

# Major changes coming to Calif. electricity rates

By Sammy Roth, Desert Sun

How much you pay for electricity could soon depend on when you use it – and Coachella Valley residents could see their summer bills go up substantially.



California electric prices may fluctuate based on peak use. Photo/Peter Craine

The California Public Utilities Commission could soon ask Southern California Edison and other utility companies to start designing “time-of-use” residential electricity rates, to take effect in 2019. The rates would make electricity more expensive when demand is high, and less expensive when demand is low.

Some ratepayer advocates and environmental groups support time-varying rates, which they say would help reduce dependence on climate-altering fossil fuels. But at least one consumer watchdog group is worried the rates would have unintended consequences. For instance, the new rates could make electricity much more expensive during the summer, hitting desert residents hard during the many months of air conditioning season.

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