

How Can We Better Serve You in 2018?

It's amazing what we learn through listening and observation.

Here at Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) we've provided members with SmartHub, a mobile app enabling you to check the status of your electric service, and receive real-time updates on energy use.

VEC members are using the app to conduct routine business with us, like online bill payments, checking daily power usage and viewing real-time outage updates. Since we launched our app, 30% of our members have downloaded our SmartHub app.

These mobile services are just new ways of connecting with people, like the member services representatives you reach when you call us, or greet you from behind the counters at our office.

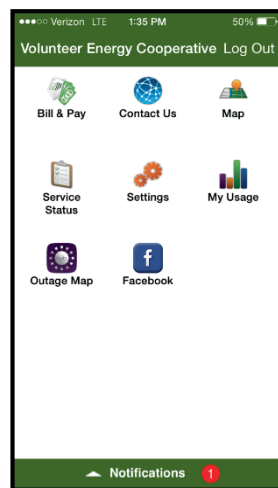


They help us offer quality services you expect us to provide.

Our goal is to find ways to help you control energy costs. That's why we communicate with you about energy prices and ways we can work together to help ease the burdens on your wallet.

So, how do we serve you better in 2018? The same way many of us try to serve community, society and family better, each day—by listening. In our offices, on telephones, through social media exchanges and in our face-to-face meetings, we're ready to listen.

When you have questions about energy efficiency, electrical service or any of our products or services, just ask us. When we know just what you want, we're in a better position to deliver successful results. So, drop in and see us, we're always glad to hear from you.



VEC College Scholarship Deadline is March 4th

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 2018.



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.

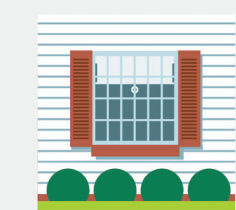
Four awards of \$500 per semester each (renewable for up to four semesters) will be presented to spring 2018 high school graduates whose parents or guardians are VEC customers. Applications will be judged by an independent panel based on each student's community service activities and citizenship - 40%; 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.

All application materials must be completed and delivered to VEC's Corporate Office in Decatur no later than 5 p.m. Eastern Time on March 4, 2018.

3 Quick Tips to Avoid High Winter Bills

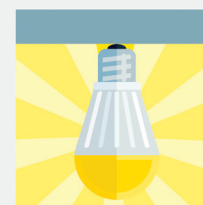
Looking for easy ways to lower your energy bills this winter? Here's a few tips from the Department of Energy:



Open blinds and curtains during the day to allow sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to keep cold, drafty air out.



Wash clothes in cold water, and use cold-water detergent whenever possible.



Replace incandescent light bulbs with LEDs, which use at least 75 percent less energy.



Broadband Pilot Begins

At the beginning of the 2017 Tennessee General Assembly, Governor Bill Haslam introduced legislation that allows Tennessee Electric Cooperatives to provide retail broadband service to their members. After a number of amendments to the bill, the state senate and house voted to pass the bill, both with overwhelming support.

Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) actually started working on a business model a number of months in advance of the legislation becoming law, anticipating the change. VEC is committed to serving our rural communities with high speed internet, the same communities that other local providers have overlooked.

VEC has 34 electric substations, of which 25 are already interconnected with VEC owned fiber optic cable. VEC is in the process of expanding this fiber network, and eventually, all of our substations will be connected with VEC owned fiber. This existing fiber will be the back bone of our program to run fiber to the homes.



VEC is committed to serving our rural communities with high speed internet... communities that other providers have overlooked.

competition for this resource. When you are looking at \$21,000 per mile of fiber, those funds only go so far. VEC is working to utilize all resources possible to move forward and provide broadband to our members.

As we move forward on the broadband buildout, please remember a few things. One, the VEC service area is vast. To execute a new business plan and to bring the service to fruition will take a few years. Also, the installation of fiber optic cable is a costly and lengthy undertaking. We will work as quickly as possible, utilizing all available resources to expedite the project, but the timing of the roll out will be limited by the scope of the project.



Rody Blevins
President/CEO
Volunteer Energy Cooperative



The VECustomers Share program funded \$29,800 in community service grants in November. Since the inception of the program in October 2001, more than \$6.1 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.



VECustomers Share Board Member Bill Blackwell presented a grant check to Carmen Ray, Benton Elementary Junior Beta Club sponsor. The club will use these funds to travel to the state convention in Nashville, TN.

