

Understanding Your Electric Rates Transcript

It's a product you almost never think about, but you count on it 24 hours a day-- every day. It helps keep you cool in the summer and warm in the winter, it charges all your electronic devices, and can make your food hot or cold. Of course we're talking about electricity, and it's our job to deliver that electricity to you safely and reliably every day. So when you flip that switch, the lights come on.

We generate electricity at our power plants and deliver it through thousands of miles of wires and poles. When we need to upgrade the system- to make sure it continues to provide you with safe and reliable power- we can't just raise prices.

You see, we're regulated by the Public Service Commission of South Carolina, so before we can adjust our prices, we must make the case that the current rates are not sufficient to cover our costs.

And it's not just maintaining system reliability that costs money. There's other things like- increasing environmental standards to help make the air cleaner and making sure we're always prepared to respond to devastating, unpredictable storms that may impact your service.

All of these things can quickly add up, but not one of those dollars can be reimbursed until regulators approve them.

That's different from the way most other companies operate. For instance, when costs change for a gas station owner- that owner simply adjusts the price for a gallon of gas.

But it's different for us. It's our top priority to provide you with safe and reliable power, so we go ahead and invest in our infrastructure whenever it's needed. When an expense is unexpected or costs more than we're able to collect with our current rate structure, we have to borrow money to help pay for it until we can present a rate case to regulators.

You may be wondering, “What exactly is involved with a rate case anyway?” Well, a rate case is the way we request a change in the price we charge for delivering electricity to you.

When we do file a rate case, the PSC requires that we provide detailed documentation to show exactly what we’re requesting reimbursement for in the filing. They have up to 6 months to review the details and consider the effects the rate change may have on you before making a final ruling.

After the regulators have reviewed all of the documents and held public hearings to get feedback from customers like you, they’ll tell us how much of the requested rate adjustment they’ll allow, and when the adjustment will go into effect.

Rate cases are a necessary part of allowing us to continue investing in, and maintaining the electric system. They allow us the ability to provide safe and reliable service, while continually improving our infrastructure to serve you now and in the future.

It takes a lot of power plants, poles, wires and people to deliver the energy you rely on 24 hours a day, every day. So now, if you hear about the change in rates, you’ll know how it helps us deliver safe, reliable electricity, and you can be sure that when you flip that switch, the lights come on.