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Save Power, Get Cashback; Use It in the Daytime, Get Benefits

Promoting “Smart Electricity Life”

- Additional energy cashback introduced during summer peak demand hours
- Access a wide range of power services in one place through the integrated platform “Smart Electricity Life”

The Ministry of Climate, Energy and Environment (MCEE, Minister Kim Sungwhan) announced that, beginning July 1, it will actively promote a range of consumer benefit programs and a nationwide public awareness campaign to encourage the widespread adoption of “Smart Electricity Use,” which encourages electricity consumption during daytime hours on weekends and public holidays when renewable energy generation is abundant

In response to the recent energy security crisis stemming from the Middle East and the expansion of renewable energy generation during daytime hours, the changing energy landscape has made it increasingly important not only to conserve energy but also to improve the efficiency of electricity consumption by encouraging greater power use during the daytime.

To this end, the MCEE is rolling out the “Smart Electricity Use” initiative, which allows consumers to receive partial rebates on their electricity bills by reducing electricity consumption and earn additional benefits by using electricity during daytime hours on weekends. The initiative is centered on three key measures: rewarding consumers for the electricity they save,

providing incentives for daytime electricity use, and offering support so that anyone can participate easily and conveniently

In particular, the MCEE will implement three customized energy cashback programs: (1) expanding the residential energy cashback program, (2) providing additional cashback for reducing electricity use during summer peak demand hours (5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on weekdays), and (3) offering cashback for using smart home appliances during daytime hours (11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.) on weekends and public holidays in the fall.

Get rewarded for the electricity you save.

Everyday energy-saving habits can help lower electricity bills and also earn cashback rewards. This year, even small efforts can qualify for cashback, and saving electricity during summer peak demand hours will bring even greater rewards.

First, from July 1 to the end of December this year, the eligibility standards for the residential energy cashback program will be significantly eased and the benefits expanded. Previously, households had to reduce electricity use by at least 3% compared with the average usage for the same month over the previous two years to qualify for the benefit, but for meter readings from July through December this year, a reduction of just 1% or more will be enough to receive cashback.

The payment rate will also increase significantly. Depending on the level of reduction, an additional subsidy of KRW 20–30 per kWh will be added, allowing households to receive benefits of up to KRW 120/kWh.

In addition, to encourage electricity savings during the evening peak demand

hours when summer power demand surges, an “additional evening-hours cashback” program will be piloted. The program will be open to households participating in the energy cashback scheme that are equipped with Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO)’s advanced metering infrastructure (AMI), which allows time-based metering, and will be operated on an application basis.

In July and August this year, households that reduce electricity use from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on weekdays compared with the average usage during the same hours over the previous two years will receive a cashback of KRW 500 per kWh.

Use during the day and get rewarded.

If you shift essential electricity use to weekend and holiday daytime hours, when output from solar and other renewable energy sources is abundant, you can help ensure the stable operation of the power system while also enjoying a range of benefits.

Households can participate in shifting electricity use to off-peak times through the “smart appliance cashback” pilot program to be launched this fall.

For two months, September and October, households using washing machines, dryers, dishwashers, and garment care appliances registered in Samsung and LG smart appliance apps will receive a cashback benefit of KRW 100 per kWh for electricity used during weekend and holiday daytime hours (11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.). Applications will be announced separately in the future through the Smart Electricity Life platform and other channels.

Under the time-of-use tariff reform introduced last April, industrial customers

can also benefit this fall: for two months, September and October, Industrial (B) customers, which account for more than 40% of electricity consumption, will receive a 50% discount on energy charges during weekend and holiday daytime hours.

In addition, electric vehicle users will also receive charging fee discounts from September through October on weekends and holidays from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The discounts will apply at “self-consumption charging stations” installed at homes and workplaces, “public fast chargers” operated by the MCEE and KEPCO, and private charging operators that participate in the weekend discount program.

In addition, electric vehicle users can also receive daytime benefits through Plus DR, one of the demand response (DR) programs operated by the Korea Power Exchange.

The DR program helps stabilize the power grid by offering discounts for electricity use during periods when power supply exceeds demand, and it involves KEPCO as well as several charging providers.

For Korea Electric Power Corporation, charging at designated KEPCO charging stations during Plus DR activation periods qualifies for a 10% discount under normal conditions, and up to a 12% discount during the daytime on Saturdays and public holidays in spring and autumn, when renewable energy generation is especially abundant.

This also ties in with the recently revised electric vehicle time-of-use tariff system, under which additional discounts are layered on top of the lower daytime base rate, significantly reducing charging costs for EV users. Private

charging operators will also provide separate customer benefits according to their own criteria.

However, not all chargers are eligible, so advance confirmation is essential. By using the information service on the integrated platform Smart Electricity Life, users can quickly and intuitively find everything from program details to the locations of designated charging stations and specific participation methods, including Plus DR operating hours and KEPCO's discounted charging stations.

Anyone can easily participate.

Programs such as energy cashback, which reward you for saving and offer benefits for using electricity during the day, can be easily accessed through Smart Electricity Life*, Korea's flagship energy-saving platform. On the platform, everyone can use electricity more rationally, join efforts to expand renewable energy, and easily experience the benefits of lower bills. By integrating 39 services previously scattered across seven organizations, including KEPCO, access has been greatly improved so that electricity-related services can now be checked and applied for in one place.

* Accessible via the Smart Electricity Life platform (<http://esp.kepco.co.kr>)

The electricity bill welfare discount and Energy Voucher programs, designed to close gaps in energy welfare support, are also operated in connection with the platform. Users can conveniently check eligibility and apply in one place. Low-income households, persons with disabilities, households with newborns, and others can receive electricity bill reduction benefits through the welfare discount program, with the monthly support limit expanded to up to KRW 20,000 during the summer months of July and August. Among eligible Energy Voucher households, those in climate-vulnerable groups can also receive voucher support for energy purchasing costs.

In addition, the platform goes beyond simple information provision by offering a “electricity bill simulation” feature that allows consumers to check their potential savings directly. It can be used to estimate in advance how much would be saved if electricity use at factories and other facilities were shifted to low-demand hours. It also provides information on the Plus DR program, which offers incentives for voluntarily using more electricity during periods of abundant supply, such as when solar power generation is high, along with estimated earnings.

In addition, households* equipped with advanced metering infrastructure can make even smarter energy-saving choices by using the digital power information service, Power Planner. Through the app, users can check their electricity consumption and estimated bills anytime, anywhere, and manage electricity costs flexibly and efficiently with consumption pattern analysis, diagnostic reports (consulting reports), and overuse alerts.

* Electricity customers whose meter data is transmitted to KEPCO via a communications network

The government plans to continue seeking ways to expand benefits that consumers can directly feel, reflecting changes in electricity supply and demand as renewable energy grows. Through this, it aims to promote more efficient electricity consumption by fostering a “Smart Electricity Life” culture in which consumers flexibly adjust* their electricity use in response to economic incentives.

* Energy Flexumer: a portmanteau of “flexible” and “consumer,” referring to users who adjust EV charging times, avoid peak demand by using energy storage systems (ESS) and other power storage devices, or participate in demand response (DR) to help manage electricity demand.