News & Views
from Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

What does it cost to play?

Energy use of video game consoles

Today, more than 40 percent of all homes in the United States contain at least one video game console, and after this Christmas, that number is definitely higher. And all that gaming is adding up to serious energy use. After conducting the first ever comprehensive study on the energy use of video game consoles, NRDC and Ecos Consulting found that game consoles consume an estimated 16 billion kilowatt-hours per year—roughly equal to the annual electricity use of the city of San Diego. Because this estimate is based on the assumption that half of all users leave their device on all the time, gamers can significantly reduce the energy consumed by their consoles through simple steps like turning off the console when not actively playing a game or watching a movie and enabling power management features when available.

New Gaming Systems Are Popular, Often More Power Hungry

For the study, the power use of the latest and prior generation game consoles offered by Microsoft (Xbox), Nintendo (Wii), and Sony (PlayStation) were measured. Among the most popular consoles, the Nintendo Wii uses one-seventh as much power as the Sony PlayStation 3 and one-ninth as much power as the Microsoft Xbox 360 during game play. Each console does, however, offer a different set of features and a different game play experience, with the Xbox and PlayStation both offering high-end 3-D graphics that require more power to generate. To their credit, Sony and Microsoft continue to optimize their systems after their initial launch, resulting in significant energy savings.

A Quick Look at the Most Popular Consoles

Nintendo Wii

Using an average of just 16 watts in Active mode, the Wii is the juice sipper of the group. Attracting buyers with novel, interactive game play rather than power hungry, high-end graphics, the Wii uses far less power to operate than its competitors.

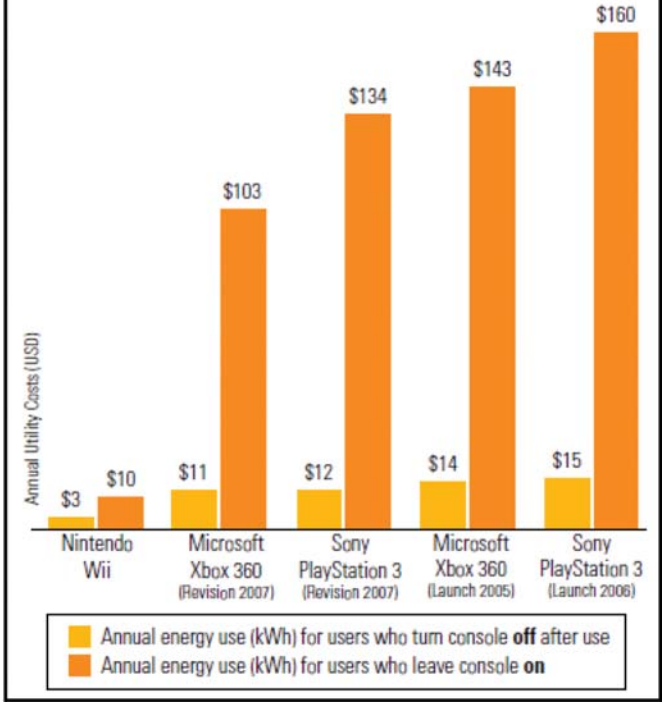
Microsoft Xbox 360

Consuming an average of 119 watts in Active mode, the Xbox 360 sits in the middle of this widely spaced field. The Xbox does offer users a built-in auto power-down option, but the feature is disabled by default and buried deep in the system menu.

Sony PlayStation 3 (PS3)

Burning through an average of 150 watts in Active mode, the Sony PS3 draws the highest amount of power of the video game consoles on the market in 2007. In October 2008 Sony introduced a power management feature via online update, but it too is disabled by default.

The Price of Play: Annual Energy Use and Costs for Three Popular Gaming Systems[3]



How To Save Energy in Your Own Home Immediately

A game console that is left on 24/7 will use approximately 10 times more annual energy than one that is turned off after use. Consequently, the single most effective way to save energy is to power down your system—after saving your game if necessary—when not actively playing. If you own a console with a power-saving feature such as auto power-off after a preset time, use it. To learn more about setting up this feature, visit *www.nrdc.org/energy/consoles/contents.asp.*

Wholesale rates impacting your co-op

Manager's Notes
by Ray Ellis

Lincoln Electric has enjoyed a very favorable and low cost wholesale power supply contract with the Bonneville Power Administration these past years. We are now in a new contract that is substantially different and which will have a profound effect on our retail rates. Under the new contract Bonneville will examine its rates every two years and adjust them according to its revenue requirements. Long periods of stable wholesale rates will no longer be available and will require LEC to follow a similar rate examination.

Wholesale rates make up 50 percent of all expenses at LEC and weigh so heavily in our budget that when an increase of any magnitude occurs it requires us to adjust our rates accordingly. LEC will experience a 23 percent increase in our wholesale power cost in 2012. This amounts to about $800,000 in added expense. I am sure that you can imagine what sort of impact that will have on our finances. I would like to say that we could absorb this increase without it being reflected in our rates but that is not possible.

We have been able to mitigate some of the effect by reducing expenses in other areas but making up an $800,000 increase just isn't possible without impacting our service and reliability. In the coming months LEC's board and staff will be evaluating how to best to allocate this price increase into our rates. We will work hard to keep you informed of when and how much of an increase will be coming but I wanted to let you know well in advance of any such action.

Thank you,
Ray

Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.

News & Views

Published monthly by Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc. Eureka, Montana

Lincoln Electric's board of trustees meets monthly at the Eureka office. The regular meetings are scheduled for the third Monday of each month at 7 p.m. Members with items of interest are encouraged to contact the general manager in advance of the meeting.

