

Make Sure This Holiday Season is a Safe One



The hustle and bustle of the Christmas season is rapidly approaching. For some, the holiday season becomes a time of tragedy so Volunteer Energy Cooperative wants the holiday season to be a safe and happy one for you and your family. To keep you and your family safe you should:

- Don't overload your electric circuits. Check fuses or circuit breaker panels to see what your home can handle, and stay well within the limits.
- Avoid putting too many strings of lights together and plugging them into a single outlet.
- Watch for flickering lights, sparks from appliances or wall outlets, warm plates, plugs, or outlets, and dimming lights or television screens. These signal potential danger spots that could cause an electrical fire.
- Make sure there's a bulb in each socket. If a bulb is burned out, leave it in until you have a replacement. Immediately replace any broken bulbs that have exposed filaments.
- Use only UL-listed equipment. Check for frayed cords, cracked insulation and damaged plugs.
- Surge protector strips are a safe option if you need more outlets.
- Match plugs with outlets. Never force a three-pronged plug into a two-hole outlet or extension cord.
- Don't run extension cords under rugs, around furniture legs, or across doorways.
- If you have children in the house or are expecting young visitors, inspect your home for cracked or missing outlet covers. Use safety caps to cover outlets.
- Keep your natural tree well watered to prevent bulbs from igniting dry branches. Never use electrical decorations on metal trees. Instead, place colored spotlights beside or above the tree. Check to make sure an artificial tree is inflammable.
- Fasten outdoor lights securely to trees, house walls, or other firm supports using insulated staples, or run them through hooks to protect lights from wind damage. Do not nail, tack, pinch, nick or stress wiring.
- Outdoor lighting should have insulated electrical cords and be plugged into a Ground Fault Interrupter-protected receptacle only. Keep all plugs and connectors off the ground, away from puddles and snow.

VEC Annual Meeting Draws More Than 1,900



Rody Blevins is President/CEO of Volunteer Energy Cooperative

It was wonderful to see about 1,900 Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) members at Meigs County Middle School on October 3 enjoying all the activities at our 73rd Annual Meeting.



Those arriving early chose between a free pancake breakfast prepared by the Tri-County Ruritan Club and a free continental breakfast, and browsed through exhibits featuring VEC products and services. More than 900 people received a free flu shot from Dr. Shane Roberts and his staff from Decatur.



The morning entertainment was provided by Miss Tennessee Stefanie Whittler. After the business meeting The Voices of Lee, an ensemble of



singers from Lee University, took the stage. The day was capped off with door prizes and free gift buckets.

It was encouraging to see so many of you there – participating in your electric company. VEC is a member-owned electric cooperative. Your participation helps make VEC a stronger company and I'd like to personally thank each and every attendee.



For those of you who were unable to make it, I'd like to encourage you to mark the first Saturday of October in your calendar and make plans to join us next year.

I would also like to say how grateful I am to the 66 VEC employees who volunteered to spend their day helping host the event.

Scammers Try to Cash in on High Energy Costs

As energy costs increase so does the number of people who try to prey on electricity consumers with all sorts of pie-in-the-sky promises and high pressure sales techniques with the goal of separating folks from their money and leaving them with little or nothing in return.

With consumers looking for relief from electricity costs, with billions in stimulus money being released for green energy programs, and with so much emphasis on helping the environment, scammers are coming up with new ways to take advantage of the situation to make a dishonest buck.

Here are some important things to keep in mind:

Beware of the high pressure salesman. They say they need a very quick decision because they'll only be in the area for a limited time or they offer free meals and other perks to attract consumers to their sales pitches. If someone can make money selling you a product today, they can make money selling it to you next week. Don't be pressured into making a hasty decision.

Just say no to any device that requires tampering with your electric meter. It's dangerous and it's illegal. If a neighbor has such a device – report it. Remember, the electricity they are stealing isn't free – YOU and other electricity customers are picking up the tab.

Tread cautiously when purchasing a power factor

correction device. While they can be useful and cost efficient in some limited applications, they are generally of no use to residential electric customers. VEC doesn't calculate power factor into residential rates so customers will not see a reduction in their bill.

Don't believe it when someone tells you that any home improvement can qualify for tax credits of up to \$1,500 through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The credits are only available for qualifying improvements. Check www.energystar.gov/taxcredits for a list of products that do qualify.

Decline any offers to file the necessary paperwork to take advantage of home improvement tax credits for a fee. You can do it for free.

Call VEC and local law enforcement authorities if anyone tries to gain entry to your home claiming to be a Volunteer Energy Cooperative employee without a previously agreed-upon appointment. VEC offers a free in-home energy evaluation program but evaluators will only schedule an appointment with you after you've requested one. Other VEC employees do not need to come into your home to do their jobs.

Everyone is looking to save money when and where we can these days. But remember the old adage, "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is."



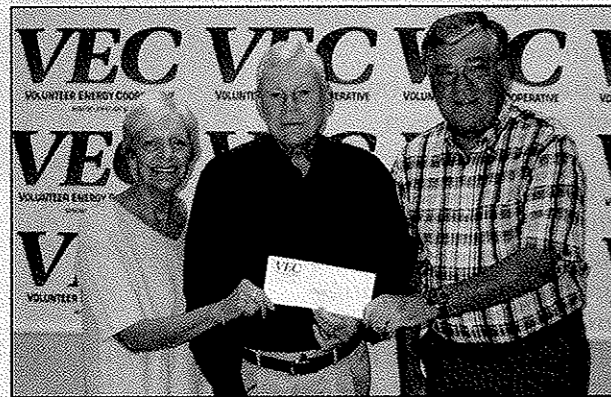
VEC Customers Share

Your Spare Change Makes a Difference

October saw the VEC Customers Share program welcome three new members to the independent board that reviews applications and awards grants to non-profit community service organizations. New members who are taking the place of board members whose terms have expired include Donald "Pete" Williams who replaces H.B. Rankin in representing Rhea County, Holly Neal who replaces Pauline Sherrer in representing Cumberland County - East, and Harold Reno who replaces Bill Sparkman in representing Bradley County.

