

FLEMING-MASON ENERGY

cooperative news

FEBRUARY 2026

Back to basics

Telling the co-op story

Have you ever wondered why your electric cooperative sends you a magazine? It's a good question—and I'm excited to explain.

When the electric cooperative movement began in Kentucky during the 1930s, not everyone understood what electric co-ops were, the problems they solved or the values for which they stood. Co-op leaders saw the need to create a publication that would help people understand the cooperative story, offer practical tips and education, advocate for co-ops during challenging times and celebrate our local people and places.

This magazine was created for just that purpose. Every month, *Kentucky Living* magazine reminds readers what co-ops are and what we stand for. A quick refresher: Fleming-Mason Energy exists to make life better in our community. We do this by providing safe, reliable electricity at the lowest possible rate, by donating time and money to worthy causes in our community and by responding to your needs as our consumer-members. We are owned by you and governed by a board that you elect.

Kentucky Living also offers us a way to share practical tips and educational

materials each month. Electricity is an essential service, but it can be dangerous, and we want to make sure everyone in your household knows how to stay safe. We offer tips for energy efficiency, as winter weather affects each one of us, and we share information about electrical topics, helping you understand how your power is generated, how it's transmitted and distributed and how Fleming-Mason Energy responds in the event of an outage.

Your magazine also keeps you informed about energy challenges that could impact you as a cooperative consumer-member. Those challenges have changed throughout the decades, and Kentucky's electric cooperatives have always risen to the occasion. For several years, we've been updating you on grid reliability. This month, our cover story looks into the role of cooperatives as consumer advocates. As energy demand increases and data centers in Kentucky become more of a reality,

we want to make sure you aren't left to cover those additional costs. See more on page 14.

Finally, your magazine celebrates the people and places that make our community special. You can't read *Kentucky Living* without feeling the local pride we share. And with topics including travel, food, economic development, agriculture, home and garden, the great outdoors and so much more, there's always something for everyone.

Kentucky Living is one more example of Fleming-Mason Energy's mission to make life better in the communities we serve. Thanks for reading, and for being part of our cooperative family.

At your service, 24/7

Should you experience an electric outage, cooperative employees are standing by to respond 24/7. To report an outage, call 1-800-464-3144.



Brandon Hunt
PRESIDENT & CEO



Contact us:

In Fleming County:
(606) 845-2661

Other Counties:
(800) 464-3144

Hours:
7:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

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Value of Electricity

Kentucky's electric rates among nation's lowest

Abundant coal resources and not-for-profit electric cooperatives are helping keep Kentucky's retail electricity rates among the country's lowest.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration reports the commonwealth's rates are regularly ranked among the most affordable in the U.S., often placing within the top 10. Among the 26 states east of the Mississippi River, Kentucky's retail electric rates are typically the lowest.

Data collected by the EIA in August 2025 reported the nation's average residential electricity rate is 17.62 cents per kilowatt-hour. Hawaii residents pay the highest rates (38.9¢/kWh). The Bluegrass State's overall average electricity price and residential rates (13.4¢/kWh) for the same period were the seventh lowest in the nation and ranked third lowest in the eastern U.S.

For most of our members, residential rates are fifth-lowest in the country and 25% below the national average.

Locally sourced coal is a primary contributor to affordable rates.



TIM WEBB

Kentucky ranks as the sixth largest coal-producing state in the U.S., providing a robust fuel supply for coal-fired power generation. Coal accounts for 69%—the largest share—of the energy mix used for commonwealth electricity generation. Natural gas, more abundant in the state's western half, accounts for 23%.

In Eastern Kentucky's rural communities, electricity is predominantly supplied by not-for-profit electricity cooperatives, such as Fleming-Mason Energy. In turn, these member-owned cooperatives are members of East Kentucky Power Cooperative, which operates the power generation plants that supply the at-cost power they distribute to homes and businesses.

Sources:

Electric Rates by State November 2025 [saveonenergy.com \(13.4 cents/kWh\)](https://www.saveonenergy.com/electricity-rates/electricity-rates-by-state/)
<https://www.saveonenergy.com/electricity-rates/electricity-rates-by-state/>

How much does electricity cost? Choose Energy Electricity Rates Report based on Aug. 2025 prices from U.S. EIA (13.4 cents/kWh)

<https://www.chooseenergy.com/electricity-rates-by-state/>

U.S. Electricity Profile 2024 - U.S. EIA (Using 10.07 cents/kWh)
[https://www.eia.gov/electricity/state/#:~:text=Table_title:%20US%20Electricity%20Profile%202024%20Table_content:%20header;%7C%20Net%20summer%20capacity%20\(MW\):%205%2C586%20%7C](https://www.eia.gov/electricity/state/#:~:text=Table_title:%20US%20Electricity%20Profile%202024%20Table_content:%20header;%7C%20Net%20summer%20capacity%20(MW):%205%2C586%20%7C)

Kentucky's Low Electricity Prices September, 23, 2024
<https://www.dependablepowerky.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Kentucky-Electric-Rate-Analysis-Revised.pdf>

Keep your family safe when using a space heater

If you use a space heater to warm a space in your home, garage, workshop or barn always take precautions to prevent fires that could hurt you or your loved ones and damage property.

