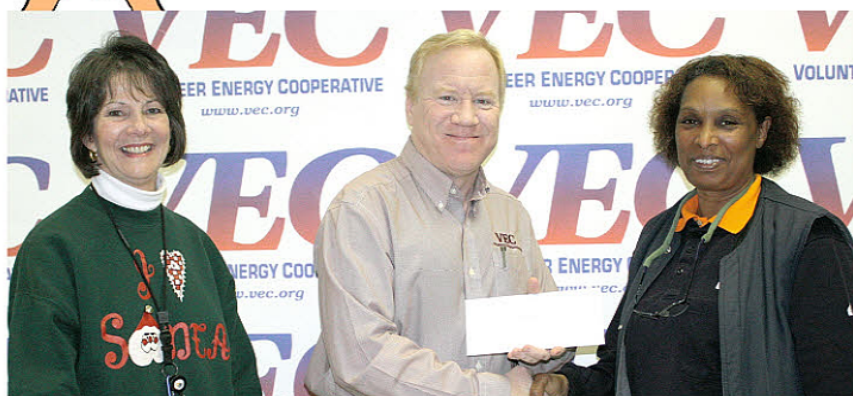




Memorial Gift Helps Needy Families



VEC President/CEO Rody Blevins, center, accepts a Project Deserve donation from Linda Bayles, left, and Vivian Hitchcock who made the donation on behalf of the employees of TVA's Watts Bar Hydro Plant.

When Tommy Wayne Ellison passed away in late August his friends and former co-workers wanted to honor him in a way they thought fitting. Ellison, who was the brother of Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) employee Charlie Ellison, had recently retired from TVA's Watts Bar Hydro Plant and his friends decided a fitting tribute would be a Christmastime donation to VEC's Project Deserve – the program that offers assistance to needy VEC customers who are having trouble paying their electric bill.

Linda Bayles and Vivian Hitchcock presented the donation to VEC President/CEO Rody Blevins in December.

"We're very appreciative of this," Blevins said. "This is a honorarium that will be a great benefit to people who need a helping hand."

Tommy's brother, Charlie, who works in VEC's Operations Department said he is also very grateful to those who remembered his brother in this fitting way.

During the coldest part of winter and the hottest part of the summer many VEC customers have a hard time keeping up with their higher-than-normal energy costs. That's when Project Deserve is most helpful – if funds are available.

VEC is a not-for-profit cooperative. That means that when a customer/member cannot pay his or her bill, VEC can't just "dip into profits" to cover the shortfall because there are no profits to dip into.

Many VEC customers don't mind paying just a little extra to pitch in and help people in need pay their electric bill, so VEC created Project Deserve."

Project Deserve allows members to help the elderly, handicapped, low-income, and unemployed with their electric bills in emergency situations. Members do this by pledging a specified amount of money to be added to your monthly bill or by making a one-time donation.

All funds collected through Project Deserve go directly to an energy fund. No funds are used to administer the program. Eligibility is determined and verified solely by Human Resource Agencies and/or community relief groups in all or portions of VEC's 17-county service area which includes: Bledsoe, Bradley, Cumberland, Fentress, Hamilton, Loudon, McMinn, Meigs, Morgan, Overton, Pickett, Polk, Putnam, Rhea, Roane, Scott, and White counties.

Members may cancel their pledge at any time by calling your local VEC Customer Service Center.

If you prefer to make a one-time contribution to Project Deserve rather than a monthly donation added to your electric bill, you may send your check to:

Project Deserve Volunteer Energy Cooperative P.O. Box 277 Decatur, TN 37322

To begin helping needy families in your community who need assistance with their electric bill, fill out an authorization form and return it to Volunteer Energy Cooperative. The form is available at VEC offices are at www.vec.org.

Want to Confirm Your Outage Restoration? No Problem, We'll Give You a Call

Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) is continually looking for ways to improve our service. In 2004 VEC performed major upgrades on our Interactive Voice Response (IVR) telephone system that helps customers report outages without lengthy hold times and helps VEC respond to outage reports quickly and efficiently. Since that time VEC has responded to customer requests and made frequent improvements to make the system easier for customers to use. And the improvements keep coming.

In November of 2010 VEC added a new feature to the IVR system that allows customers to request a return phone call when VEC crews have restored their outage.

Just seeing the lights come back on, or hearing electrical appliances turn on, might not serve the customer's needs in all situations. Some customers may have medical conditions or other reasons for needing to leave their home during an outage and go to the home of a friend or relative. This new feature allows them to receive a call, wherever they are, to let them know the power has been restored at their home.

This feature also comes in handy during major outages when a customer may have experienced damage at his or her home in addition to the damage that knocked out power to the larger area. VEC crews may not be aware that fixing the major problem to the larger area is not enough to restore power to a customer who has experienced more localized damage at his or her home.

