

By ROBERT PIERCE

• Leader & Times

A charge on electric bills has some wondering where the money they spend on the power for their house or business is going.

Bills from Southern Pioneer have been seen with a county sales tax charge on them, but with no apparent sales tax in Seward County, where did the charge come from?



According to the Kansas Department of Revenue, sales that are taxable do include “the retail sale, rental or lease of tangible personal property, including furnishing of utilities within the state of Kansas.”

The KDOR also listed electricity as one of the utilities that are subject to state and local sales tax, and it said that “agricultural and residential use of these utilities are exempt from state sales tax, but are subject to applicable local sales taxes in effect at the customer’s location.”

County tax on utilities?

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Seward County Administrator April Warden said she was unsure if the sales tax on Southern Pioneer's bills actually had anything to do with the county itself.

"I think it is the usual tax that is on bills, phone bill, etc.," she said.

A chart on the website www.bestplaces.net showed that Seward County did collect a sales tax of 8.55 percent as of June 2012, but it did not state whether that was money collected by the county itself or the City of Liberal.

A spokesman at Southern Pioneer said the tax is actually a sales tax Southern Pioneer collects for the county.