



**November 2023**

Dear New River Light and Power Customer,

For nearly 110 years, Appalachian State University's New River Light and Power (NRLP) has prided itself on being your highly reliable, low-cost electric power provider. In fact, NRLP has not had a basic electric charge adjustment since 2018.

Like other areas of service, the cost of doing business has increased substantially over the last five years. To allow NRLP to continue providing quality service to you, NRLP has gained approval from the North Carolina Utilities Commission (NCUC) to increase our base electric charges. Because we have focused on efficiency and effectiveness to keep costs low over the years, even after this increase, **NRLP will still be among the most affordable utility providers in North Carolina.**

### **What does this Rate Case mean for you?**

Beginning with services **billed on and after November 1, 2023, NRLP customers will see an increase in their electric rates due** to adjustments that were passed by the NCUC on October 16, 2023. Residential customers who consume 750 kWh each month will see an increase of \$7.04 per month. Commercial customers will see similar increases based on their energy consumption and load characteristics. These funds will allow us to continue improving the excellent service you have come to expect.

### **NRLP continues to invest and improve its electric system.**

Over the last year, NRLP has made great strides to improve our system. NRLP rebuilt our last delivery point to a higher capacity to ensure customers' future needs are met. NRLP has also made aggressive efforts to convert overhead lines to underground in areas of the highest historical level of outages due to wildlife and tree growth. These large capital improvements are the most progressive steps NRLP has taken in over a decade to ensure we continue to provide the highest level of service and reliability possible.

### **Itemized rate structure on your bill for fuller transparency.**

The look of your monthly bill is changing. The NCUC has approved the modification of rates on monthly bills to give customers a better understanding of charges and to offer more transparency. The Electric Charge line on your bill will now be referred to as an Energy Charge and will be broken down into two sections, NRLP Distribution Charge and Wholesale Power Supply Charge. Both the utility's distribution charge and the wholesale power supply charge make up the retail cost of electricity. Customers may see both the prior and new configuration on one bill as we make the switch. Please be assured that you are not being billed twice.

### **Customers have more choices when considering renewable energy.**

As we committed in 2021, NRLP has created options for customers who would like to install renewable energy. Up until the approval of this most recent rate case, NRLP offered a "Buy All/Sell All" rate for customers who chose to install generation. Buy All/Sell All is offered by over 30 electric utilities in North Carolina and is common across the country. It is the simplest way of installing generation and does not require special wiring to existing homes. NRLP simply installs a meter at your generation site and records how much energy you generate. NRLP calculates the benefit of your energy and compensates you for all of your generation. This credit will adjust along with your retail rate with the change in electric costs. As with any rate, this compensation is reviewed and approved by the North Carolina Utilities Commission to ensure every customer is compensated for the value of the generation they supply.

Now, **NRLP is pleased to offer a second option to our customers who choose to generate energy — Net Billing.** This option does require modifications to your home electric service but when complete, the energy generated by the customer

will be reflected on your monthly bill and will not be a separate credit. In addition to applying all generation to the customer's consumption, any excess will be exported to NRLP's system and compensated at the full retail rate. Since NC statute is clear that customers are not to be compensated for more than the value of solar, under the Net Billing rate, customers will be charged a fixed amount based on the size of their solar system to ensure NRLP does not transfer any costs to customers who do not generate electricity.

If your home is not suitable for generation but you want to make the switch to clean energy, NRLP has a third option for customers who want a choice of where their energy is generated.

### **Green Power Program**

NRLP's Green Power Program offers customers the choice of purchasing renewable energy without the need to invest in costly equipment or enter long-term contracts. Through our wholesale contract with Carolina Power Partners, NRLP purchases energy from renewable sources to offer this unique opt-in program. The utility does not profit from this effort and funds collected enable the program to continue. Through the Green Power Program, NRLP has purchased over 17,000,000 kWh of carbon free energy. This is equivalent to approximately 9 MW or 45 acres of solar. To participate, visit [nrlp.appstate.edu/green-power-program](http://nrlp.appstate.edu/green-power-program) and purchase clean energy for as little as \$5 extra per month.

### **Assistance is available for those in financial need.**

NRLP understands that many customers may be struggling to meet increased costs in recent years. **NRLP offers several programs and resources.** Energy audits are available free of charge to all customers, as well as energy tracking and forecast tools accessible on our website. To help with household budgeting, we offer a prepay billing option designed as a flexible, pay-as-you-go plan that puts customers in control of how and when they pay for electricity.

Additional options are also available for those who are struggling to pay their electric bills:

- NRLP partners with Hospitality House of Northwest NC through NRLP's Good Neighbor Round Up Program, to help our customers who are struggling to pay their electric bills.  
To inquire about assistance through the Good Neighbor program, **visit [hospouse.org/wecan](http://hospouse.org/wecan) or call 828-264-1237 ext. 2.**
- Watauga County Social Services also offers resources, including the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) and Crisis Intervention Program (CIP). To inquire about assistance through these programs, **visit [wataugacounty.org](http://wataugacounty.org) or call 828-265-8100.**
- WAMY Community Action, Inc. offers numerous programs to help individuals and families in need, including the state's Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP). The program offers a variety of energy solutions including repairs, replacements, and weatherization of homes. Please **visit [wammycommunityaction.org](http://wammycommunityaction.org) or call 828-264-2421 for more information.**

NRLP continues to seek ways to meet our customers' expectations of providing reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy. As we move forward in a continuously changing industry, NRLP remains committed to providing the level of service that our customers in the High Country have grown to expect.

As always, if you have any questions or suggestions on how we can better serve you, please contact us at 828-264-3671 or [nrlp.appstate.edu](http://nrlp.appstate.edu).

Sincerely,



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Appalachian State University