Organizations receiving grants in November

5th Grade Mathematics Club - Pickett County School	\$1,920	Kiwanis Club of Spring City	\$750
Crab Orchard PTO	\$1,700	Rogers Creek Student Council	\$724
Jamestown Rotary Club	\$1,500	NAACP - Dream Achievers Program	\$700
Monterey High School Cheerleading Booster Club	\$1,406	Youth Achievement Foundation	\$700
Meigs County Quest for Success	\$1,350	Quarterback Club of Meigs County	\$500
West Polk County Baptist Food Bank	\$1,250	Midway High School Beta Club	\$500
Chilhowee Middle School Boys Basketball	\$1,250	We Care Community Services Safe Haven Light	\$500
Maple Grove Community Senior Adults	\$1,000	Bethel Springs Baptist Youth	\$500
Ooltewah High School Band Boosters	\$1,000	Hamilton County STARS	\$500
Midway High School Baseball Boosters	\$1,000	Luminary School Backpack Committee	\$500
DAV Chapter #25	\$1,000	Midway High School Cheerleader Booster Club	\$500
Veterans Museum of White County	\$1,000	The Art Guild at Fairfield Glade	\$300
For the Children Quilting Ministry	\$1,000	Meigs County Crush (5 & 6 yr old baseball)	\$300
North Cumberland Elementary School PTO	\$800	Meigs Fury Softball (Girls 10 U)	\$300
McMinn County Foster Care Association	\$800	Cumberland County Early Literacy Council	\$300
Daily Bread Sack Lunch	\$800	Meigs Senior Center	\$300
Oak Grove STEM Club	\$750	SCES (Spring City Elementary School)	
First Baptist Church of Spring City Food Pantry	\$750	4th Grade Enrichment Trip	\$250
Bradley Football Club	\$750	Rhea County Teen Maze	\$250
		Helping Hands Ministry (on Peavine Rd)	\$200
		PALS-Homeschool Group	\$200



Watch Out for Scammers

Unfortunately, in today's world, scams are inevitable. Scammers can threaten you with everything from legal action involving the IRS to turning off power to your home.

Utility scams often involve an individual or group posing as an employee of your electric cooperative. The scammer may use threatening language in order to frighten you into offering your credit card or bank account information. Don't fall victim to these types of scams. Understand the threats posed and your best course of action:

- If someone calls your home or cell phone demanding you pay your electric bill immediately, gather as much information as you can from that individual, hang-up the phone and contact the local authorities. Scammers often use threats and urgency to pressure you into giving them your bank account number or loading a pre-paid credit or debit card. If you have any doubts about your utility bill, contact our member payment center either in person, or over the phone.
- If someone comes to your home claiming to be an employee of Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) that needs to collect money or inspect parts of your property, call us to verify they are, in fact, an employee. If they are not, call local authorities for assistance and do not let the individual into your home.

There are other types of scams consumers should watch out for:

- Government agencies like the IRS will never call to inform you that you have unpaid taxes or other liens against you. You will always receive this type of information in the mail. If someone calls claiming to be the IRS, hang-up immediately.
- If you receive an email from an unknown sender; an email riddled with spelling errors and typos; or an email threatening action unless a sum of money is paid, do not click any links provided within the email, and do not respond to the email. Simply delete the email, or send it to your spam folder.
- If someone calls your home claiming to have discovered a virus on your computer, hang-up. This caller's intent is to access personal information you may be keeping on your computer.

Volunteer Energy Cooperative wants to make sure you avoid any and all types of scams that could put you or your financial information in jeopardy. If you have any questions or would like more information about how you can protect yourself from scammers, call us, or visit our website www.vec.org.

New Substation for Fairfield Glade

If you live in Fairfield Glade or even Crossville you have probably noticed all the construction on Dartmoor. Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) has recently completed their newest substation, West Fairfield,



and will be energizing it by early December. The new substation is part of the VEC 2020 plan to increase system reliability. This substation will serve the northern portion of Fairfield Glade including the Dartmoor Lake area and provides an additional 42MVA to support 4,000 - 5,000 new homes. VEC also changed out the distribution lines in that area and built the new 161kV transmission line. Building the substation made good fiscal sense while line construction was already in progress. The line and substation will increase capacity and efficiency.

(Above)
Preparing the foundation.

(Right)
Bringing in the transformer.



VEC is very serious about power reliability. In the last 17 years VEC has upgraded (and sometimes built new) more than 26 out of the 33 substations in operation. This effort was kicked off by CEO and President Rody Blevins when he was Vice President of engineering and continued in his role as CEO. He and Matthew Teague, Vice President of Engineering, have worked toward a complete system upgrade plan which they titled Vision 2020.



Ready to energize.

Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)

Residential & Outdoor Lighting Fuel Cost Adjustment
Effective December 1, 2018

2.019¢

For the most current FCA information, visit www.vec.org
Volunteer Energy Cooperative is an Equal Opportunity provider and employer.

