

COVID-19 FAQ's



How is the COVID-19 pandemic affecting Lincoln Electric?

Lincoln Electric will continue to serve you with the safe, reliable energy you rely on. As always, our crews are on-call 24/7 to respond to and restore outages.

What is Lincoln Electric doing to help stop the spread?

Although we are open and available to members during regular business hours of Monday through Thursday from 7:00 am until 5:30 pm, our office is closed to the public. We will take payments via the drive-thru, but we are not giving change at this time. All received payments are quarantined for a minimum of a day before they are handled and processed by employees. We have adjusted shifts, reduced employee working hours, and have some employees working from home to restrict the number of employees in the building at the same time. Employees are also extremely diligent about maintaining personal space and vigilant about disinfecting all surfaces. All meetings are conducted online.

Is Lincoln Electric doing anything to assist in the community?

As a cooperative, we are highly invested in our members and communities. We have partnered with Montana Market and Heavens Peak to help with home deliveries of groceries to those who are not able to leave their homes. We have contacted local financial institutions to become familiar with how stimulus money can be used to help our members and local businesses.

Montana Market

www.montanamarketonline.com
406-297-2113

Heavens Peak Organic Market

grocery.hpo@gmail.com
406-297-3504

I'm having a hard time paying my electric bill. Will my service be disconnected?

Lincoln Electric has suspended disconnects and will not assess late fees at this time. However, this is not a bill waiver. Please contact us at 406-889-3301 if you cannot pay your electric bill. We want to work with you to create a solution together. Our goal is to help ease the transition once the pandemic has passed, rather than add to your burden.

What types of solutions may be available if I cannot pay my bill right now?

There are some resources for helping with payment of residential electric bills. Community Action Partnership of Northwest Montana offers a Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) as well as Energy Share for assistance in emergency situations. Please contact them for more information and to determine if you qualify. Lincoln Electric has an in-house bill assistance program.

We encourage you to call us so we can work together with you to create a solution that fits your situation.

Community Action Partnership of Northwest Montana

www.capnm.net
Lincoln County
406-293-2712
Flathead County
406-752-6565
800-344-5979

If you cannot pay your business's electric bill, you may qualify for one of the Small Business Administration's (SBA) coronavirus relief programs. The Paycheck Protection Program indicates it can be used for payment of utility bills. Please visit the SBA for complete information and application forms. Our local financial institutions are also available to help navigate these programs.

U.S. Small Business Administration

www.sba.gov
Local SBA Office
Montana Small Business
Development Center
www.sbdc.mt.gov
406-756-3836

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Lincoln Electric
Cooperative, Inc.

What can I do to help Lincoln Electric help me?

Please contact us as soon as you know you cannot pay your bill. Additionally, even if you do not have the full bill amount available, we encourage you to pay what you can when you are able. Taking this simple step can help you avoid a large multi-month balance when the pandemic is over.

Is there more that I can do to ease the stress of high electricity bills?

Yes! As we are spending more time at home, energy use is going to increase. Now is a great time to practice energy efficiency or take low-to no-cost home energy efficiency measures. For example, setting your thermostat one degree cooler when heating can reduce home energy use by up to five percent. Air drying your dishes can cut your dishwasher's energy use by up to 50 percent. For more ideas, please visit the resources in the sidebar.

U.S. Department of Energy

www.energy.gov/energysaver

Energy Star

www.energystar.gov

Is there anything I can do to help with other people's Lincoln Electric bills?

Indeed! One way is to join Operation Round-Up. Proceeds from this program are used to fund our in-house bill assistance program to provide relief to those unable to pay their electric bill. Participants elect to have their bill rounded up to the next dollar each month. The extra change is added to the Operation Round Up fund. Each participant contributes an average of \$6.00 per year.

Enroll in Operation Round-Up

Check the box on your bill stub
In SmartHub, go to Billing &
Payments>Operation Round Up
Call us at 406-889-3301

If you have a specific person or family you would like to help, you can pay on their Lincoln Electric account. Please give us a call and we can assist in making that payment. You will need to choose your own predetermined amount since we will be unable to tell you how much, if anything, a member owes.