

### Understanding Electric Demand



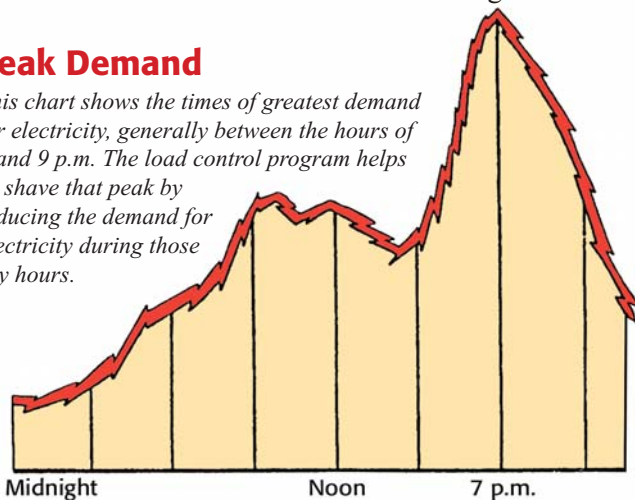
By Michael P. McMahon

If you were to take the amount of power Vernon Electric purchases and graph it on a timeline, you would see peaks during daytime hours and valleys during evening hours — that is demand. The one time in a billing month that the graph reaches its highest peak is called the “peak demand.” Vernon Electric pays a separate charge on our power bill from Dairyland

Power for that peak demand. The charge for a demand peak has been as high as \$200,000 for one month, and that does not include the kilowatt-hour charge.

#### Peak Demand

*This chart shows the times of greatest demand for electricity, generally between the hours of 3 and 9 p.m. The load control program helps us shave that peak by reducing the demand for electricity during those key hours.*



Working together with you, our members, Vernon Electric can shave that peak demand and save money. The Member Services and Engineering Departments at Vernon Electric have put together some conservative figures that show how much Vernon Electric saves using load management. The Water Heater Load Management program currently can save as much as \$20,000 per month, and the Air Conditioning Load Management program and the Dual Fuel program also helps to reduce demand. The more members we can bring into all of these programs, and the more we can shift electric demand into off-peak hours, the more money everyone saves.

If you are interested in helping to keep costs down by participating in the load management program, please give Dave Maxwell a call in our Member Services Department. There is a load management program for electric water heating, air conditioning and electric heat. ■

### Increase the Efficiency of Your Water Heater

There are several ways to reduce your water heating costs. In addition to cutting the demand for hot water, you can improve the efficiency of your existing water heating system. One way to do this is to insulate the hot water pipes. A great deal of energy and water are wasted — literally going down the drain — while you wait for hot water to reach the sink or shower. Insulating your hot water pipes will help reduce heat losses as the hot water flows to your faucet or showerhead, and it will help minimize standby losses when the tap is turned on more than once an hour. Even with insulated pipes, the water eventually will cool, but the water will stay warmer longer than it would if the pipes were not insulated.

Your hot water system is a good candidate for pipe insulation if:

- You use water frequently throughout the day.
- The water pipe runs in your home are long.
- The pipes pass through an uninsulated crawl space or basement.

These types of water pipe insulation are available:

- **Fiberglass batts.** These thin batts come on a roll and wrap the pipe, securing the batt in place with tape as you go.
- **Foam or fiberglass tape.** Both types come on a roll, and they're self-adhesive so they'll stick in place as you wrap the pipes.
- **Foam or synthetic rubber tubes.** Commonly sold in six-foot lengths, these tubes are split lengthwise so all you do is slip them over the pipes and secure them. Rigid foam tubes usually have a higher insulation factor than the less-expensive flexible foam tubes, but the flexible ones are easier to trim and cut for corners or T-joints in your pipe runs.

Before you go shopping, measure the length and diameter of the water pipes you want to insulate. At the store, you'll need to balance cost, convenience of installation, and insulation factor; for example, even though fiberglass insulation may have a higher R-value than foam tubes, it costs more and will take longer to install, and its payback period will be longer. ■

# Scholarships Available from VEC

Every year, unclaimed capital credit checks are forfeited to the Federated Youth Foundation. This Foundation, in turn, makes this money available for youth scholarships to Vernon Electric Cooperative.

