










## Have a Safe and Happy Halloween

Help keep an accident from ruining this Halloween by considering these safety tips:

### For Trick-or-Treaters

-  Stay on sidewalks wherever possible. If there are no sidewalks, walk on the left side of the road – facing traffic. Obey all traffic signals.
-  Stay in familiar neighborhoods. Only approach houses that are lit. Stay away from animals you don't know.
-  Select costumes that are made of flame-retardant materials and that have reflective markings or tape. Carry only flexible knives, swords, or other props. Carry a flashlight. Make sure costumes don't drag the ground and that shoes fit properly.
-  Make-up provides better visibility than masks. But if you select a mask, make sure you can easily breathe and see. Don't wear your mask when walking from house to house.

### For Parents

-  Young trick-or-treaters should be accompanied by an adult. Older children should know how to reach you and you should know where they are going.
-  Although tampering is rare, tell children to bring their candy home to be inspected before eating any of it. Look at candy wrappers carefully and throw away anything that looks suspect.
-  Make sure your yard is clear of ladders, hoses, tools, or anything that could trip young ones. Use battery powered lights for pumpkins and other decorations instead of candles.
-  Pets are easily frightened on Halloween. Put them up to protect them from stress and cars and to make sure they won't bite a trick-or-treater.
-  Consider giving out healthy snacks such as mini boxes of raisins, packaged fruit rolls, or single-serve packages of low-fat popcorn or cereal.

## October is Cooperative Month

Virtually every American's life is touched in some way by cooperatives. About 45,000 separate cooperatives, with more than 90 million members, currently operate in the United States. If you received this copy of *Powerlines* with your VEC electric bill, then you are a member-owner of at least one cooperative – Volunteer Energy Cooperative.

Being a member-owner of a cooperative is very different than being a customer. One of the biggest differences is that a cooperative member is in control of the company. VEC members elect a board of directors that sets policy and oversees the operation of the cooperative. That means that the final word in how VEC is operated rests with the members.

But our obligation to our member-owners doesn't stop there. In order to help our members-owners make informed decisions about the operation of the cooperative, we are committed to providing educational opportunities and information to our member-owners.

This monthly newsletter you are reading now is just one small part of the effort. We also maintain an extensive website with a wealth of information about the cooperative. We also host an annual meeting, produce an annual report, sponsor educational and informative seminars, and enlist the aid of local media outlets to provide information to members.

Another big difference is that VEC and other cooperatives operate at cost to the benefit of their members. Cooperatives exist to meet the needs of members as economically as possible – not to make a profit.

In 79 years of operations, VEC has never made a penny in profit. VEC sets electric rates and collects only enough to cover the cost of operating the cooperative. About 78% of the money that VEC collects goes directly to TVA to purchase electricity. The remaining 22% is what VEC uses to build and maintain the electricity distribution system and to operate the programs and services we offer our member-owners.

Some of those programs are even designed to help our member-owners use less electricity and spend less money on our product. Imagine that. In this day and age when we are constantly bombarded with advertising from companies who are trying to get us to spend more and more money on their products and services, your electric cooperative actually funds programs to help you spend less on our product.

We operate in this manner because that is what a cooperative does. And we continue to operate VEC in the manner dictated by the 55 Meigs County residents who gathered together in 1935 in order to form an organization that would bring electricity to an area that for-profit companies could not.

The management and staff of Volunteer Energy Cooperative understand that VEC was here before they came along and they are confident that VEC will still be around after they are gone. In that respect they have accepted stewardship of your electric cooperative.

That is what it means to work for a cooperative.

Cooperative Month is a good opportunity to note the differences between being a member-owner of an electric cooperative and being a customer of a for-profit utility.

### Coming Soon!

Watch this space for details about a new energy efficiency program from TVA and VEC. The current in-Home Energy Evaluation program is going to be expanded and improved to help our members save even more on their electric bills.



