

LIVE MANSFIELD IRE

A newsletter for customers of the
Mansfield Municipal Electric Department

mansfieldelectric.com

Fall - Winter 2022

Why the dramatic increase in the price for electricity?



Joe Sollecito

As I go around town, I hear that question regularly now. As you know, we had to raise electric rates three times by a total of approximately 60% to offset increases in market costs for power production. I sympathize with everyone's sticker shock and assure you that Mansfield Municipal Electric is only passing through the costs that are passed on to us to deliver electrical power in Mansfield.

The detailed reasons are multi-faceted and the challenges we face are international, national, and regional in nature.

Here is a synopsis of what has happened and the steps we are taking to reduce the impact on our customers as much as possible:

First, the problem is INTERNATIONAL. The war in Ukraine has caused a series of problems that affect worldwide markets for fuel supply, especially natural gas. The threat by Russia to terminate natural gas supplies to Europe alone has caused a huge price spike for natural gas in both overseas commodity markets and here in the United States. We are all competing for the same commodity. Couple that with a lack of increased natural gas production, and we have a meteoric rise in the price for natural gas.

Second, the problem is NATIONAL. Over the past 20 years, there has been a push (rightfully so) to move away from oil and coal power plants due to excessively high carbon emissions. Any new power plants built over this time have been fueled by natural gas, which produces fewer emissions than oil or coal. However, with the predominant electrical generation tied to one resource (> 60% for all New England), there is no competitive fuel supply to balance out the increase in natural gas costs.

MMED, in alignment with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, is committed to increasing the amount of carbon-free resources, such as wind, solar, and energy storage, in our power portfolio. However, these renewable resources are currently intermittent in performance, and do not provide long-term reliability under the current technology now in place. Renewable resources will eventually be a more reliable resource, but that won't be for quite some time.

In the meantime, as we develop technology along with federal and state initiatives to move toward a 'greener' future power grid, we need a reliable supply of natural gas at stable prices to power our homes and businesses now.

Thirdly, the problem is REGIONAL. ISO New England, the overseer for New England's entire electrical grid, sets the market rules for power suppliers and gives outlooks for overall power reliability. All of us are used to turning on a switch and expecting there to be electricity to light our rooms, power our appliances, and heat our homes.

However, about 60% of the current electric system grid for all of New England is predominantly powered by natural gas. Therefore, the overall system reliability is tied to natural gas availability. Recently, ISO New England issued a "Problem Statement and Call to Action¹" in which they stated that without adequate gas supply in New England, the region may not be able to meet the demand for home heating and electricity.

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<https://isonewswire.com/wpcontent/uploads/2022/08/DraftFERCTechConferenceEverettandEnergyAdequacyProblemStatement-8.29-final.pdf>



COMMUNITY OWNED

Mansfield Municipal Electric Department is owned by the people of Mansfield and governed by an elected Board of Commissioners who oversee our local utility.

MMED Board of Commissioners:

Jess Aptowitz - Chair
Frank DelVecchio - Vice Chair
Diana Bren - Clerk
Neil Rhein - Commissioner
Mike Trowbridge - Commissioner



MMED Energy Star Appliance Rebate Incentive

MMED has an enhanced residential Energy Star Appliance Rebate Incentive program that includes programmable thermostats, duct and ductless heat pumps, and heat pump water heaters, in addition to selected energy efficient ENERGY STAR central air conditioners, refrigerators, clothes washing machines, clothes dryers, dehumidifiers and window air conditioners.

Rebate Qualifying Product

\$25	Clothes Dryer
\$25	Window Air Conditioner
\$25	Dehumidifier
\$50	Clothes Washer
\$50	Central A/C (SEER ≥ 16)
\$50	Refrigerator
\$350	Ductless Mini-Split Heat Pump (SEER ≥ 16, HSPF 9+)
\$500	Ducted Air Source Heat Pump (SEER ≥ 18, HSPF 9+)
\$500	Heat Pump Water Heater (Electric and ≥ 55 gallons)
50% (\$125 max)	Programmable Thermostat (Smart, Wi-Fi Enabled)

In addition to a rebate, residential customers who purchase and install a mini-split heat pump and/or a Wi-Fi enabled thermostat can enroll in the HELPS Connected Homes program to receive additional monetary incentives. Please look elsewhere in this newsletter for additional information about the Connected Homes carbon-reducing program.