In these cases, the customer receives a call notifying them that the problem over the wide area has been repaired, and gives the customer the opportunity to let us know that there is an additional problem that needs our attention.

For customers who are away from home during outages the service can also be useful in helping them determine how long their power was out. This can provide them with information they may need to alert them about food spoilage or battery back-up issues that they may need to address when they return home.

The return phone call can be received at the phone number of record for the account or to any other phone number.

When reporting the outage the customer will be given the opportunity to request a return call and the customer will also be given the opportunity to enter an alternate phone number for the return call.

VEC installed the new service in November and in the first two months 755 customers have requested and received return phone calls.

Customers who report their outage through the automated system can also leave a voice message for dispatchers if they want to relate additional information about their outage.

VEC's Vice President of Information Technology Karen Davis advised that customers who request a call, may get that return call during hours that some may find inconvenient.

"If a customer requests a call we will call shortly after the outage has been repaired," she said. "That means the call could come at any time of the day or night."



Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)
Residential & Outdoor Lighting Fuel Cost Adjustment
Effective February 1, 2011

\$0.00472

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

Automatic Drafts Can Draw from Checking Accounts, Credit Cards and Debit Cards

How much easier would your life be if you opened your next electric bill and saw that it has already been marked "PAID"?

It happens every month to customers who have signed up for VEC's Automatic Draft payment plan using their checking account, or their Visa or MasterCard credit or debit card. These customers don't have to worry about checks, stamps, or extra trips to the VEC Customer Service Center. If they are on vacation or traveling for any reason, they don't have to worry about whether or not their electric bill has been paid on time.

Sounds easy, doesn't it?

If you're interested in taking the stress and hassle out of paying your electric bill, signing up for VEC's Automatic Draft is quick and easy as well.

Customers with accounts in good standing are eligible. Each month you will continue to receive your bill, but it will be marked "Paid By Bank Draft" or "Paid by Credit Card Draft." When you see one of these messages you can rest assured that your bill has been taken care of automatically.

The amount due will be drafted approximately two days before the actual due date.

Checking Account Draft

To have your electric bill automatically drafted from your checking account you'll need to fill out and sign a Draft Authorization Card and supply VEC with a voided check. You can do this at your local VEC office, or you can call to have the form sent to you so you can return the form and voided check by mail. You can also download the form from the VEC website at www.vec.org, fill it out, sign it and mail it back to VEC, along with your voided check.

Credit or Debit Card Draft

VEC accepts Visa or MasterCard credit and debit cards for the Automatic Draft

program. To have your bill automatically drafted from your credit or debit card, you'll also need to fill out a Draft Authorization Card and VEC will need to get a copy of the front of your card. You can accomplish this by going into your local VEC Customer Service Center or you can phone to have the authorization card mailed to you. You can also download the authorization card at www.vec.org. If you have the form mailed or download it from the website, you'll need to fill it out, sign it, and mail a photo copy of the front of your card back to VEC.

The mailing address to use is:

Volunteer Energy Cooperative
Attention: Accounting Department
P.O. Box 277
Decatur, TN 37322

The Fine Print

Electronic deductions will continue automatically from the time you sign up until you request that the deductions discontinue, you discontinue your electricity account, your credit/debit card expires, or your checking account changes.

Due to federal "Red Flag" rules to prevent identity theft VEC can no longer sign up customers for automatic draft payments over the telephone. However, customers who can answer security questions can change the details of their draft payment plan over the telephone.

Upon the expiration of the credit/debit card, customers will need to re-submit a Draft Authorization Card and photocopy of the front of their new credit/debit card. VEC will make every effort to notify customers whose credit/debit cards are about to expire.

Customers who discontinue their Automatic Draft Payments for any length of time must re-submit the Draft Authorization Card and voided check or credit/debit card photocopy.

VEC Customers Share

VEC Members Make a Difference in their Communities

The VECustomers Share program funded \$32,900 in community service grants in November. Since the inception of the program in October 2001, more than \$3.6 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.



VECustomers Share Board Chairman Carlton Norris, right, presents a grant check to Glenn Carroll of the Ooltewah High School Band Boosters.