## Substations are a Big Investment

Over the past few months, I've been discussing some of the costs associated with providing electricity.

Since VEC customers are members and part owners of the cooperative, it is important to provide you - our owners - with information about how your cooperative is operated. This month I'd like to point out some of the major projects we've completed recently building new substations and improving existing substations.

Substations are where VEC receives power from TVA. They contain equipment that regulates and lowers voltages from transmission levels to distribution levels. VEC operates 33 substations across our 17-county service area.

Recently we've completed - or are nearing completion - on substation projects totaling about \$6,950,000. Below is an overview of those projects.

### Georgetown

VEC began construction of a new 42-MVA substation to serve the Georgetown area in the fall of 2013. The cost of the project is about \$2.1 million. The new substation is on Highway 60, about two miles west of Highway 58 in Hamilton County. It will double the capacity from the existing Georgetown substation and will increase system reliability in the area. We anticipate energizing the new substation in the fall of 2014.

The new substation will be served from the 161 kV transmission line instead of the older 69 kV system. This should improve the reliability of the power system in the area.

### Grimsley

Construction is moving forward on a new 22 MVA substation in Grimsley to serve south Fentress County.

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VEC engineer Matthew Teague trains dispatchers and linemen on manual and remote operation of VEC's new Georgetown Substation.

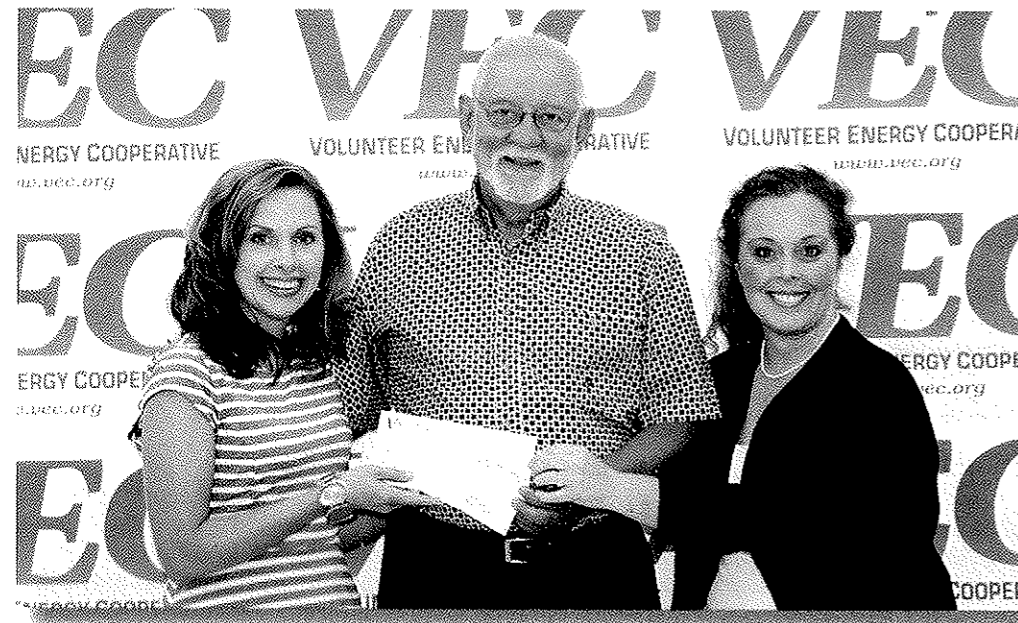


Rody Blevins  
President/CEO  
Volunteer Energy  
Cooperative

## VEC Customers Share Your Change Changes Things



The VEC Customers Share program funded \$29,250 in community service grants in July. Since the inception of the program in October 2001, more than \$4.9 million in grants has been awarded. The deadline for grant applications is the last 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](http://www.vec.org).



VEC Customers Share Board Member Jim Taylor, center, presents a grant check to Jennifer Hall, left, and Julia Sells, right, of York Agricultural Institute's Dragon Renaissance.

