Some customers have recently expressed concern their new AMI meter has something to do with their higher bills received in August. AMI meters are not the cause for higher August bills.

Warmer temperatures in July and August contributed to higher bills, as they do nearly every summer. This year we had spring-like weather through mid-July, which meant many customers received bills for that period that were lower than normal. The rapid onset of hotter than normal temperatures in the second half of July resulted in much higher bills, especially for customers whose billing cycle started when the weather warmed up. For example, bills that generated on July 12 covered a billing period from June 11 through July 10 and included eight days of 90+ degree heat. Bills that generated only one week later, on July 19, covered a billing period from June 18 to July 17 and nearly doubled the number of 90+ degree days at 15.

According to the National Weather Service, the Denver area saw 20 days of 90 or more degrees in July and 18 in August, compared to only five in June. August 2019 was the third-warmest August in Denver weather history. Electricity usage system-wide was consistent with this weather. This situation was compounded by the fact that billing periods in July and August were longer than in June for most customers.

We have been installing AMI meters for several months, and have only recently had an influx of high bill concerns, which is typical for this time of year regardless of the type of meter a customer has. About 7,000 customers had AMI meters by the end of May, and many had decreased usage in June compared to June 2018, as should be expected due

### Identify usage issues with a Kill A Watt meter

Customers who want to know more about energy use within their homes have a free, easy-to-use option. IREA worked with Douglas County Libraries in 2018 to provide library patrons several P3 Kill A Watt meters.

Each Kill A Watt meter plugs into a standard wall outlet. Any appliance or device with a three-prong power cord can be plugged into the meter’s front socket. The meter measures the appliance’s kilowatt-hour (kWh) usage and calculates daily, weekly, monthly and annual consumption. The meter can also check the quality of the power delivered to the outlet.

The Kill A Watt meter is especially useful for identifying which of your household devices are drawing the most power, and determining whether an old appliance has become too inefficient.

Meters are available at the Castle Pines, Philip S. Miller (Castle Rock) and Parker DCL branches, and can be reserved via www.DCL.org.

For a list of common household appliances and devices and the typical kilowatts hours they consume, visit www.IREA.coop/energy-audits.
New meter installs near 40,000

Installation of AMI meters continues at a steady pace. Nearly 40,000 new meters have been installed as of late September.

New meter installations are scheduled to continue in the central portion of our service territory through the end of the year, including Castle Rock, Castle Pines, Centennial, Parker and Roxborough. Next year our installers will move to the eastern, western and southern portions of our service territory, including Strasburg, Bennett, Byers, Conifer and Woodland Park. We plan to have all new meters installed by the end of 2020.

You will receive a mailed postcard ahead of planned installation at your home or business. If your meter is located behind your fence, the technician will need to access your backyard to change it. If you have a dog and are concerned your dog might escape or be bothered by the presence of a technician, please refer to the phone number on the mailed postcard to schedule an appointment. We will try to schedule your new meter installation at a time that is convenient for you. The well-being of your animals is important to us.

We encourage customers who have other concerns about AMI to watch our AMI video series, available at www.IREA.coop/ami-videos. The videos address billing accuracy, privacy, data security, health and safety. Our website also has other detailed information about AMI.

Get ready for My Power customer portal

Customers who have AMI meters will soon have access to My Power, a customer portal that will allow you to view your monthly usage in hourly, daily and weekly increments. This data can help you identify periods in which your demand and energy usage is higher, which can help you plan activities to better control your energy usage.

My Power also includes a weather tracker you can use as a reference when analyzing your home’s usage. You also can set up custom usage thresholds and My Power will alert you if those thresholds have been exceeded.

More detailed information will be on our website, www.IREA.coop, once My Power is available.
to milder June weather this year. A large majority of our customers received higher bills in August regardless of the type of meter they had: More than 80% of IREA customers did not have an AMI meter at the end of August; however, nearly 84% of our customers saw an increase in their August usage over July usage.

The bottom line is that high temperatures and longer billing cycles are the key contributors to higher energy bills, not new meters. We encourage you to understand your long-term energy usage, past temperature patterns, and the days in your billing cycle before jumping to conclusions about meters. The meters deliver the energy use message, and do so accurately; they should not be blamed for the message.

If you have concerns about your energy usage, consider a free home energy audit. Our specialist can evaluate your home’s energy efficiency and provide recommendations on how to improve it. Visit www.IREA.coop/energy-audits to schedule an audit. You also can measure the energy usage of your appliances with a Kill A Watt meter. For more information, see the Kill A Watt article in this issue.

A customer portal will be available soon for customers with AMI meters, and will allow for increased visibility into energy usage. See ‘Get ready for My Power customer portal’ for more info.

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**Coats for Colorado drive under way**

Please consider donating to Coats for Colorado. Thousands of Coloradans need adequate winter coats. This drive provides coats to more than 100 non-profit health and human service agencies.

Children’s and extra-large men’s and women’s coats are most needed, but any new or gently used winter coats are accepted. Boots, raincoats, pants, hats, gloves, mittens and monetary donations are not.

You can bring your donations to any of our four offices during normal business hours, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, until Nov. 30:

- 13404 Old U.S. Highway 285, Conifer
- 5496 N. U.S. Highway 85, Sedalia
- 1497 Main St., Strasburg
- 800 N. Highway 67, Woodland Park

IREA customers donated more than 500 coats in each of the last two drives. Help us exceed that number this year and keep even more Coloradans warm.

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**AMI opt-out**

Although our AMI meters are safe, secure and accurate, we recognize some customers oppose them. We have approved an AMI opt-out rate rider that allows eligible residential customers to opt out of an AMI meter upon payment of charges to cover some of the costs incurred for IREA to manually read meters, set up alternative billing, and maintain a less efficient system. Those charges include a one-time fee of $80 to set up a non-standard meter, and a recurring fee of $20 per month. Refer to our Rates and Regulations, available at www.IREA.coop, for AMI opt-out eligibility requirements.
Important rooftop solar info

IREA received more small generation interconnection (SGI) applications through August of this year than we did throughout 2018. We are adding resources to handle the workload associated with these applications, but it takes time to handle applications and there have been some delays.

We welcome additional rooftop solar applications, but want to stress several things:

• Please contact IREA before committing to or signing a vendor agreement, so we can explain how your solar interconnection may affect your IREA bill. We can be reached at (303) 688-3100, ext. 5302.

• To get started with your rooftop solar project, we will provide you a packet that includes an application and important info that you and your solar vendor will need. Call the number above to request a packet.

• IREA must receive a complete application – including all required documentation and payment of the application fee – before we will put your project into the queue for a technical review for safety and grid integrity. Once the review is complete, the solar vendor will be notified that the system is either approved for installation or requires corrections.

• Some solar vendors begin installation prior to receiving approval for installation. This may result in the homeowner paying for an idle system that cannot be used until required reviews, inspections and possible corrections that require additional work are completed.

• IREA does its best to review and approve all completed applications as quickly as possible. This process is subject to the volume of applications received, incomplete applications requiring additional information or corrections, and the number of status inquiries made by customers and solar vendors.

Annual meeting scheduled for April 18

The annual meeting of the members of The Intermountain Rural Electric Association will be held at the Association’s headquarters, located at 5496 N. U.S. Highway 85, Sedalia, CO 80135, at 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 18, 2020, to transact the following business:

1. The presentation of reports covering the previous fiscal year.
2. All other business that may properly come before the meeting.

Note: Registration is from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. on the day of the meeting.