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General Manager Ray Ellis

In case of power failure:
Call 889-3301 or 1-800-442-2994
Anytime day or night
After hours voice-mail for messages 889-3304

Visit us on the Web at:
www.lincolnelectric.coop
e-mail: info@lincolnelectric.coop

Business and Boardroom Briefs

The regular meeting of the board of trustees was conducted November 21, 2011. A quorum of trustees was present and the board took the following action:

- Approved a five-year right of way clearing contract with CLS Contracting
- Approved changes to the following policies: 501-Organizational Chart, 504-Grievence Procedure, 507-Drug & Alcohol, and 513-Employee Discipline
- Approved a bid from Grizzly Security for a building security and fire protection system
- Accepted a five-year pole-testing bid from CLS Contracting
- Presented trustee Tom Klyver with his certificate as a NRECA Certified Credentialed Director

	Year to Date 10/31/11	Year to Date 10/31/10
YTD Kwh Sales	89,429,907	84,268,214
YTD Revenue	$6,928,688	$6,021,477
YTD Cost of Power	$2,539,737	$2,293,933
YTD Operating Exp	$3,656,432	$3,269,794
YTD Margins	$788,206	$513,137
# of Members	4,046	3,991
# of Meters	5,341	5,257
Miles of Line	929	923
Total Utility Plant	$29,562,868	$28,509,898
Member Equity	$7,791,546	$7,104,692
Avg Residential Usage (kWh)	956	1,003
Avg Residential Billing	$82.54	$85.98

Electric co-ops fight for balance between regulation and keeping electricity bills affordable

For the past several years, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has pushed an aggressive regulatory agenda that could potentially cost electric utilities nationwide tens of billions of dollars and impact service reliability. In response, electric co-ops have urged EPA to pursue a balanced approach that makes sure any rules keep the lights on and electric bills affordable.

Last fall, Congress got into the act. Bills to head off, slow down, or stop various EPA regulations cleared the U.S. House.

For example, the House passed the "TRAIN Act "—the Transparency in Regulatory Analysis of Impacts on the Nation Act—which would require EPA to more fully analyze the economic impact of its regulations. The TRAIN Act would also nullify EPA's Maximum Achievable Control Technology rule aimed at curbing emissions of hazardous air pollutants, such as mercury, emitted by coal-fired power plants and the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule that seeks additional caps on emissions of acid rain-causing sulfur dioxide and smog-contributing nitrogen oxides from generating stations in the eastern half of the country. However, the Senate is unlikely to take up the measure.

Another piece of legislation passed by the House would ensure that coal ash, a byproduct of burning coal that is used safely in many building and highway construction applications, continues to be treated as a non-hazardous material. A similar bill has received bipartisan support in the Senate.

As congressional Democrats and Republicans wrangle for openings to pass competing legislative initiatives, the resulting partisan gridlock shows no signs of abating and will likely continue through the November 2012 election. This means even routine legislation will face difficulties becoming law.

In today's political environment marked by partisan gridlock, electric cooperatives are working to remind lawmakers and regulators that the costs of meeting environmental rules must be balanced with the need to keep electricity affordable, safe, and reliable.

Winter Storm Safety

Snow and ice storms are an inevitable part of the winter season. However, they can lead to downed power lines and outages. Remember the following tips to stay safe and warm should you find yourself in the dark after a severe winter event:

- Never touch a fallen power line, and assume all wires on the ground are electrically charged. Call Lincoln Electric at 889-3301 or 1-800-442-2994 to report it immediately. Avoid contact with overhead lines during cleanup and other activities.
- In the event of an outage, an alternate heating source—such as a fireplace, kerosene space heater, or wood stove—may be used. Extreme caution should be taken.
- Fuel- and wood-burning heating sources should be vented. Be sure to follow manufacturer's directions.
- Make sure carbon monoxide detectors and smoke detectors are working properly.
- Do not use a gas oven for heating. A gas oven may go out or burn inefficiently, leading to carbon monoxide poisoning.
- If you use a portable generator to power a heating source, be sure the generator is located outside your house for proper ventilation. Do not use a generator in an attached garage. Follow manufacturer's directions for operating the generator.

Ideally, your family will stay warm until the power comes back on. But keep an eye on family members for signs of hypothermia, which include shivering, drowsiness, and mental and physical slowness. The elderly and young children are particularly vulnerable to hypothermia. Call 911 immediately if you notice these symptoms. At least one telephone in the house that does not depend on electricity should be available in the case of a power outage.

Sources: Consumer Product Safety Commission; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Ag Safety Database)

PNGC Power
Smart. Local. Connected.

PNGC Power Elects Officers

LEC manager Ray Ellis elected chairman of the board

At their November meeting, the PNGC Power Board of Directors elected officers for the coming year, with Lincoln Electric Manager Ray Ellis getting the nod for the Chairman in 2012. PNGC Power, based in Portland, is an electric generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative owned by 14 Northwest electric distribution cooperative utilities with service territory in seven western states. PNGC provides leadership and power supply options as well as other management services to its member-owned utilities. The board of directors has 14 members, nominated by each of their respective local community-based boards of directors.

Ray Ellis

John Prescott, PNGC Power President & CEO said, "The Board of PNGC Power provides strategic direction to this $174 million (in annual revenues) generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative, serving combined electricity loads for 172,000 retail residential, commercial and irrigation accounts throughout the Northwest."