

# **INSIDE GARDNER**

WINTER 2021/2022

## **UNDERSTANDING YOUR ELECTRIC COSTS**

The key to understanding your electric costs is understanding the breakdown in charges, consumption calculations and the associated line items listed on your bill. Here is some information to help you evaluate your energy consumption and costs.

### **WHAT CHARGES ARE INCLUDED IN THE ELECTRIC PORTION OF A CITY BILL?**

A customer's electric charges consist of a base rate of \$.10380 per kWh, a \$6.72 monthly fee, a Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) charge, and a required city/county sales tax of 2.975%.

### **WHAT IS A KWH?**

A kilowatt-hour, otherwise known as a kWh, is a way to measure how much energy being used. It's not the number of kilowatts a customer uses in an hour. Instead, a kWh equals the amount of energy one uses by keeping a 1,000-watt appliance running for one hour. For example, turning on a 100-watt bulb would take 10 hours to use one kilowatt-hour of energy. A 2,000-watt appliance, on the other hand, would only take half an hour. It all comes down to dividing the number of watts in an appliance into 1,000.

### **WHAT IS THE PCA?**

The PCA is a variable energy rate that fluctuates from month to month as the city's purchased power costs increase or decrease. Since the price of fuel and purchased power fluctuate due to many factors, including weather, it is difficult to predict the amount of revenue needed to cover the costs. Therefore, implementing the PCA fee and averaging costs over a 12-month period allows the city to meet expenses related to purchased power and natural gas and minimize large fluctuations in the overall rate structures.

### **HOW DID LAST YEAR'S POWER EMERGENCY IMPACT EACH CUSTOMER'S BILL?**

The February 2021 record-low temperatures across the nation resulted in increased natural gas prices, leading to the higher cost of producing electricity. Those costs impact the PCA and have been rolled over 12 months. The city estimates that the PCA will eventually decrease but not to the rate before the February 2021 energy emergency as overall natural gas prices have increased. For this reason, most, if not all, utility customers outside of Gardner have seen similar increases.

### **WHY DOES THE CITY PURCHASE VERSUS GENERATE POWER?**

Most of the city's electric needs are met through energy purchases from outside resources (OPPD, WAPA, GRDA, EMP1, Dogwood, and MARSHALL). The city generates some of the electricity required to meet customer demand with dual fuel Combustion Turbine Units. The cost of generating the city's turbines is more expensive than purchasing in power pools, which are energy contracts that include several other municipalities who can purchase electricity on the open market at cheaper rates.

### **HOW DO GARDNER'S ELECTRIC RATES COMPARE TO OTHER CITIES?**

According to the American Public Power Association, Gardner has one of the lowest electric rates compared to other cities that own their utilities. Gardner's electric rates are comparable to private-sector rates. It is important to note that some entities may charge additional tariffs and other fees while Gardner rolls most costs into their base rate.

### **WHAT'S A TYPICAL MONTHLY ENERGY BILL?**

Electric bills vary significantly due to seasons; however, the annual average monthly residential electric bill equals \$125.45 for electric usage equal to 937 kWh. This does not include water or sewer charges.

### **WHAT ARE SOME WAYS CUSTOMERS CAN REDUCE THEIR ENERGY COSTS?**

One of the best ways a customer can lower their electricity bill is by being energy-conscious. It begins by taking simple steps like turning off the lights when leaving a room and adjusting the thermostat when away from home. Customers can take even more control over their expenses by paying attention to their appliances. Appliances that are on standby all the time, such as televisions, computers and stereo systems, use power all day long, even when they are off. This can be resolved by unplugging these devices. In addition, customers should use energy-saving appliances when possible.





A message from former

# MAYOR STEVE SHUTE

Every year, the seasons remind us that, no matter how warm in the summer or how snowy and cold in the winter, inevitably, change is coming. Fall leaves give way to icy winds, which turns to budding trees and renewal of nature for another yearly cycle.

