

Peak Load Reduction Pilot Program Available for VEC Business Customers

By Rody Blevins, VEC President/CEO



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It takes everyone working together to keep the cost of power down. Each time we partner together and reduce the overall amount we pay for power, those savings can be passed down to all our customers.

In our ongoing effort to reduce costs, VEC launched a pilot program in January targeting peak load reduction for our business customers. This program offers bill credits in exchange for electric load reduction during times of high demand. Reduction in load during peak times will result in VEC paying less to TVA for the power we purchase. Those savings can then be passed along to each commercial customer who participates in the program. Participating business customers choose the amount of load they are able to reduce and VEC provides a credit for each kilowatt of demand that is actually reduced. The actual amount of credit is based on the time of year and can range from \$2.80 per kilowatt - \$4.50 per kilowatt.

To make reduction events manageable for our business customers, we are limiting the events to 1-2 hours per event with no more than 8 total hours per calendar month. We will do our best to forecast peak demand and notify companies in advance when there is a high probability of a load reduction event. We are also limiting the load reduction events to weekday on-peak hours.

It is not too late to sign up to participate. If you are a business customer with 100 kW or more and are interested please contact your local VEC service area manager.

Safeguarding Customer Information

Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) considers safeguarding customer information a serious matter. New regulations from the Federal Trade Commission require VEC to identify, detect, and respond to warning signs that indicate identity theft. Customer service representatives must ask for identification before they can release account information at the office or over the telephone.



The extra identification step can be frustrating to customers who want to do routine account maintenance. This can also result in another complication if the account owner is not available to speak with customer service representatives. Customers who have been with VEC for many years often experience life changes

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that result in the VEC account owner not being the person who actually maintains the account.

One solution to this complication is to add an additional contact. The primary account owner (the person listed on the first line of the bill) can fill out the "Add or Change Request for Additional Contact" form. This form can be located on the VEC website (vec.org) or can be mailed if needed. The form must be returned with the signatures of both parties along with a government-issued ID for the additional contact. VEC does not charge for this service. Once the form is completed and returned the account will be updated to show the additional contact information.

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If the primary account holder is not available to add an additional contact, a new membership agreement will need to be completed. The membership agreement form is also on the VEC web site. Once the signed agreement is returned to the local office along with two forms of identification and verification of home ownership/rental agreement, the account can be updated.

Once the account is updated, customer service representatives will be able to answer questions and make requested changes to the account without compromising the customer's information safety.

Cumberland County Home Show

The annual Home Builders Association of Cumberland County Home Show was held the first weekend of March. The Home Show offered ideas for spring home improvement projects. Vendors including Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) showcased new technologies, products and shared safety information.

VEC employees presented a safety demonstration using a model home, school bus, power lines, and electrical transformers. This safety demonstration was used to show VEC customers how important it



Nathaniel Hild, a VEC Lineman, demonstrates the dangers of downed electrical lines. (Photo courtesy of the Crossville Chronicle)

is to stay away from power lines, transformers, and trees that have grown too close to power lines. In addition to the safety demonstrations, VEC employees shared energy saving information which included the EnergyRight Heat Pump Loan Program and the eScore program.

Bradley County High School Student, Ryan McElhane, Attends Youth Leadership Summit

Bradley County High School student, Ryan McElhane, was in Nashville March 21-23 for the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association's annual Youth Leadership Summit. Ryan was sponsored by Volunteer Energy Cooperative and was one of 46 students who attended the annual event.

The summit began Monday evening, March 21st, with a short get-acquainted session at the group's hotel, the Millennium Maxwell

House. Immediately following, the group loaded buses for a tour of the Bridgestone Arena, home to the Nashville Predators. After the tour students were introduced to the history of electric cooperatives and engaged in additional team building activities. The students had the opportunity to watch a Predator's game and witness Mike Fisher receive his 1,000th game award.

Tuesday morning, March 22nd, the students arrived at the capitol early. Speaker Beth Harwell welcomed attendees in the House Chamber of the Tennessee State Capitol and spent time explaining her role as Speaker of the House and the process that is required to pass legislation.

Representative Kevin Dunlap also addressed the group and encouraged students to stay active and involved. "You are already leaders or you would not be here today," he said. He also helped students understand the role electric cooperatives play in rural Tennessee. "The electric co-ops were created because there was a problem: rural Tennessee did not have the privilege of electricity," said Dunlap. "Our leaders and citizens worked together to form the electric cooperatives and solve the problem."

Senators Mike Bell, Richard Briggs and Ferrell Haile and Representatives Kent Calfee, Kevin Dunlap, Dan Howell, Jay Reedy, and David Shepard joined Harwell and Dunlap for a town hall meeting with students in the House Chamber. In addition to the town hall meeting, Representative Kevin Brooks invited Ryan to attend a House Education



Representative Dan Howell, Ryan McElhane, and Representative Kevin Brooks stop for a photo between committee meetings at the Legislative Plaza.

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The VECustomers Share program funded \$30,300 in community service grants in April. Since the inception of the program in October 2001, more than \$5.6 million in grants has been awarded. The deadline for grant applications is the last working day of each month. For additional information, contact the office of Marketing and Economic Development, at 423-334-7051. Applications are also available online, at www.vec.org.



