

COOPERATIVE REVIEW

Energy for Today, Power for Tomorrow.



BillingInsights™ — An Online Billing Analysis Tool

Union Power has made available an innovative on-line software application called **BillingInsights™** for residential customers to analyze energy bills directly in your home. The goal of this software is to provide you with key energy information such as:

1. Answer typical questions about why your bill has changed
2. Show you where your energy and dollars are going

BillingInsights™ is a sophisticated home-energy use analysis tool, which is linked to your account's billing history. The account must have at least ten months of billing history. **BillingInsights™** uses the actual local weather temperature information, current energy rates, your home's profile, and presents a bill analysis in straightforward terms.

After completing a few commonly known inputs, the **BillingInsights™** software will accurately analyze your home's energy use and costs. As a result of completing the questionnaire, you will be able to get your questions answered quickly and efficiently.

HOW DO I USE IT?

BillingInsights™ provides an easy to follow, step-by-step process for inputting your home's profile so that you can complete the analysis. Just as in a recipe, the instructions are numbered for quick execution.

Log on to our website www.union-power.com and click the **BillingInsights™** icon located in the Online Services section on our home page. Once you click on the icon, you must enter your account number in the first step. Step 2 will direct you to complete the individual attributes to describe your existing home using drop-down windows. And, finally in step 3, you click on the Analyze My Electric Bill button to analyze your bill. This action brings together your electricity bills, actual local weather data for the past year, and a smart analysis of your home based on your home profile. The result is a summary display of critical information designed to answer your billing questions.

First, the information is graphically displayed showing your electric bills in the context of the actual weather, which is the biggest determinant of changes in the bill. Seeing this



alone can address many of your billing questions.

Next, you will see at the top of the results screen suggestions for how you can reduce energy use and cost based on your specific circumstances and home profile.

Finally, the application answers the typical bill inquiry concerns:

WHERE ARE MY ENERGY BILL DOLLARS GOING?

This section allows you to see an estimated breakdown of your home's annual energy usage. The usage is broken down into the common categories of Heating, Cooling, Water Heating, Lighting, Cooking, Refrigeration, Appliances, and Plasma TVs.

WHY HAS MY BILL CHANGED?

This section gives you an indication of the primary drivers behind your electric bill. It will determine the dollar-value of the change in temperature and home energy usage behavior.

Using **BillingInsights™**, you will be able to determine the impact of weather and personal behavior on your electric bills as well as view how you personally use energy. You will also learn about ways you can save by making a few no-cost to low-cost changes to your home.

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EXECUTIVE PERSPECTIVE

Will Congress Support Nuclear Power?

Congress is working on legislation that would mandate nationwide greenhouse gas reductions. But with or without legislation, our country will move toward cleaner fuel sources that emit less carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. As we move forward in this carbon-constrained world, nuclear power is one of our best energy options. North Carolina's electric cooperatives are asking their members of congress to include robust incentives for nuclear power in federal energy legislation.

Public attitudes are shifting on nuclear power. Some former opponents of nuclear power now see the benefits of this emission-free resource. A Gallup poll earlier this year showed a majority of Americans favor nuclear power.

Public opinion, recent Congressional action, and regulatory hurdles make it difficult to construct new coal power plants. Without coal, we must depend on nuclear power, natural gas, and renewable energy for future power needs. Nuclear power plants, while expensive to build, are economical to run and provide the most reliable power of all emission-free fuel sources. As not-for-profit power providers, cooperatives have the benefit of the consumer connection — we search for the most affordable, cleanest power

resources. Right now, cooperatives, by law, cannot take advantage of federal tax incentives on nuclear power. We are asking Congress to create comparable incentives so cooperatives have the ability to participate in future nuclear power projects if they benefit cooperative consumers.

One major challenge for nuclear power is the proper handling of nuclear waste. Current nuclear sites have the ability and capacity to continue storing nuclear waste onsite, but this situation cannot continue indefinitely. Congress must follow through on a plan to dispose of nuclear waste safely at a central repository or allow for next generation recycling as done in Europe and Japan.

Currently, half the power used by electric cooperatives in North Carolina is generated by nuclear power. When cooperatives invested in nuclear power decades ago, many wondered if the costs would ultimately benefit consumers. Now that carbon emissions are an increasing concern, emission-free nuclear power is more attractive than ever. Cooperatives' nuclear portfolio also has provided reliable power generation at a consistent cost.

Nuclear power continues to be a topic that causes strong reactions. We hope consumers will see the benefits of nuclear power and the long safety record in this country. Nuclear power must be a major component of carbon reductions in this country.

Weatherization Assistance Available

Local community agencies are coordinating the federal program to help low-income families add energy efficiency improvements to their homes. Families with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines or those receiving certain cash assistance payments are eligible for weatherization services.

Weatherizing your home can save you at least \$300 in yearly energy expenses according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

To apply, contact your local agency to arrange for application and assistance for testing of your home. These tests are used to determine air infiltration, heat loss, levels of carbon monoxide and identify recommended energy efficiency, safety and health measures. The following are county and local agencies coordinating low-income weatherization assistance.

