



July 31, 2023

Lathrop Irrigation District began a fiber optic project to transfer the communication method for remotely reading the meters from the unreliable cell service to high-speed fiber optic cabling in the beginning of 2023. While most of this was seamless to our customers, the final transfer of the project was delayed due to supply issues and available resources and resulted in the inability to communicate with many of the customers meters for the August 1, 2023 billing period (the July 25th reading). Since it is impossible to send someone to manually read the over 1600 meters that were not sending the readings in on the date the meter reads were needed for billing, it was necessary to allow the billing system to estimate the readings for that statement. While the system has a very sophisticated methodology of estimations, the solar component makes it a bit more challenging. The system creates an estimate using three criteria: 1) last month's reading; 2) the same month last year; and 3) an average of the past 12 months. This system is very effective in most instances, however, many of our customers have recently installed solar, so the estimation may have a heavier influence if the last year's reading did not include the solar offset. The same thing may have occurred on the estimation for the excess generation, resulting in a higher credit than actually earned.

Staff does review the validation reports and many of these instances were manually over-written with human logic estimations, but there are likely many others that were not obvious and may have been estimated higher than actual usage or excess credits. In many cases, the readings will catch up next month and be back on track, but in some cases, staff may need to take a closer look and make adjustments. Now that our meters are back online and communicating, we can look at the actual usage and make a determination if an adjustment may be justified or if the usage will likely balance out with the next month's billing.

If you feel your estimate is out of the expected range (you bill will have an "E" on the statement if it has been estimated as highlighted below) please give our staff a call and ask for a review of your estimate. If it does appear that the estimate will not correct itself with the next reading, we can make necessary adjustments so the next billing will reflect the new meter reading with the adjustment for this month's reading.

METER	PREVIOUS READING	CURRENT READING	MULTIPLIER
ELECTRIC [REDACTED]	06/25/23	07/25/23	
SOLAR PRODUCTION	31414	32129	
ELECTRIC 3239 [REDACTED]	06/25/23	07/31/23	
ENERGY CHARGE	53209	54909	E
420 KWH @ 0.194900			
1263 KWH @ 0.263100			
17 KWH @ 0.375200			
RECEIVED ENERGY	09191	09384	E
193 KWH @ 0.060000-			
INFRASTRUCTURE CHARGE			

We would like to emphasize that there is nothing wrong with the meters, the issue was not being able to obtain the readings from the meters in time to get the billing out as scheduled. While it is not optimal to estimate readings, it is a tool that is available in situations such as this one and does allow for correction if necessary. The good news is that the completion of the fiber optic project will allow us more reliable readings in the future now that we won't have to rely on the cellular communication in the established areas. As we continue to grow, our fiber project will increase as well, but cellular is always a good back up for the newer areas until all of the infrastructure can be built. It is important that cellular carriers continue to improve their reliability as well, as we realize that if the coverage is not reliable for our meter communications, customer are affected as well and we will continue to encourage cell carriers to improve their services as well. We are honored to be your electric utility and will always be finding ways to improve our level of service to our customers.