

Kentucky Utilities wants to raise rates. How much might your electric bill go up?

BY KARLA WARD
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Kentucky Utilities is asking the Kentucky Public Service Commission to approve a rate hike that would raise base rates for residential customers by 13.6%.

That translates to about \$18.15 a month for a residential customer using 1,085 kWh of electricity per month, which is the average for KU residential customers, according to the company.

If approved, the change would provide KU an additional \$226.1 million a year, or 11.5 percent more revenue, according to the filing.

KU filed the application for a rate increase with the PSC May 30, and the new rates likely would not take effect until at least Jan. 1, according to the documents.

The change “is required to enable KU to continue providing safe and reliable service to its customers, and to afford KU a reasonable opportunity to earn a fair return on its investment property used to provide that service while attracting necessary

capital at reasonable rates,” the company’s application states.

KU’s sister company, Louisville Gas and Electric, is also asking for a rate increase that would raise electric revenue by 8.3% and gas revenue by 14%.

KU serves 77 Kentucky counties, as well as five counties in Virginia, while LG&E serves Louisville and 16 surrounding counties. They are part of the PPL Corp. and together serve more than 1.3 million customers.

WHY KU, LG&E SAY THEY NEED A RATE INCREASE

The company said it needs to update aging infrastructure, and extreme weather underscores the need for “system hardening.”

“In 2025 alone, Kentucky has experienced up to three quarters of an inch of ice, 14 inches of snow, extreme cold, more than 30 reported tornadoes and the worst flooding on the Ohio River since 1997,” KU and LG&E said in a recent news release regarding the rate increases.

“For utility providers,

including Louisville Gas and Electric Company and Kentucky Utilities Company, stronger, more frequent storms underscore the importance of system hardening to withstand the effects. Already, LG&E and KU’s ongoing system investments for customers have achieved a reduction in power outage frequency by 40% and duration by 30%.

“As the risks of these more severe storms, wildfires and demand for energy continue to rise, LG&E and KU are working to mitigate the threats with stronger wires and poles; increasing vegetation management to further control this leading cause for power outages; and installing advanced technologies to identify and prevent outages.

“Coupled with system enhancements, LG&E and KU are making it even easier for customers to do business. New advanced meter technology gives customers access to near real-time data to better pinpoint savings and manage their energy bills. Behind the scenes, the utilities also are upgrading information tech-

nology systems, improving customer billing processes and adding even more protections against cyber-related threats.”

LG&E and KU President John R. Crockett said in a recent news release that “increasing customer bills is impactful and not a decision we take lightly.”

“However, we’re at a tipping point in which the foundational portions of our system – poles, wires, substations and technology – are reaching the end of their useful lives,” he said.

The company said in a news release that, if the rates are approved, they would still be lower than the national average for residential customers.

“Over the last five years, as inflation increased nearly 20% and labor and material costs escalated, LG&E and KU have held down costs and maintained retail rates that are more than 24% below the national average,” the release stated.

In addition to electric rate increases, KU wants to make other changes, such as increasing the charge customers pay to opt out of having an AMI,

or advanced metering infrastructure, meter installed, according to the filing.

The company’s filing says it wants paperless billing to be the default for new customers and those for whom it has an email address.

It also hopes to create a new optional “pre-pay program” that would allow electric customers to put funds in their account in advance “to pay for energy as it is used,” KU said in a news release.

The rate change and other changes will have to be approved by the Public Service Commission before they can take effect, and several entities are already making known their desire to have a say in what happens.

The Kentucky Attorney General is intervening in the case. The AG typically takes that action to represent consumers’ interests, often arguing for a decrease in the requested rate.

The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government has also asked the PSC to allow it to intervene, stating that it has an interest in the case, since it paid more than \$13.6 million to KU for electrical service in the last fiscal year.

Walmart has filed a motion to intervene, stating that it has 31 Kentucky retail sites served by KU.

The PSC has already granted the request of Kentucky Industrial Utility Customers to intervene. The association

says it represents the interests of some of the largest public utility customers in the state that get their electricity from KU, including Toyota Motor Manufacturing Kentucky, Alliance Coal, Corning, Dow Silicones Corp. and North American Stainless.

The agency said in its filing that the rate increase “will significantly impact the competitiveness of KIUC member companies.”

The Public Service Commission will schedule a hearing in the case to be held later this year.

The last time KU and LG&E requested a rate increase was in November 2020, when they asked to raise rates by \$331 million.

In that instance, the cities of Lexington and Louisville and the state attorney general reached an agreement with KU and LG&E to reduce the requested rate by a third.

As part of that settlement, reached in April 2021, KU and LG&E agreed not to ask for another base rate increase for four years.

