage or balance and refuel their pre-paid metering account online via www.otecc.com, through OTEC's mobile app, or by visiting one of OTEC's convenient payment kiosks.

It is easy to save. A nationwide survey of electric cooperatives offering prepay programs reported higher levels of satisfaction and fewer past due balances. Primarily because members had greater awareness and control of their usage.

For more details on how you can enroll, please call your local OTEC representative.

OTEC Kiosk payment locations:

- **Baker City:**
Baker City Truck Corral, 515 Campbell Street
- **John Day:**
Chester's Thriftway, 631 West Main Street
- **Hines:**
Leathers Shell Station, 652 Hwy. 20 N.
- **La Grande:**
Sinclair Station, 1709 Gekeler Lane