



ENERGYWISE® LOAD CONTROL

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. WHY IS THERE MORE PLANNED LOAD CONTROL THIS YEAR?

Prices are unusually high in the electricity and natural gas markets this year, largely due to inflation and supply constraints. This is projected to continue through the 2022-2023 winter season. Additionally, there will be pricing pressure in the wholesale power markets during the heating season due to natural gas supply competition with domestic heating.

Great River Energy, our wholesale power provider, will manage costs by implementing load control to reduce load during peak pricing hours for members enrolled on our demand side management programs, including Dual Fuel, Peak Shave Water Heating, and Interruptible programs. This includes both morning and evening control periods, as well as weekends for residential programs.

2. HOW LONG DOES A LOAD CONTROL PERIOD LAST?

This depends on the program(s) you are enrolled in:

Dual Fuel: Typically, Heaters can be controlled with a maximum continuous control time of 12 hours per day. Dual Fuel systems can be controlled up to a maximum of 400 hours per heating season.

Peak Shave Water Heating: Water heaters can be controlled for up to 8 hours on a peak load day.

3. IS THERE A WAY I CAN FIND OUT WHEN YOU ARE CONTROLLING?

Yes, you can visit our website, www.stearnselectric.org/load-control and select "View control times for Stearns Electric's EnergyWise® programs at the top.

If you'd like to sign up to receive load control notifications ahead of schedule control periods, you can email energywise@stearnselectric.org with your name, address and account number. An email notification goes out to those on the load control notification list when Great River Energy informs Stearns Electric of a control period.

4. WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE WINTER HEATING SEASON?

The winter heating season is considered October 1 through April 30 every year.

5. FOR DUAL FUEL, WHAT IS A QUALIFYING BACKUP?

Acceptable backup heating systems are:

- Fuel Oil Furnace
- Fuel Oil Boiler
- Propane Furnace
- Propane Boiler
- Natural Gas Furnace
- Natural Gas Boiler
- Wood Furnace
- Wood Boiler
- Electric Thermal Storage

6. SHOULD I BUY MORE FUEL THIS HEATING SEASON IF I AM ENROLLED IN THE DUAL FUEL PROGRAM?

With the high price of propane and natural gas, we are encouraging members to purchase the fuel needed for their backup heating systems as soon as possible. We also advise you to check your fuel supply periodically throughout the winter and be prepared to purchase additional fuel if needed if you start to get low this heating season.

7. ARE THERE GOING TO BE MORNING OR WEEKEND CONTROLS?

Participants in Dual Fuel should expect more morning control periods this heating season. Participants in the Peak Shave water heating program should expect more weekend and holiday controls.

8. IS THERE ASSISTANCE TO HELP PAY FOR MY HEATING BILLS?

Yes, there is. Please contact TriCap at (320) 251-1612 or visit tricap.org/assistance/energy-assistance for more information. You can also call our Cooperative at (800) 962-0655 with questions and/or to set up a payment arrangement.

9. HOW CAN I REDUCE MY ENERGY BILLS?

There are many simple ways you can conserve energy around your home. Please visit our website page www.stearnselectric.org/save-money-and-energy/tools-and-resources-energy-saving-tips to learn more.

10. WHAT IS A SYSTEM EMERGENCY?

A system emergency is a condition on a utility's system which is likely to result in imminent significant disruption of service to customers or is imminently likely to endanger life or property. This can be called at any time, but usually happens when electrical demand is extremely high and energy supply is low.

11. DO I NEED TO DO ANYTHING MORE TO PREPARE?

Prepare for winter by filling up your backup fuel source now. Also, operate your electric heating equipment and any oil or propane system to be sure the system(s) respond to a "call for heat" from the thermostat.

We also encourage you to have your gas or oil furnace/boiler checked periodically by a professional HVAC contractor.

Make sure to sign up for load control notifications if you haven't already. Do this by emailing energywise@stearnselectric.org with your name, address and account number.

TO LEARN MORE OR GET YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED:

Please contact our Energy Service team
during regular business hours:

(800) 962-0655
www.stearnselectric.org/load-control