The 2022 Energy Star Appliance Rebate Incentive program is in effect from January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022, and all qualified products must be purchased by December 31st and postmarked by January 31, 2023.

To be eligible for a rebate:

- Product eligibility is based on the appliance list at energystar.gov.
- Residential customers can receive one rebate per qualifying product within a three (3) year period.
- All products must be installed at the account location. MMED may choose to inspect the installation on the premises before the rebate is issued. This is for residential customers only.
- The rebate program is subject to available funding and may be terminated at any time.

Rebates of \$500 or less will be applied directly as a credit to the active customer account. Rebates greater than \$500 will have the option of a credit or refund check. Customers should allow 6 to 8 weeks for processing.

Applications and additional information can be obtained on the website www.mansfielelectric.com.

MMED 2022 Residential Weatherization Incentive Program

MMED offers a residential weatherization incentive program to help customers save money on energy-saving measures that help reduce energy costs. Residential customers may be eligible to receive a 50% rebate on all qualifying weatherization measures installed, up to maximum of \$1,000. To be eligible for a weatherization incentive rebate, customers must have an ENE Home Energy Assessment, and all energy-saving measures made must be the result of the audit recommendation and meet program guidelines.

To receive a rebate a weatherization incentive rebate:

- Schedule a free Home Energy Assessment audit by calling ENE at 888-772-4242. ENE is currently providing virtual audits to ensure safety.
- If an audit is required and an audit or virtual audit is conducted, the energy conservation specialist may recommend energy efficiency improvements.
- After the recommended measures have been installed, customers can schedule a post audit inspection by calling ENE (888-772-4242).
- A rebate application must be submitted along with sales receipts and the pre and post audit results.

Eligibility requirements:

- MMED residential customer of record.
- Each measure must be recommended by the ENE Home Energy Assessment audit and have a Savings to Investment Ratio (SIR) of greater than one (1). The more cost effective a measure, the higher the SIR.
- Doors, windows and labor are not eligible for a rebate.
- Measures must be purchased between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2022. The application must be postmarked by January 31, 2023.

Rebates of \$500 or less will be applied directly as a credit to the active customer account. Rebates greater than \$500 will have the option of a credit or refund check. Customers should allow 6 to 8 weeks for processing.

Applications and additional information can be obtained on the MMED website www.mansfielelectric.com.

Electric/Plug-in Hybrid Vehicle Charger Rebate

MMED offers a two-part electric vehicle charger rebate program for the purchase of plug-in hybrid chargers and full electric vehicle chargers. Plug-in hybrid chargers can be of any brand and customers can purchase the chargers on their own.

Residential customers who purchase through MMED a Chargepoint Level 2 full electric vehicle charger have an opportunity for further incentives and savings by enrolling in the Connected Homes program. The charger must be installed at the Mansfield account address by a licensed electrician within 30-days of purchase. Enrollment in the Connected Homes program must also occur and be verified within the 30-day period to qualify for a rebate.

Plug-in hybrid charger < 15 kWh battery capacity
\$200 rebate

Plug-in hybrid charger 15 kWh battery capacity or greater
\$300 rebate

Full EV charger within Connected Homes program
\$700 rebate

To be eligible for a rebate and to enroll in the Connected Homes program, MMED customers must purchase qualified products. A list of all qualified products can be found on the website: munihelps.org/rebates-incentives/mansfield-municipal-electric-department. All chargers must be purchased between January 01, 2022 and December 31, 2022.

Smart Devices	Qualifying Brands	Monthly Incentive
Battery	Generac	\$15
Battery	Sonnen	\$15
Electric Vehicle Charger	ChargePoint	\$10
Electric Vehicle Charger	Enel X JuiceBox	\$10
Electric Hot Water Heater	GE	\$5
Electric Hot Water Heater	Rheem	\$5
Mini-Split Controller	Flair	\$5
Mini-Split Controller	Sensibo	\$5
WiFi Thermostat	Google Nest**	\$5
WiFi Thermostat	Honeywell/Resideo	\$5

*****Google Nest thermostats will only be controlled between May 1 and September 30.***

The remaining devices will be controlled year-round.
Google and Nest Thermostat are trademarks of Google LLC.