Due to this past November election in Gardner, we have seen a cycling of the city's Governing Body, with some members that have departed and some that have changed seats. So, I wanted to take this final message to recognize these changes. Randy Gregorcyk, who faithfully served the city as an elected official for the last four years, has left the council. Randy, good luck and Godspeed in your future endeavors. Re-elected to a second term is Council Vice-President Mark Baldwin (congratulations, Mark!), whose counsel on the Governing Body has been invaluable. I am thrilled that Mark will continue to bring his analytical mind to the discussions on the dais. I

cannot be happier to see my friend and colleague, Todd Winters, assume his new position as Mayor of Gardner. Todd has had a heart for this community for many years. It has shown not only in his official capacity as a councilmember but also in his chiropractic practice, his roles with Rotary, and formerly, Festival on the Trails. I know you will do an amazing job in your new role, Todd!

This outgoing Mayor's Message is the hardest one I've had to write, but not for the reasons you might think. I've never felt the pride of ownership in being mayor, per se, but I've always felt humbled and privileged to serve as the custodian of this seat, if only for a little while. Many mayors have come and gone before me in this city, and like a changing of the seasons, the old gives way for the new – new ideas, new approaches, and a new style of leadership. I have moved over to a council seat, thanks to those in the community who saw fit to support me. Hopefully, I can help Todd's transition be a swift and effective one. My late mother imparted to me the philosophy that I should leave the world a little better than it was when I entered it. I pray that I have left the mayor's seat – and the city – a little better due to my brief presence there. Again, thank you - it truly was an honor to have served as your mayor these last four years.

Stay #GardnerStrong!



A message from new

# MAYOR TODD WINTERS

By the time you read this message, I will have transitioned to my role as mayor of Gardner, Kansas. I am deeply honored to serve in this capacity, and I want to express my gratitude to our citizens for putting their faith in me and entrusting me with this great responsibility. I promise to work tirelessly to do what's best for the advancement and betterment of the community, which includes taking a common-sense approach to growth and development and making decisions that will keep Gardner a safe place to live.

I want to thank former mayor Steve Shute for his steady and passionate leadership over the past four years. I look forward to continuing the good work he began to progress the city. I'm stepping into an advantageous situation. We have an extraordinarily talented staff in place and a highly experienced City Council that I will continue to work with, as I have over the past four years. We can keep the momentum going - there is no learning curve, which developers and businesses can appreciate.

Gardner, we live in an amazing city, and we have great things in store for our growing community - our future is bright! I look forward to the next four years serving as your mayor. Thank you again for putting your trust in me. Let's continue to Blaze New Trails together!



Best wishes!

# PUT A FREEZE ON WINTER FIRES



Home fires occur more in winter than in any other season. That's because most of us spend our time cozied up inside throughout the winter, longing for the warm weather to return. According to data, half of all home heating fires occur in December, January and February. One in every seven home fires and one in every five home fire deaths involve heating equipment. Because we run our homes in overdrive during cold weather, it's important to be fire smart. Here are some instructions to help increase your winter fire safety knowledge.

- Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet from any heat source like fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators or space heaters.
- Keep portable generators outside, away from windows, and as far away from your home as possible.
- Install and test carbon monoxide alarms at least once a month.
- Plug only one heat-producing appliance (like a space heater) into an electrical outlet at a time.
- Have a qualified professional clean and inspect your chimney and vents every year.
- Store cooled ashes in a tightly covered metal container, and keep it outside at least 10 feet from your home and any nearby buildings.

## CITY SEEKING TO FILL SEVERAL FULL-TIME POSITIONS



The City of Gardner is looking for talented individuals to join the team. There are full-time positions available, spanning nearly every department. Those positions are as follows:

- Chief Operator (Wastewater)
- Journeyman Electric Lineman (Utility)
- Maintenance Worker- Line (Utility)
- Police Officer
- Senior Staff Engineer (Public Works)

Visit [www.gardnerkansas.gov/jobs](http://www.gardnerkansas.gov/jobs) to learn more about these positions and view all job openings. Apply today!