### Organizations receiving grants in June

Pickett County Relay for Life	\$1,500	Burks Middle School Yearbook Staff	\$900
Fentress County Agricultural Fair	\$1,500	Senior Lighthouse Center, Spring City	\$885
Stone Memorial High School Construction Club, Crossville	\$1,500	Nocutula Civitan Club, Decatur	\$850
Polk County High School Golf Boosters	\$1,250	Women at the Well, Athens	\$850
Rhea County American Cancer Society	\$1,000	Mended Hearts Chapter 127, Cookeville	\$700
Cumberland County School Supply	\$1,000	South Roane County Volunteer Fire Depart. Junior Firefighter Training Program	\$500
Junior Achievement of the Ocoee Region, Cleveland	\$1,000	American Cancer Society of McMinn County	\$500
Midway Elementary School Back to School Bash Club	\$1,000	American Cancer Society of Polk County	\$500
Meigs County Rescue Squad	\$1,000	Midway Middle School Beta Club	\$500
Avalon Center, Crossville	\$1,000	Extreme Softball 14U, McDonald	\$500
Ooltewah High School Band Boosters	\$1,000	Paul Jones Memorial Chapter DAV #25, Cleveland	\$500
Dragon Renaissance, Jamestown	\$1,000	Cumberland Adult Reading Council	\$500
Benton United Methodist Women	\$1,000	Bachman Academy, McDonald	\$500
Mission Teens Crossville MBTC	\$1,000	South Roane County Volunteer Fire Depart. Dry Fork Valley Station 4	\$500
Maple Grove Senior Citizens, Harrison	\$1,000	Cherokee Removal Memorial Park, Blythe Ferry	\$500
Mrs. Jolly's Math Club	\$1,000	Meigs County Youth Football League	
Meigs County Fair Association	\$915	Cheerleaders	\$250
Monterey Lions Club	\$900	American Cancer Society of Meigs County	\$250

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Located at 5023 Wilder Road next to the existing Grimsley substation, the \$1.2 million project will represent a major upgrade for the area. Two 22-MVA transformers were moved to the location this summer and VEC expects to energize the new substation in early 2015.

The new substation will nearly double the capacity and improve reliability in the area.

#### Lantana

VEC completed a major upgrade of the Lantana substation at 68 Dunbar Road in Cumberland County in June at a cost of about \$1.4 million.

Two 20-MVA transformers were replaced with a pair of 50-MVA transformers. The first was put into service in May and the second was energized in June. The upgrade has more than doubled the capacity of this substation.

In addition to the transformers, VEC installed a new breaker bay to further enhance the reliability of the substation.

#### Brydstown

VEC energized the newly completed Byrdstown substation at 1549 Moodyville Road in Pickett County on September 14, 2012. The \$2.2 million project includes all new equipment that will help VEC improve system reliability in the area.

In addition to the new substation, system reliability into the Byrdstown area is also enhanced by a new 161-kV transmission line that TVA has put into service to feed the new VEC substation. The new line is fed through TVA's Kelsey Road substation in Kentucky. In addition to the increased voltage, the new line features wider rights-of-way, steel poles, higher ground clearance, and all new hardware.

The combination of new equipment has provided better service and much faster restoration of power when outages do occur.

#### Pruitt Tower Switch

In September VEC will complete work on a new motor-operated 69 Kv switch in the Highway 68/Homestead area of Cumberland County. The \$50,000 Pruitt Tower Switch will increase reliability and reduce outages on the 69 kV transmission line that serves the Crab Orchard Substation. In the event of outages, the switch will also allow VEC to isolate faults and restore service faster.

## Now is the Time to Prep for Lower Winter Electric Bills

Sometimes we all have pretty short memories. But now is the time to remember how harsh last winter was and how high our electric bills were.

