



Westar Energy's 2018 Rate Case: Frequently Asked Questions

OVERVIEW

Westar Energy customers in Kansas may soon see an increase in their monthly service fee as well as electric rates. And solar customer bills could climb even higher if a new tariff is approved.

The increases are part of a combined rate case that Westar Energy has filed (docket 18-WSEE-328-RTS) with the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC). The request includes a \$4 increase in the standard monthly service fee, which would increase the basic fee to \$18.50, and a surcharge for some residential solar customers, raising their bills by an average of 50%.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE RATE CASE?

- Residential solar customers who installed on or after October 28, 2015, will see an average bill increase of 50%.
- Residential and business electric customers will see an increase between \$70 and \$840 annually on the basic fee alone.
- Electric vehicle owners will also experience new rates which will include a demand charge.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. How are my energy bills currently determined?

A. You have a basic fee for customer services and a variable rate based on your energy usage.

While the national average is less than \$8, Westar's basic fee is currently \$14.50 per month. Added to that is a per kWh charge (\$/kWh). The more energy (kWh) you use, the higher your bill; but the basic fee stays the same until utilities request an increase.

Q. What's wrong with this approach?

A. Nothing. A basic fee to recover billing and collection costs, with most of the other costs of delivering electricity reflected in the per kWh charge, gives you the ability to control your bill by taking steps to reduce your electricity use. CEP believes that an increase in the basic fee restricts customers' ability to lower their energy bills through efficiency measures or renewable energy. In this rate filing, Westar is proposing a \$4 increase in the basic fee and asking for a surcharge on customers who installed their own energy source using solar or wind on or after October 28, 2015.

Q. Shouldn't customers expect rate increases?

A. CEP agrees that the cost to maintain and upgrade infrastructure should be shared. Some rate increases are to be expected, but it's important to include customer input and participation in the discussion.



The Climate + Energy Project seeks to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions in America's Heartland through the ambitious deployment of energy efficiency and renewable energy, in policy and practice. Join the Conversation at climateandenergy.org!

Q. How will these rate cases impact the growing solar energy industry? What if I want to put a solar panel on my house?

A. Solar customers or those interested in distributed generation will be negatively impacted by the increase surcharge and basic fee. They could see as much as a 50% increase on their monthly bill. This is a huge disincentive to anyone considering adding rooftop solar. Instead of saving over \$300 per year with her solar investment, one solar customer will pay an additional \$125 per year if she keeps her solar panels. It would be cheaper to disconnect them.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

This is a great opportunity to work toward practical solutions for a clean energy future. The Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC) needs to hear from Kansans. Your voice matters!

- ✓ Stay informed! Sign up for Climate + Energy Project's updates (climateandenergy.org)
- ✓ Follow us on Facebook [facebook.com/CEPheartland/](https://www.facebook.com/CEPheartland/)
- ✓ Write a Letter to the Editor
- ✓ **Submit a comment by 5 p.m. Thursday, July 18**



Online: http://kcc.ks.gov/pi/complaint.cgi?dkt=18-WSEE-328-RTS	
Email: public.affairs@kcc.ks.gov Fax: (785) 271-3111	Phone: 1-800-662-0027 or (785) 271-3140 TDD Kansas Relay Center: (800) 766-3777
Mail: Kansas Corporation Commission, Office of Public Affairs and Consumer Protection, 1500 SW Arrowhead Rd., Topeka, KS 66604-4027.	
Reference Docket Reference Docket No. 18-WSEE-328-RTS	

**Submit your comments to the Kansas Corporation Commission
by 5 p.m. Thursday, July 18!**



The Climate + Energy Project seeks to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions in America's Heartland through the ambitious deployment of energy efficiency and renewable energy, in policy and practice. Join the Conversation at climateandenergy.org!