The program funded \$31,500 in community service grants in September. Since the inception of the program in October 2001, more than \$3.1 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.

Organizations receiving grants in September include: Monterey Lions Club - \$2,000; E.K. Baker Elementary School PTO, Athens - \$1,650; Allardt Volunteer Fire Department - \$1,500; Pickett County Junior High Book Club - \$1,000; Kiwanis Club of Spring City - \$1,000; Coordinated School Health, Benton - \$1,000; Hebbertsburg Fire Hall, Fairfield Glade - \$1,000; Polk County Girls Basketball Booster Club - \$1,000; Candlelighters Fun Day, Benton - \$1,000; Fentress County Children's Center of the Cumberlands - \$1,000; Cumberland County Imagination Library - \$900; Homestead Elementary School Cafeteria, Crossville - \$700; American Cancer Society, Bradley County - \$600; For the Children Quilting Ministry, Crossville - \$500; Pickett County Junior High Football Boosters - \$500; Birchwood Elementary PTA - \$500; Crossville Arts Council - \$500; Birchwood Senior Neighbors - \$500; Spring City Dixie Youth Baseball, Inc., - \$500; Lady Tigers Booster Club, Ten Mile - \$500; Meigs South Elementary PTO - \$500; Midway Quarterback Club - \$500; Grandview Fire Association - \$500; Elisha Cummings Walk for Cure, Byrdstown - \$500; Cumberland County Master Gardener Association - \$500; Midway Athletic Club - \$500; Laurel Bluff Youth Organization, Kingston - \$500; Providence Baptist Food Pantry, Ooltewah - \$500; First Baptist Church TeamKids Fall Fest, Spring City - \$500; Chattanooga Central High Band Boosters - \$500; Cedar Valley Giants, Decatur - \$500; Meigs Archery Club - \$500; Operation R.E.A.C.H., Kingston - \$500; Helping Hearts Community Service, Crossville - \$500; The Caring Place, Cleveland - \$500; Camp Lookout, Holston Conference UMC - \$500; UT Extension for Bradley, McMinn, and Meigs Counties - \$350; American Cancer Society, McMinn County - \$350; Bradley Central High Baseball Boosters - \$300; Royal Rangers of Heritage Fellowship, McDonald - \$300; Bradley/Polk Foster Adoptive Care Association \$300; Christian Counseling Center of Cumberland County - \$300; and The Refinery Youth Group, Cleveland - \$250.



VEC Customers Share Board Member Pete Williams, center, presents a check to Dick and Stephanie Rucker of the Spring City Kiwanis Club.

VEC Offers College Scholarships



Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) wants to reward students who have used their time and talents to benefit their local communities. VEC's Lillard-Shadow scholarship program rewards academic and community service achievements by awarding four \$2,000 scholarships to students who will graduate from high schools in VEC's service area in the spring of 2010.

The scholarships honor J.W. Lillard and Willis A Shadow, two community leaders who spearheaded efforts to bring electric power to Decatur and Meigs County in the 1930s, forming the organization that would become Volunteer Energy Cooperative. Mr. Shadow and Mr. Lillard were instrumental in improving the lives and livelihoods of thousands of

residents through electric power.

Four awards of \$500 per semester each (renewable for up to four semesters) will be presented to spring 2010 high school graduates whose parents or guardians are VEC electric customers. Applications will be judged by an independent panel based on student's community service activities and citizenship - 40%; written communication skills - 20%; financial need - 25%; and academic achievement - 15%.

Scholarship applications are available at any VEC Customer Service Center or from high school counselors in the VEC service area. Applications are also available online at www.vec.org.

Merry Christmas



Volunteer Energy Cooperative's Board of Directors and Staff include: Seated (left to right) Sammy Norton, Secretary/Treasurer, Meigs County; Gene Carmichael, Chairman, McMinn County; Rody Blevins, President/CEO; Laney Colvard, Vice Chairman, Cumberland County - West; Standing (left to right) Charles Fitch, Roane & Loudon counties; Scott Humberd, Bradley County; Harvey Cameron, attorney; Marvin Stinnett, Polk County; Jerry Henley, Rhea & Bledsoe counties; Alesia McNelley, executive assistant; Randy Bond, Cumberland County - East; Keith Phillips, Putnam White, and Overton counties; Aubie Smith, Hamilton County; William J. Campbell, Fentress, Morgan, and Scott counties; and Larry Storie, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer, Pickett County.

Volunteer Energy Cooperative's Board of Directors, management, and staff would like to extend their best wishes to you and yours during this holiday season.

Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)

Residential Fuel Cost Adjustment

Effective November 1, 2009

- \$0.00309

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

We've Got Your Holiday Shopping Covered



Toy Bucket Trucks & Pick-up Trucks
\$5.00 plus tax



Midland WR-300 Weather Radio
\$74.95 plus tax

Stop by your local Volunteer Energy Cooperative Customer Service Center to pick up these great holiday gifts.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

Volunteer Energy Cooperative is the recipient of federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provide that no person in the United States on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or disability shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is Rody Blevins, President/CEO. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above from and/or file a written complaint with this organization; or the Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250; or the Administrator, Rural Utilities Service, Washington, D.C. 20250. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.