Now is the time to take steps to keep those winter electricity bills as low as possible. Here are some helpful tips from the U.S. Department of Energy. For more energy saving tips, visit [www.vec.org](http://www.vec.org) or <https://tva.energysavvy.com>.

#### Take Advantage of Heat from the Sun

Open curtains on your south-facing windows during the day to allow sunlight to naturally heat your home, and close them at night to reduce the chill you may feel from cold windows.



Unless it's done properly, using a fireplace to heat your home can cause higher electric bills.

Cover drafty windows.

Use a heavy-duty, clear plastic sheet on a frame or tape clear plastic film to the inside of your window frames during the cold winter months. Make sure the plastic is sealed tightly to the frame to help reduce infiltration.

Install tight-fitting, insulating drapes or shades on windows that feel drafty after weatherizing.

#### Adjust the Temperature

When you are home and awake, set your thermostat as low as is comfortable.

When you are asleep or out of the house,

## Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)

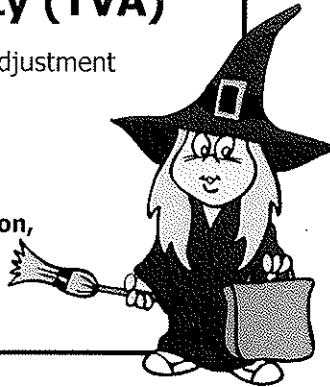
Residential & Outdoor Lighting Fuel Cost Adjustment  
Effective September 1, 2014



**2.266¢**

For the most current FCA information, visit [www.vec.org](http://www.vec.org)

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turn your thermostat back 10° to 15° for eight hours and save around 10% a year on your heating and cooling bills. A programmable thermostat can make it easy to set back your temperature.

Note: Electric heat pumps work more efficiently when you maintain a constant temperature. Don't lower your thermostat unless you plan to maintain the lower temperature for eight hours or more. When you raise the temperature back up, increase the thermostat by two degrees at a time to lock out the auxiliary/emergency heat. A programmable thermostat can do this for you. Auxiliary/emergency heat is typically much less efficient (and more expensive!)

#### Find and Seal Leaks

Seal the air leaks around utility cut-throughs for pipes ("plumbing penetrations"), gaps around chimneys and recessed lights in insulated ceilings, and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets.

Add caulk or weatherstripping to seal air leaks around leaky doors and windows.

Maintain your heating systems.

#### Schedule Service for your Heating System

Find out what maintenance is required to keep your heating system operating efficiently.

Heat Pumps and Furnaces: replace your filter once a month or as needed.

Wood- and pellet-burning heaters: clean the flue vent regularly and clean the inside of the appliance with a wire brush periodically to ensure that your home is heated efficiently.

#### Reduce Heat Loss from the Fireplace

Keep your fireplace damper closed unless a fire is burning. Keeping the damper open is like keeping a window wide open during the winter; it allows warm air to go right up the chimney.

When you use the fireplace, reduce heat loss by opening dampers in the bottom of the firebox (if provided) or open the nearest window slightly -- approximately 1 inch -- and close doors leading into the room. Lower the thermostat setting to between 50° and 55°f.

If you never use your fireplace, plug and seal the chimney flue.

If you do use the fireplace, install tempered glass doors and a heat-air exchange system that blows warmed air back into the room.

Check the seal on the fireplace flue damper and make it as snug as possible.

Purchase grates made of c-shaped metal tubes to draw cool room air into the fireplace and circulate warm air back into the room.

Add caulking around the fireplace hearth.

#### Lower your Water Heating Costs

Water heating can account for 14% to 25% of the energy consumed in your home.

Turn down the temperature of your water heater to the warm setting (120°f). You'll not only save energy, you'll avoid scalding your hands.

#### Lower your Holiday Lighting Costs

Use light-emitting diode - or "led" - holiday light strings to reduce the cost of decorating your home for the winter holidays.