Cabarrus

Cabarrus County Planning Services Division
Concord, (704) 920-2141

Gaston, Mecklenburg, Stanly, Union

Gaston Community Action
Gastonia, (704) 861-2283

Rowan

Salisbury-Rowan Community Action
Salisbury, (704) 633-6633

State Coordinating Agency Weatherization Services

Office of Economic Opportunity
NC Department of Health and Human Services
Raleigh, NC 27601
(919) 715-5850 www.ncdhs.gov/oeo

PLAY IT SAFE



In this day and time, personal safety has to be a top priority for everyone. In the past, there have been reports of incidents involving people posing as utility workers, by phone and in person.

Some electric co-op members and customers of other utilities have received telephone calls from scam artists demanding immediate credit card payment to avoid disconnection of service. Union Power urges members to use extra caution if they're asked for personal information or access to their home. At no time should a Union Power employee need to come into your home to make repairs.

The company recommends the following tips to customers who are approached or contacted by someone claiming to be a Union Power employee:

- 1 Always ask for company identification. All Union Power employees, and employees working for companies contracted by Union Power, carry company-issued photo identification and can provide this information immediately.
- 2 If you are not certain a telephone call is coming from Union Power or one of its contractors, do not provide any personal or banking information. Union Power recommends asking the caller to provide their employee number and to verify the customer's account number, or simply hang up and call Union Power's customer service department at (704) 289-3145 or 1-800-922-6840.

- 3 Union Power employees, on occasion, may be dispatched to a customer's home for unscheduled routine maintenance. If a visitor or caller is unable or unwilling to provide their name or employee identification, please call Union Power's customer service department at (704) 289-3145 and report it to local law enforcement authorities.

To help you identify legitimate Union Power employees look for:

- Marked truck with Union Power logos on the doors and/or on the front tag.
- Uniforms of khaki-colored shirts with a Union Power patch and olive green pants.
- Ask for photo identification.
- Any member can call the Cooperative office, at (704) 289-3145 or 1-800-922-6840, to verify that an employee has been dispatched to their residence.

At Union Power, we're looking out for you.



Steps to Restoring Power

Winter is just around the corner and with that comes the chance of large-scale outages due to ice storms.

If you need to report an outage and if the phone number is not recognized, you will be instructed to enter additional information to help us identify the location of the problem. You can report your outage by providing us with any one of the following items that are listed on your billing statement:

- phone number
- account number
- meter number

**CALL 1-800-794-4423
TO REPORT AN OUTAGE**

It is important that your phone number be listed correctly on your account. To add or update your phone number, visit our website, www.union-power.com, or call our customer service department at (704) 289-3145 or 1-800-922-6840.

RIGHT-OF-WAY CLEARING



During the next month, you may see our tree-trimming crews in your neighborhood. Carolina Tree Care and ABC Tree Professionals will be working in the following areas of Cabarrus, Rowan, Stanly, and Union Counties:

Cabarrus County: Highway 52, Wagoner Road, Short Cut Road, Gold Hill Road East, Mattons Grove Church Road, and Chellman Lane

Rowan County: Highway 52 and Rowan Cabarrus Road

Stanly County: Collie Rd, Matton Grove Rd, Frick Road, Millingport Road, Miller Road, Earl Road, Misenheimer Road, Blalock Road, Burris-Burleson Road, Kendalls Church Road, Caudle Road, Esther Road,

Harwood Road, Bear Creek Church Road, Lowder Reunion Road, Watson Road, Hillcrest Road, Ellen Road, Gold Hill Road, Paul's Crossing Road, Rogers Road, Ryan Road, Old Salisbury Road, and Danville Road

Union County: Lancaster Highway, Parkwood School Road, Crow Road, Halcyon Lane, Tara Drive, Reid Circle, South Rocky River Road, Maple Knoll Drive, Autumn Wood Drive, Griffith Road, Parks McCorkle Road, and Long Hope Road

For more information about Union Power's vegetation management program or tree trimming practices, please call (704) 289-3145 and speak with Wil Ortiz (ext. 3323) or Carrie Lorenz (ext. 3291). For monthly right-of-way clearing updates, visit our website www.union-power.com.

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Union Power Cooperative provides safe and reliable power with exceptional value to over 65,000 members in Union, Stanly, Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, and Rowan counties.

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Business Hours

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday
(704) 289-3145 or 1-800-922-6840

www.union-power.com

24-Hour Outage Reporting Service and Account Information

1-800-794-4423

Call Before Dig

NC One Call Center—Dial 811



SERVICE CHARGES:

Security Deposit—charges vary

\$0, \$175, \$375

Connection Fee

\$25

Late Payment Charge

\$5 or 1.5% of past due balance, if greater

Returned Check Fee

\$25

Meter Test

\$75 (refunded if not accurate)

Dual Meter Comparison

\$50 (refunded if not accurate)

Trip Charge

\$25 (checks or money orders only, no cash)

RECONNECT CHARGES:

(collected in advance)

Normal Hours

\$50 (if called in before 4:00 p.m.)

After Hours

\$100 (if called in after 4:00 p.m.)

Weekends and Holidays

\$100

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IN THE COLD!

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Your Heating & Cooling
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We service most major brands

Free Estimates







Union Services

A Union Power Company

1543 Rocky River Road North
Monroe, NC 28110

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