## CITY TO EMPLOY INTERMITTENT UTILITY SHUTOFFS DURING COLD WEATHER MONTHS



In previous years, the city discontinued the shutoff of water services when temperatures fell below freezing despite customers not paying their utility bills. However, with the capabilities of the recently installed smart meters, the city will employ intermittent shutoffs of electricity on accounts with outstanding balances. For example, customers may experience a 15-minute power outage on an hourly basis. While electric shutoffs will impact a home's temperature, the city will ensure a liveable temperature is maintained. Customers can avoid these intermittent shutoffs by contacting the Utility Billing Division at (913) 856.7535 or visiting City Hall, 120 E Main St., to pay their bills or make payment arrangements.

### GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS

Messages for the Governing Body can be left at (913) 856-0939 or with the following info.



**MARK BALDWIN**  
Council VP

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Councilmember

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**UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS** (MONDAYS AT 7PM)

**Jan. 18 Feb. 7 Feb. 21 March 7 March 21**



View more City Council meeting dates at **GARDNERKANSAS.GOV**



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# PARKS AND RECREATION JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The City of Gardner Parks and Recreation Department is hiring for the seasonal positions listed below. Individuals must complete an online application at [www.gardnerkansas.gov/jobs](http://www.gardnerkansas.gov/jobs) to be considered. Those that do not have access to apply online may visit the Parks and Recreation counter at City Hall, 120 E Main St, or call (913)856-0936 with any questions. The available seasonal positions are as follows:

- Pool Manager:** Primary responsibilities include overseeing all operations at the Gardner Aquatic Center (GAC) and directly training and supervising 100+ employees. Must obtain Red Cross Lifeguard Training Certification. Wage: \$19.25/hr. (Age 18+)
- Assistant Pool Manager:** Primary responsibilities include assisting Pool Manager, oversight of daily operations, pool cleanliness and staff training. May be asked to receive Red Cross Lifeguard Training Certifications. Wage: \$13.25/hr. (Age 18+)
- Swimming Lesson Coordinator:** Red Cross Lifeguard Certified and have experience teaching swimming lessons. Wage: \$16.25/hr. (Age 18+)
- Head Lifeguard:** Must have lifeguard experience. Primary responsibility to assist lifeguards in day-to-day duties through training. Must become a Red Cross-certified lifeguard. Wage: \$11.25/hr. (Age 16+)
- Lifeguards:** Must become certified through Red Cross Lifeguarding Training. Wage: \$10.50/hr. (Age 15+)
- Swim Lesson Instructors:** Must become certified through Red Cross Training. Wage: \$10.50/hr. (Age 15+)
- Pool Facility Attendants:** Primary duties include working tube huts, lazy river, slides and cashiering. Wage: \$8.50/hr. (Age 14+)
- Pool Maintenance:** Primary responsibilities include cleaning swimming pool, decks, drains and restroom facilities. Must be available for weekends. Wage: \$11.00/hr. (Age 15+)
- Concession Workers:** Responsibilities include food sales at the GAC and/or sports complex. Should possess good math and customer service skills. Wage: \$8.50/hr. (Age 14+)
- Facility Supervisors:** Must be able to work in the evenings, 2 to 3 nights per week, Mon-Sun. Occasional weekends are required. Primary responsibilities include supervising baseball/ softball games. General knowledge of baseball/softball rules a plus. Wage: \$14.25/hr. (Age 18+)
- Soccer Officials:** Primary responsibilities include officiating youth soccer games, mainly working weekends. General knowledge of soccer rules is a must. Wage: \$14-\$20 per game, depending on league. (Age 14+)
- Umpires:** Primary responsibilities include umpiring baseball/softball games; working 1 to 5 nights a week – some weekends are possible. General knowledge of baseball/softball rules is a must. Wage: \$20-\$50 per game, depending on league. (Age 14+)
- Park Maintenance Seasonal:** Must have a valid driver's license and available evening and weekend hours. Primary responsibilities include mowing, landscaping, athletic field preparations, and other park maintenance duties. Wage: \$12.25/hr. (Age 16+)
- Sports Complex Concession Worker:** Position runs March through early November. Responsibilities include food sales at the three sports complexes. Available to work nights and weekends. Wage: \$8.50/hr. (Age 14+)