Organizations receiving grants in December

- | | |
|---|---|
| The Borderlands Foundation, Byrdstown - \$2,750 | Knights of Columbus Council 8152, Crossville - \$750 |
| Ooltewah High School Band Boosters - \$2,750 | Common Bond Christian Women's Job Corp, Cleveland - \$750 |
| Midway Middle School Junior Beta Club - \$1,700 | Fentress County Public Library - \$750 |
| Cumberland County Imagination Library - \$1,500 | Linsdale Community Services - \$750 |
| Cumberland County Rescue Squad - \$1,500 | Stone Memorial High School Rocket Club, Crossville - \$700 |
| Spring City 8 th Grade Washington, DC Booster Club - \$1,325 | Prospect Elementary School PTO, Cleveland - \$500 |
| Mineral Springs Food Ministry, Monterey - \$1,250 | Fentress County Chapter of the American Red Cross - \$500 |
| Calhoun Alumni Association - \$1,250 | Eastland Fire Department - \$500 |
| Happy Hearts Seniors, Benton - \$1,200 | Bradley/Polk County Foster Adoptive Association - \$500 |
| Friends of the Library, Spring City - \$1,050 | Fentress County Children's Center - \$500 |
| Christmas for the Elderly Booster Club, Benton - \$1,000 | Walnut Grove Youth Group - \$500; |
| Christmas on the Mountain, Crossville - \$1,000 | Meigs UMC Parish Ramp Builders - \$400 |
| Camp Belle Aire Lake Association, Sparta - \$1,000 | Spring City 7 th Grade Tremont Trip Booster Club - \$375 |
| Clearwater Volunteer Fire Department - \$1,000 | Roane Youth Leadership - \$250 |
| Family Promise of Bradley County - \$1,000 | Bradley County Committee on Aging - \$250 |
| Fentress County Ministerial Association - \$1,000 | Christ's Legacy Academy PTO, Athens - \$250 |
| American Legion Post 79, Decatur - \$800 | Liberty Christian Athletics Boosters, Athens - \$250 |
| Meigs County High School Baseball Booster Club - \$800 | Meigs County Show Team - \$250 |
| Midway Hall of Fame Committee - \$800 | Spring City Historical Museum/Depot - \$200 |



April 2011 Rate Changes Will Affect Energy Use

Rody Blevins is President/CEO of Volunteer Energy Cooperative

As I've discussed in previous issues of Powerlines, the Tennessee Valley Authority is planning major rate change initiatives that will become effective on April 2, 2011, and that will have a major impact on the way energy use is measured and billed in the future.

And even though TVA has indicated the overall rate changes will not increase or decrease the amount of revenue it collects as the wholesale power supplier, the impact to individual power distributors varies, and it appears Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) consumers will see a slight increase in energy costs with the implementation of the new rate structures.

Effective with the new rate change TVA will begin billing VEC for wholesale power use based on the amount of energy used as well as the "peak demand" for power during a given period of time. In addition, the season of the year energy is used will also be taken into account under the new "seasonal demand and energy rate." As a result, rates paid to TVA for wholesale power purchases will vary by the season of the year (higher rates in the winter and summer; lower rates in the spring and fall).

Also being considered as a part of the new rate methodology is the introduction of optional "time-of-use" rates that will give members the opportunity to manage their energy use and shift from high-demand, on-peak times to off-peak, low-demand times of the day and take advantage of lower energy costs when TVA's cost to generate the power is lower.

In order to implement the time-of-use rate structure, VEC will need to complete the installation of our automated metering system. To date, that project is about 80% complete.

Under the structure of the new rates it will be very important for all members, including residential, commercial and industrial, to manage not only how many kilowatt hours of energy they use each month, but the timing of the use of that energy.

VEC is currently studying numerous programs that could be made available to members that will make implementation of the demand reduction and time-of-use rates easier.

Watch future issues of Powerlines for additional information about implementation of the new TVA rate structure, its impact on consumer members and programs that will be made available to lessen the impact of the rate changes.

Volunteer Energy Cooperative to Auction Surplus Vehicles & Equipment

Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) will sell one-owner, locally owned and operated surplus vehicles at absolute auction at 8 a.m. Eastern Time on Saturday, March 26 at VEC's Decatur Customer Service Center on Highway 58 North in Decatur.

VEC will offer 15 to 20 vehicles for sale that will include:
Five 2000 to 2004 model Chevrolet ¾-ton four-wheel-drive trucks, some with utility body and some with cab and chassis only.
Six Chevrolet ½-ton four-wheel-drive pick-up trucks.
One International flat-bed truck with tool boxes.

Additional vehicles are expected to be added to the sale. A detailed vehicle list with descriptions will be available at www.vec.org and by calling 423-334-7031 or by calling your local Volunteer Energy Cooperative and entering extension 7031.

Inspection times are from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. Eastern Time on Thursday, March 24th and Friday, March 25th.

Also offered for sale will be about 100 personal computers which will be sold in lots of 10 to 12. The PCs will include no software or operating programs. The auction will also include printers, filing cabinets, and miscellaneous office equipment.

All vehicles and other items purchased must be paid for on the day of the sale by cash or check.

Auctioneer: Mike Hixon TFL 135 TAL 1608