VECcustomers Share Board members Pauline Sherrer and Jerry Mayo present a grant check to Scot Shanks with the Youth Achievement Foundation of Crossville.

Organizations receiving grants in April

100 Black Men of Bradley County Inc.	\$2,000	American Legion Post 203	\$500
Walk by Faith Ministries	\$1,550	Meigs County-Decatur Chamber of Commerce	\$500
Mended Hearts, Chapter 127	\$1,300	SpiritHorse at Black Fox	\$500
Meigs County FFA Chapter	\$1,250	Midway Middle School Football Booster Club	\$500
Soap for the Needy	\$1,250	Keep American Beautiful - McMinn County	\$500
Crab Orchard Archery Club	\$1,250	Ooltewah High School Band Boosters	\$500
Cumberland County Community Chorus	\$1,200	Relay for Life of Fentress County, TN	\$500
3rd/4th Grade Environmental Camp at Burks	\$1,200	"FUNDAY"	\$450
American Cancer Society	\$1,000	Benton United Methodist Women	\$450
Jamestown Rotary Club	\$1,000	Christ Legacy Academy Parent Teacher Fellowship	\$450
Pickett County Historical Genealogy Society	\$1,000	BASIC of TN, Inc.	\$400
Girl Scout Troop 40311	\$1,000	Harrison Ruritan Club	\$300
Stone Memorial High School Drama/Thespians Club	\$950	Polk County Friends of the Library	\$300
McMinn County Rescue Squad	\$800	Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) Club	\$300
American Cancer Society	\$750	John Knox Center	\$250
Quilts of Valor Foundation	\$750	Midway Youth Cheerleading Organization	\$250
Midway High School Science Club	\$750	Spring City Middle School Golf Boosters	\$250
Midway Middle School Support and Outreach Committee	\$750	American Cancer Society	\$250
Helping Hands Ministry (Peavine Road)	\$750	Polk County Health Council	\$200
Harrison Recreation 7/8 Softball - Lady Freedom	\$700	West Polk Empty Stocking	\$200
The Art Guild of Fairfield Glade	\$600	Happy Hearts Seniors	\$200
Brown Middle School PTO	\$600	Delano Lions Club	\$200
		Polk County High School Softball Booster Club	\$200

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Administration and Planning Committee meeting and introduced him to the other representatives and attendees.

The theme of this year's summit was "Small Towns, Big Ideas," and attendees were encouraged to use their talents to improve rural Tennessee. "Students were chosen to attend the summit based on their interests in government and strong leadership abilities," says Todd Blocker, vice president of member relations for the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association. "During this year's Youth Leadership Summit, we taught these exceptional students that advances in technology have created unique career opportunities in their hometowns. They will be the next generation of leaders in rural Tennessee, and we want to prepare them for the challenges and opportunities they will face."

"These students will soon be our community leaders — and electric cooperative member-owners," said Roddy Blevins, President/CEO Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC). "We want them to share our passion for rural Southeast Tennessee, so it is an honor for VEC to help prepare them for the opportunities that are ahead."

Volunteer Energy Cooperative Hosts "Electricity College"

Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) hosted about 150 sixth graders from Meigs County Middle School on April 8th for "Electricity College." The students attended several "classes" on the cooperative business model, electricity generation and distribution, the math of electric company billing, communications and outage response, electrical equipment, and safety.

Students were also escorted to their classes by VEC volunteers who shared their own educational and career paths.

"We wanted to develop something that complimented their classroom instruction on electric circuits and math, and also give them a good overview of the business of electricity distribution," said VEC Vice President of Operations Clyde Jolley. "But we also wanted to make sure it was something that was going to be fun for the students."



Jolley said the feedback from students, teachers, and VEC volunteers seemed to indicate that the event was successful on all counts.

Students were split into morning and afternoon sessions. After an introduction, an overview of electricity generation and distribution, and a brief history of VEC, students were separated into three groups. Each group rotated to three different stations where VEC volunteers taught about safety and right-of-way maintenance; outage management systems and call center operations; and a large scale safety demonstration using the Tennessee Job Training and Safety Hot Trailer. At each station students received answers for their "final exam" that they turned in to earn their diplomas.



"The students were really excited about visiting VEC," said Meigs County Middle School sixth grade science teacher Misty Meadows. "And when we got back to school they couldn't stop talking about it."

The event was also a big hit with the VEC volunteers who participated. "I think we all enjoyed the energy and the enthusiasm of the students. It was contagious," said Connie Landrum of VEC's Marketing and Economic Development Department.

"VEC employees left a lasting impression on our youth," said Bridgette Rayl, a sixth grade teacher at Meigs Middle School, "Many left inspired to pursue a career that would allow them to be like the men and women they met at Electricity College."

Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)

Residential & Outdoor Lighting Fuel Cost Adjustment

Effective May 1, 2016

1.768¢

For the most current FCA information, visit www.vec.org

Volunteer Energy Cooperative is an Equal Opportunity provider and employer.