Look for a space heater that provides 10 watts per square foot of the room. So if the room is 150 square feet (10 feet by 15 feet for example), look for a space heater that produces up to 1,500 watts.

Avoid using extension cords and power strips not rated for high amperage. Space heaters require a lot of energy and can be dangerous if used with extension cords. If possible, plug your space heater directly into the wall.

Never use a space heater you suspect may be damaged. Inspect your heater before you use it to ensure the cord is not frayed or cracked. Never run a space heater cord beneath a carpet or rug. This can damage the cord and create a fire hazard.

During use, frequently check to determine if the heater plug or cord, wall outlet or faceplate is hot. If so, discontinue use immediately and contact an electrician.

When using a space heater, establish a 3-foot, kid-free zone and never put a space heater in a child's room or leave it unattended. Be sure to keep the heater at least 3 feet away from furniture, bedding and curtains.



KENTUCKY'S TOUCHSTONE ENERGY COOPERATIVES

Ensure the heater is on a level, stable surface where it cannot be knocked over. To prevent the risk of electric shock, never touch a heater with wet hands.

Stay safe and warm this winter!

Membership has its privileges

We are often asked why we call those who purchase electricity from Fleming-Mason Energy members and not customers. While the two might sound like the same thing, they're not.

Being a customer means you pay a bill, get a service and the relationship ends there. But when you're part of a co-op, you're a member. Membership has its privileges, and as a member you get the benefits of belonging to a cooperative.

YOU'RE AN OWNER

Unlike a for-profit utility company owned by shareholders, you and the rest of our members own the co-op. That means we answer to you, not investors who've never walked our streets, eaten in our local restaurants, shopped in our stores or worshiped in our churches.

Frankly, we believe the not-for-profit model is the best and most effective way to serve our members.

But every decision your member-elected co-op leaders make is meant to serve those who live and work along these power lines. When you pay your electric bill, you're investing in our community.

YOU HAVE A SAY

Fleming-Mason Energy membership is about more than keeping the lights on. It also gives you a voice in how things are run, because our directors are people like you, who live and work in our community.

From electing board members to giving input on community projects, you can take an active role in the co-op's direction. The dollars you spend on

co-op electricity don't disappear into unknown corporate pockets. They stay here to support local schools, businesses and initiatives, benefiting people and places you know and love.

And when Fleming-Mason Energy does well, so do you. Unlike for-profit utilities, we return extra revenue to members through capital credits. That's money back in your pocket—something no traditional utility customer ever sees.

YOU HAVE POWER

Here's the bottom line: Every Fleming-Mason Energy membership comes with power. More than just the kind that keeps your refrigerator running, this power influences our co-op and strengthens our community. And that makes all the difference.

Are you SAD?

Doctors suggest electric light therapy can help

If you're feeling more than a little blah, it could be more than winter blues you're experiencing. Winter's gray skies and shorter days can lead to seasonal affective disorder, commonly known as SAD. The disorder is a type of depression typically experienced in the fall and winter, reports the Mayo Clinic.

It's normal to feel sad for short periods, but if you feel down for many days at a time and can't get motivated to do activities you normally enjoy, SAD may be the reason. Signs of the disorder include low energy, prolonged moodiness, sleeplessness and difficulty concentrating. Craving high-carbohydrate foods,

oversleeping, weight gain and suicidal thoughts are also characteristics of SAD.

TREATING SAD

A variety of treatments are available for those suffering from SAD. The National Institute of Mental Health recommends consulting a health care provider about the potential benefits and risks of treatment options.

Light therapy, which involves sitting close to an electric light-emitting source every morning for at least 30 minutes, is a mainstay for treating wintertime SAD. A SAD light is about 20 times brighter than an ordinary



2020 FIRKESHUTTERSTOCK

indoor bulb, and is meant to make up for diminished natural sunlight in darker months. When choosing a light for SAD, prioritize a 10,000 lux intensity, a large screen size and a UV filter for eye and skin protection.

PLUG INTO SAFETY

Tips for charging your devices

Something as simple as charging your phone could be dangerous.

- Only purchase charging cords and devices from trusted sources. Low-priced options are often unregulated and untested.
- Only charge on cool, well-ventilated surfaces away from flammable objects. Always unplug cords when they're not in use.
- If you're charging your phone and accidentally drop it in water, you could be electrocuted. Unlike hair dryers and electric razors, devices not meant to be used in a bathroom are not equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters.



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