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New EPA power plant rules threaten grid reliability

On April 25, the Environmental Protection Agency released four major new regulations for the electric industry, including a much-anticipated rule to cut emissions from power plants, a sweeping move that will aggravate reliability concerns for electric cooperatives and other utilities nationwide.

“The path outlined by the EPA is unlawful, unrealistic and unachievable,” says Jim Matheson, CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. “It undermines electric reliability and poses grave consequences for an already stressed electric grid.”

The power plant rule constrains existing coal and new natural gas plants by requiring them to install carbon capture and storage technology that is not yet reliable or commercially available.

“The new EPA rules ignore our nation’s ongoing electric reliability challenges and are the wrong approach at a critical time for our nation’s energy future,” Matheson says.

The power plant rule will force the early closure of electricity generation sources that are available 24/7 and will also impede the construction of new natural gas plants. The timing of these sweeping new rules is particularly

troubling as electric utilities face a surge in demand for electricity from factors like transportation electrification and the rapid expansion of data centers to support artificial intelligence, e-commerce and cryptocurrency.

Under the new rule, existing coal-fired power plants that plan to operate past the start of 2039 must install CCS

to capture 90% of emissions by 2032.

The rule also requires new natural gas plants that operate more than 40% of the time to install CCS and capture 90% of their carbon emissions by 2032. These standards, and their reliance on unproven CCS technology, will undermine electric reliability.

Electric cooperatives understand the need to keep the lights on at a cost local families and businesses can afford. Clean energy technologies must be balanced with generation sources that are always available to ensure a reliable electric grid.



NRECA STRAIGHT TALK

Reliability is essential to electric cooperative operations—our everyday life at Jackson Energy—and to neighbors in our communities. That’s why policymakers need to hear from you about the importance of reliable, affordable power.

Electric co-ops like Jackson Energy deliver power to 42 million Americans. Our top priority is to meet members’ energy needs, and we must have reliable electricity available to do that.

Visit [voicesforcooperativepower.com](https://www.voicesforcooperativepower.com) to connect with your legislators and advocate for reliable energy.

Lisa Baker, Editor

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Happy Independence Day

Co-op values unite us all

This July Fourth, there's no better time to celebrate the values that unite us, not only as Americans, but also as a cooperative family.

Jackson Energy is guided by seven internationally recognized principles. Just as our nation's leaders swear an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, members and leaders of your cooperative have a duty to uphold these principles.

As I reflect upon our cooperative and American values, three of those principles seem especially relevant to me.

Cooperative Principle 2: Democratic Member Control

Each of our members has an equal say in the guidance of Jackson Energy. When our board of directors is elected, each co-op member has a single vote. That is as American a principle as you can find.

The board of directors of a co-op makes important strategic decisions for the organization, while the day-to-day running of Jackson Energy is entrusted to the co-op manager and employees.

Cooperative Principle 4: Autonomy and Independence

As we mark Independence Day, don't forget that Jackson Energy is also independent. Our responsibility is to serve our members with safe, reliable and affordable electricity.

Cooperative Principle 6: Cooperation Among Cooperatives

We work with East Kentucky Power to provide power so that we can distribute it to the communities we serve. Our membership in both the national and Kentucky electric cooperative associations helps Jackson Energy leverage the collective strength and influence of co-ops to best serve you and keep your rates affordable.

We are proud of our co-op and of our country, and we know that to truly serve both, we cannot take either of them for granted.

That means staying engaged with the issues that affect us and doing our patriotic duty to show up at election time. That's why Jackson Energy is a strong supporter of the Co-ops Vote initiative to make sure our voices are heard in our representative government.

I hope you and your family have a safe and fulfilling Fourth of July, and that we can each take a moment to reflect on the values that unite us all.

By President & CEO
Carol Wright



Rounding it up for our communities

Since 2004, Jackson Energy members have donated more than \$511,000 to community programs and services through the Operation Round-Up program.

Operation Round-Up allows a member to voluntarily round up their monthly bill to an even dollar amount, and that extra money is placed in a trust account that is used to fund community projects.

An independent board reviews grant applications from community groups for funding.

Projects funded in 2024 year-to-date totaled \$14,525 and consisted of the following organizations:

- \$600 to Estill County Historical Society
- \$500 to Lee County High School Project Prom
- \$1,000 to Jackson County Loan Closet
- \$625 to Fogertown Fire and Rescue
- \$600 to Resurrection Home
- \$400 to Owsley County Farmer's Market
- \$500 to Parkinson's In Motion
- \$1,000 to Lee County Tourism
- \$1,000 to Panco Youth Center
- \$1,000 to Owsley County Alliance for Recreation
- \$750 to Blessings in a Backpack



Operation Round-Up Board Member Joe Crawford, left, presents a \$600 check to Yvonne Harrison with the Estill County Historical Society.