Comments on KU’s application can be submitted to the PSC via email at psc.info@ky.gov or can be mailed to Public Service Commission, P.O. Box 615, Frankfort, KY, 40602.

Comments should reference case number 2025-00113.

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JOE MAHER Getty Images

Brad Pitt and Tom Cruise attend the “F1: The Movie” European Premiere at Cineworld Leicester Square on Monday in London, England.

PEOPLE

Pitt, Cruise meet after teasing about work

Us Weekly

Tom Cruise is showing support for **Brad Pitt** days after the “F1” star shared his one condition for working with the “Mission: Impossible” actor again.

Cruise, 62, made a surprise appearance at the “F1” movie premiere at Cineworld Leicester Square in London on Monday, and reunited with Pitt, 61, on the red carpet. The pair shared a hug and posed for photos.

The duo’s reunion came days after Pitt told *E! News* that he’s not opposed to appearing on screen with Cruise again in the future. They previ-

ously starred together in the 1994 horror film “Interview With the Vampire,” directed by **Neil Jordan**.

“I’m not gonna hang my a-- off airplanes ... so when he does something again that’s on the ground,” Pitt told the outlet at the “F1” premiere in Mexico City.

Cruise has become known for performing death-defying stunts in his “Mission: Impossible” films, including dangling off the side of planes, leaping across rooftops and jumping off tall buildings.

While attending the London premiere of “Mission: Impossible – The Final Reckoning” in May, Cruise shared that he was looking forward to seeing Pitt star in “F1” and called it a “fun movie,” as seen in a clip shared by **Javier Ibarreche** via Instagram.

Trump picks Meredith for KY federal judge slot, 3 years after nomination failed

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The second time was the charm for Chad Meredith, who was nominated to serve as a federal judge on United States District Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky late Wednesday by President Donald Trump, according to a social media post from Trump.

In 2022, the administration of former Democratic President Joe Biden planned to nominate Meredith, the state’s former solicitor general under former Attorney General Daniel Cameron. Republican Sen. Mitch McConnell had successfully pushed for the nomination, a rarity for a president of a different party to grant, but the plan was dropped due to opposition from Republican Sen. Rand Paul.

Though the reasons for the change are unclear, Paul’s office said this time around he’s completely on board with Meredith’s nomination.

“Dr. Paul gladly recommended Chad Meredith to the White House alongside Sen. McConnell. He appreciates President Trump nominating Chad and looks forward to voting for him in the Senate,” a spokesperson wrote in a statement to the Herald-Leader.

Meredith is set to fill the seat of Judge Danny Reeves, who took senior status earlier this year, according to a spokesperson from McConnell’s office.

McConnell in a statement called Meredith a “bright lawyer with a stellar resume and a distinguished record of public



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S. Chad Meredith, Kentucky solicitor general, speaks to members of the media after making arguments before the Kentucky Supreme Court at the state Capitol in Frankfort, Ky., on Thursday, June 10, 2021. The state’s highest court heard arguments in a case that will decide whether the state legislature can limit Beshear’s emergency powers.

service.”

Beyond his service in Cameron’s office, Meredith also worked as chief deputy general counsel to former Republican Kentucky Gov. Matt Bevin.

The planned nomination stirred some controversy among Democrats because of Meredith’s history defending Kentucky’s anti-abortion laws. Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear called it “indefensible” at the time.

Meredith is the son of state Sen. Stephen Meredith, a Republican from Leitchfield.

In a post to Truth Social late Wednesday, Trump congratulated Meredith.

“Chad is highly experienced and well qualified, previously serving as the Solicitor General of the Commonwealth of Ken-

tucky, and Chief Deputy General Counsel for the Office of the Governor. Chad is a courageous Patriot who knows what is required to uphold the Rule of Law, and protect our Constitution,” Trump wrote.

One civil rights group expressed disappointment at the decision, citing a “disturbing anti-abortion record.”

“We need federal judges who will protect civil rights and work for all of us — judges who will uphold our laws and Constitution rather than being servile to the president’s agenda and the wealthy and powerful. Chad Meredith would not be that judge and should not be confirmed to a lifetime seat on the federal bench in Kentucky where he can do real damage to our fundamental rights and

democracy for decades,” Lena Zwarensteyn, senior director of the fair courts program and an advisor at The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, wrote.

Cameron, who was a prominent anti-abortion politician during his time in office and is running for U.S. Senate in 2026 to replace McConnell, lauded the president’s decision.

“I was proud to appoint him as Kentucky’s first Solicitor General. He thrived in that role, fighting for Kentuckians in courts across the Commonwealth. Chad is a principled conservative who will make his family, his state, and his country proud,” Cameron wrote.

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