Connected Homes ... Reducing Your Carbon Footprint while Saving You Money

MMED is participating in Connected Homes, a program that helps customers save money while reducing their carbon footprint. The Connected Homes program is conducted through Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC), Mansfield Electric's residential energy efficiency service utilizing the Virtual Peaker software platform.

According to MMED General Manager Joe Sollecito, Connected Homes is an innovative residential demand management program that allows MMED customers to leverage the technology of smart appliances and devices into cost savings for the light department and its customers.

By enrolling a smart device in the Connected Homes program, customers agree to allow limited adjustments to their devices during times of peak electric demand, such as temporarily reducing the charging rate of an electric vehicle during peak hours. Customers will be informed of possible adjustments in advance via email and will be given the choice to opt out of each adjustment. Customers who participate are given a quarterly incentive check.

For specifics on qualifying brands and to apply, visit <https://nextzero.org/mansfield/connected-homes>. In addition to the Connected Homes monthly incentives, several of the products may be eligible for a rebate through the department's expanded rebate and incentive program.



Are You Concerned About the Environment? GO REO!

GO REO can be a great way for you to make a real impact on climate change. Started by MMED in the Fall of 2019, the GO REO program offers customers the opportunity to voluntarily match their electrical consumption to purchase Massachusetts Class I Renewable Energy Credits (or RECs). These RECs are used by the Commonwealth to invest in future energy renewable projects such as wind and solar.

In 2020, 47 MMED customers contributed a total of \$9,240 to purchase 228 RECs in the voluntary program.

In 2021, 37 customers contributed \$7,152 to this initiative to purchase 238 RECs.

For 2022, 20 customers are on pace to contribute over \$5,700 to this initiative.

100% of the funds collected from MMED customers are used to purchase and retire Class I RECs through Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC), a joint action agency partner with MMED.

According to emissions calculator by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the annual 'Greenhouse Gas Emissions' impact from a single home with electrical consumption of 750kWH's per month, has an equivalent of 6.4 metric tons of carbon dioxide OR have the impact of an average passenger vehicle driven 16,000 miles over a year.
<https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator>

Your contribution can make a difference.

To enroll in **GO REO**, visit the website or contact Laurie Anderson at landerson@mansfieldma.com or (508) 261-7361 ext. 60301. Enrollment applications must be received by December 1, 2022.

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This doesn't mean that there will be 'rolling blackouts,' but this warning identifies the significance of this problem if a confluence of scenarios were to come together. To be fully transparent, there are those who argue that such a scenario is not accurate, and the problem is being exaggerated.

There are many moving parts to this problem, and we are working very closely with both our power consultant, PLM, and our joint action agency partner, Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC), to find ways to reduce our power supply costs. Such initiatives include seeking power hedge opportunities for both conventional and renewable power resources.

Finally, I want to emphasize that every customer of MMED can have an impact on their own energy usage and the overall power supply for the Town of Mansfield by conserving electricity during these times. We encourage customers to reduce power consumption by;

- installing programmable thermostats,
- purchasing energy efficient appliances, and
- participating in our Connected Homes demand response program.

Rebates are available for many different initiatives listed within this newsletter.

I promise you that we will find our way through this power supply challenge. As explained above, much of this is outside our local control. We have to set our rates accordingly to be fiscally responsible in order to maintain the local distribution system here in Mansfield, and to have the best staff available to respond to emergencies. That is what Mansfield Municipal Electric is all about. That is what all municipal light departments are about: local control and local responsibility.

If you have any questions, please reach out to me or MMED staff and we will provide the best assistance we can.

Joe Sollecito
General Manager



Mansfield Municipal
Electric Department

125 High St., Unit 2
Mansfield, MA 02048

Phone 508-261-7361
Fax 508-261-7391

Directory

Customer Service & Billing.....508-261-7361

Emergency.....508-261-7395

Off-hours Emergency.....508-261-7300

Payment Boxes:

Town Hall parking lot
Six Park Row, Mansfield

Front of Billing Office
125 High St., Unit 2, Mansfield

Payment Location:

Town Hall, Treasurer's Office:
Six Park Row, Mansfield

Monday, Tuesday & Thursday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Wednesday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Friday 8 a.m. to noon

Payment, New Service & Customer Inquiries

125 High St., Unit 2, Mansfield
Monday, Tuesday & Thursday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Wednesday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Friday 8 a.m. to noon