



The VECustomers Share program funded \$29,400 in community service grants in February. Since the inception of the program in October 2001, more than \$6.2 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 Member Erbin Baumgardner presents a grant check to Mary Ketchersid, Program Administrator of the Unity Center, and to David Ketchersid, Director of the Unity Center.

Organizations receiving grants in March

Fentress County Bull Dogs	\$2,000	Chattanooga's Kids on the Block (CKOB)	\$500
Byrdstown Senior Center	\$1,250	Friends of the Art Circle Library	\$500
Lady Owls Softball Boosters	\$1,100	Fantastic Quilt Guild Quilts of Valor	\$500
Friends of the Library of Spring City TN	\$1,000	Youth Dept. of Salem Baptist Church	\$500
Polk County High School Softball	\$1,000	Allardt Volunteer Fire Dept.	\$500
CC TAD Center	\$1,000	Cherokee Tribe Baseball Booster	\$500
New Life Community Kitchen	\$1,000	Roane County Youth Leadership	\$450
Calhoun Alumni Association	\$1,000	Midway Hall of Fame	\$325
Chilhowee Middle School Archery Club	\$1,000	CCCB- Cumberland County	
5 Loaves Food Pantry	\$1,000	Community Band	\$300
Cumberland Shrine Club	\$900	Plateau Women's Chorus	\$300
Hamilton County Stars	\$900	Wesley Memorial United Methodist	
BonDeCroft Elementary PTO	\$800	Church-Sack Pack Program	\$250
Meigs County Archery Club	\$800	Polk County Friends of the Library (FOL)	\$250
Meigs Middle School Golf Team	\$800	Distinguished Young Women Program	
Pickett County Soil Conservation Club	\$750	of Rhea County	\$250
Midway Quarterback Club	\$750	30 Plus Club	\$250
Meigs Tigers 5 & 6 year old Baseball	\$700	Muscular Dystrophy Association	\$250
Rhea County Rescue Squad	\$600	ATS- The Bridge	\$250
CCHS Mens Soccer Booster Club	\$500	Jr. Achievement of the Ocoee Region	\$250
Flint Springs Ruritan Club	\$500	Feed my Sheep Sack Pack Food Program	\$250
Spring City Dixie Youth Baseball	\$500	Midway Youth Development Organization	\$225
Keep McMinn Beautiful	\$500	Cookeville Housing Services Corporation	\$200
7th & 8th Grade Science Club	\$500	Rhea/Dayton Tennis Association	\$150

VEC was Founded with the Goal of Creating Positive Effects in Communities

In the early 1930s only four out of every 100 farms in Tennessee were served with any form of electricity. Except for a few privately owned Delco battery power systems, the citizens of Meigs County lived and worked under primitive conditions compared to their counterparts in the larger towns and cities.

In 1933, Willis A. Shadow, University of Tennessee Agriculture Extension Agent for Meigs County, saw new hope for the residents along the Tennessee River with the enactment by Congress of the Tennessee Valley Authority Act. Mr. Shadow began talking "electricity" throughout the county. County Attorney J. W. Lillard joined the ranks, agreeing to furnish Mr. Shadow with legal advice without fee. Enthusiasm gained momentum until a mass meeting of 500 citizens at the Meigs County Courthouse resulted in the May 29, 1935 formation of the Meigs County Power Association, Incorporated, which later became the Meigs County Electric Membership Corporation and today is known as Volunteer Energy Cooperative. The first lines erected in Meigs County were energized August 6, 1936.

In 1939, just seven years after the Tennessee Electric Power Company refused to provide electric service to Meigs County, the rural cooperative entered into a contract with TVA to purchase the power company's distribution properties in McMinn, Bradley, Meigs, Polk, Roane, Rhea, Cumberland, Putnam and Fentress Counties for \$276,700. Recognizing it would soon be serving an area far larger than Meigs County, the corporation changed its name to Volunteer Electric Cooperative.

Today, Volunteer Energy Cooperative is one of the largest rural electric cooperatives in the nation in terms of the area we serve. VEC delivers electricity to more than 115,900 members in all or part of 17 Tennessee counties with more than 10,000 miles of power lines from the Georgia to Kentucky borders.



First Line Crew - An early group of employees poses in front of their trucks and the VEC office in Decatur.

"When you do the common things in life in an uncommon way, you will command the attention of the world."
-George Washington Carver

Easy Steps to a Greater Efficiency

Do you want to save money and electricity but have limited time, money and patience? According to the Department of Energy, a "typical American family" spends nearly \$2,000 per year on their home energy bills. Much of that money, however, is wasted through leaky windows or ducts, old appliances or inefficient heating and cooling systems.

There are several easy ways to save energy without a substantial commitment of time and money. These efforts will help you save whether you own or rent an older or newly constructed home.

☑ Improving the Envelope:

According to Money Magazine, "improving the envelope" of your home is a good place to start. Sunlight, seasonal temperature changes and wind vibrations can loosen up even a tight home, increasing air leakage. Doors and windows may not close tightly, and duct work can spring leaks, wasting cooled and heated air. By placing weather stripping and caulk around windows and doors, you can keep cool air inside during warm months and prevent chilly air from coming indoors during colder months. Sealing gaps around piping, dryer vents, fans and outlets also helps and creates greater efficiency. Apply weather stripping around overlooked spaces like your attic hatch or pull-down stairs.

☑ Light Bulbs:

Replacing incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs can make a big difference in home efficiency and is one of the fastest ways to cut your energy bill. Known for their longevity and efficiency, LED bulbs have an estimated operational life span of typically 10,000 to 20,000 hours compared to 1,000 hours of a typical incandescent.

☑ Water Heater:

Installing a blanket around your water heater could reduce standby heat losses by 25 to 45 percent and save you about 7 to 16 percent in water heating costs, according to the Dept. of Energy. For a small investment of about \$30, you can purchase pre-cut jackets or blankets and install them in about one hour.

☑ Heating and Air (HVAC):

Checking, changing or cleaning your air filter extends the life of your HVAC system and saves you money. Air filters prevent dust and allergens from clogging your HVAC system. Otherwise, dust and dirt trapped in a system's air filter leads to several problems, including: reduced air flow in the home and up to 15 percent higher operating costs; lowered system efficiency; and costly duct cleaning or replacement. Many HVAC professionals recommend cleaning the system filters monthly.

Remember, there are easy steps you can take now to improve the energy efficiency of your home. To learn about additional ways to save, contact VEC's Energy Specialist Paige Finnell at 423-334-7053.

Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)

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

2.154¢

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

Volunteer Energy Cooperative is an Equal Opportunity provider and employer.