- \$750 to Swiss Colony Fire Department
- \$500 to Rockcastle Chamber of Commerce
- \$500 to Owsley County Bitty League Basketball
- \$500 to Kentucky Stream Heritage Corp/Museum
- \$500 to Jackson County Cattleman's Association
- \$800 to Jackson County Public Library
- \$250 to Owsley County 4-H Club
- \$250 to Clay County 4-H Club
- \$250 to Hands and Feet Ministries
- \$250 to Jackson County Farmer's Market



Sue Christian, left, accepts a \$1,000 Operation Round-Up check on behalf of Owsley County Alliance for Recreation from Jackson Energy's Michelle Gabbard. Photos: Brent Jackson

- \$250 to Jackson County Adult Ed.
- \$250 to Beattyville Main Street
- \$250 to Clay County Shrine Club
- \$250 to Pongo Volunteer Fire and Rescue
- \$250 to Estill County Center for Pregnancy and Parenting
- \$250 to Living Stone Outreach
- \$250 to Stay in Clay
- \$250 to Kentucky Music Hall of Fame

Summer temps are heating up

The air conditioning is most likely on at your house in July. This is Kentucky, after all, and July is one of the warmest months of the year. All of the extra work by your cooling system to keep your home comfortable adds up and shows up on your monthly utility bill.

July is typically the hottest month here in Kentucky. Extreme temperatures put a strain on your HVAC equipment, causing it to run longer and at maximum capacity. When you use more electricity, your bill will be higher.

So, what can you do? Jackson Energy offers several resources for controlling your summertime power bill to the extent possible.

Monitor your energy use. Sign up for Jackson Energy's SmartHub, a free resource for tracking your electricity consumption. Use the information to customize energy-saving strategies for your home.

Take a home energy audit. Visit our website and click on the Virtual Energy Assessment link to learn how your home's using energy. We'll make suggestions on how to reduce your energy use.

Set an alert. Tap into SmartHub's alerts option to be notified via email or text messages when your summertime power consumption climbs so you can take proactive steps to control costs.

Buy a smart thermostat.

During the summer months, you can set your smart thermostat to a warmer temperature while you are away so you don't waste energy and money. Smart thermostats offer greater convenience, energy savings, and control than manual or programmable thermostats.

Hit the library. Visit our Residential Energy Library at togetherwesaveky.com/energy-tips for step-by-step guides and easy DIY projects to save energy and money on your power bills.

This summer, take advantage of these programs and resources to control your energy consumption and save money while staying cool.

No space to grill outdoors? Go electric

When you think of grilling burgers, steaks and veggies outdoors, the debate usually is between gas and charcoal. But a third option is the right one for a lot of grilling fans: electric.

The electric grill's most attractive features include:

- It requires no fire or flame, so it's not necessary to keep it at a distance from your house. This is a great benefit for those who live in apartments or townhouses.
- It heats up quickly. Just plug it in and start cooking. There's no wait for the charcoal to turn white-hot.
- It can grill sandwiches. Gas and charcoal models can't do that.
- If you buy an indoor/outdoor model, you can grill all year long.
- It's easy to clean. Because the grill does not create any charcoal ash, it

creates very little mess while cooking.

If you decide to buy an electric grill, consider:

- If you plan to shuttle your grill between the kitchen and the patio, buy a portable model that fits on a tabletop.
- Choose a model made from commercial-grade stainless steel so it will resist corrosion, especially if you plan to grill outdoors.
- Look for a brand that offers a lifetime warranty. The least expensive models come with warranties as limited as 90 days to three years.
- Electric grills are powerful and should be the only appliance plugged into



PIXELSHOT/ADOBE STOCK

- an outlet. If they have to compete for power, preheat times lengthen.
- Most electric grills are designed for outdoor use only, so if you want to use it inside, choose a model designed to direct food drippings outside of the unit as a fire safety measure.

Keep your cool this summer

There's no need to lose your cool when you get your summer electric bill during the hottest days of the year. Instead, try some alternatives to cranking up the air conditioning when the sun is blazing and it hasn't rained in days.

Install a dehumidifier. If it feels as humid indoors as it does outdoors, there's too much water in the inside air. If you see water dripping out of the air conditioner or if you have to set it so low that you're freezing just to reach a comfortable humidity, the dehumidifier will help.

Cook outdoors or eat cold food. Salads, raw veggies and fruit make great summer meals, and they don't require you to turn on the stove or oven, which can make the air in the kitchen too warm. Instead, gather the family for a barbecue and fire up the outdoor grill or serve a cold buffet on extra-hot evenings.

Hang bright curtains.

Red, orange and yellow tend to deflect heat, so for curtains, those colors are energy efficient. Closing the curtains or blinds during the day will keep the sun from heating up the home you're trying to keep cool. Or install solar screens or a window tint to let in the light but keep out the heat.

Run fans. Ceiling fans with blades that turn counterclockwise pull heat up out of the room while sending a soft breeze down into it, so anyone nearby will feel cooler. Portable electric fans placed in windows facing outward can suck heat out of a room on days when you want to give your air conditioner a break.

Run your dishwasher and clothes washer and dryer after dark. Appliances that use heat to operate also throw



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some heat into the rooms where they are located. So run them during the coolest part of the day, after the sun goes down.

Turn off pool pumps and heaters when not needed. Pool pumps do not need to run all the time. Running them for about 8-12 hours a day, especially during summer, is usually sufficient for proper circulation and filtration.