In 2008, seventeen scholarships will be made available to students whose parents or legal guardians are members of Vernon Electric Cooperative. Seventeen seniors will each receive a **\$750 scholarship** for the college or university they decide to attend.

One student from each of the following high schools, and one at-large student not attending any of the high schools listed below, is eligible for a \$750 scholarship:

- Aquinas
- Brookwood
- Cashton
- Cornerstone Christian Academy
- De Soto
- Hillsboro
- Kickapoo
- La Crosse Central
- La Farge
- Luther
- Royal
- Sparta
- Viroqua
- Westby
- Wonewoc
- Youth Initiative High School

One applicant from each high school listed above, plus one at-large applicant, will be chosen in a random drawing at the annual meeting from all of the completed and verified applications received for the scholarships. That applicant, or one of the applicant's parents or legal guardians, **MUST BE PRESENT AT THE ANNUAL MEETING**. If the applicant or one of the applicant's parents or legal guardians is not present at the annual meeting, the applicant will not receive the scholarship should his/her name be drawn. Instead, a new name will be drawn until the scholarship can be awarded to an applicant meeting attendance requirements.

Of the seventeen seniors, six will be eligible to attend the Youth Leadership Congress at UW–River Falls, July 16–18. The six will be selected via an essay contest on the topic “What is the Value of Cooperation.” The students with the six best essays will receive an additional \$100 added to their scholarship. In addition, students can enter the same essay in the Youth Leadership Congress Essay Contest and win \$1,000 for first place, \$500 for second, and \$250 for third. In reality, one student from VEC's service territory could win a total of **\$1,850 worth of scholarship money**.

Pick up your scholarship application and guidelines from your school guidance counselor or download one from our website at [www.vernonelectric.org](http://www.vernonelectric.org) (click on “Community Connection”). The deadline for scholarship applications to be submitted back to Vernon Electric's office is **March 10, 2008, 4:30 p.m.**

## Non-traditional Scholarship Also Offered

This \$750 scholarship is awarded to a person who is beginning a two or four-year program after spending a minimum of three years in the work place or raising a family after graduating from high school. One non-traditional scholarship will be chosen in the same manner as the regular scholarship program. The applicant, or one of the applicant's parents, legal guardians, or spouse **MUST BE PRESENT AT THE ANNUAL MEETING**, or a new name will be drawn.

Applications and guidelines for the non-traditional scholarship can be downloaded from our website, picked up at the cooperative office in Westby, or call and we will send them to you. Application deadline is **March 10, 2008, 4:30 p.m.** ■

*(A scholarship application can also be found on page 29.)*

# TV Power-Saving Tips



**E**ven after you've bought a TV, you can still make a difference in your power consumption. We've assembled a short list of tips that just about anybody can do to make their home theater more energy efficient.

**Turn the TV off when it's not being used.** Sure, this one's obvious, but it's easy to get into the habit of leaving the TV on as "background" when you're not really watching it. And while TVs still consume power in standby mode, it's a tiny fraction of what they draw when they're actually on. Old habits die hard, but you'll be saving yourself some bucks if you remember this tip.

**Turn down the LCD's backlight.** Many LCDs give you the ability to control the intensity of the backlight in the TV. By turning down the backlight, you'll lower power consumption, but also make the TV less bright. While retail stores love to turn the backlights up all the way for their displays, some have found that they get the best image quality when they turn down the backlight significantly.

**Turn on the power-saver mode.** Many TVs these days come with a power-saver mode that's designed to cut down the power con-

sumption. Performance of this mode varies from model to model, with the effect sometimes being drastic and other times providing only a slight savings. The only downside is that the power-saver mode usually makes the TV less bright, but some have found that sometimes this has a beneficial effect on the image quality, especially with the room lights turned off, in which case it's a win-win situation.

**Reduce light output with other settings.** Many people buy a TV, turn it on, and never think to change the picture settings. Not only is that bad for the picture quality, it's bad for power consumption. Most TVs are very bright by default, and that leads to using more juice. One of the first things a professional calibrator will usually do is turn down the light output — which is traditionally controlled primarily by "contrast" or "picture" controls — along with several other adjustments that will maximize your TV's performance.

**How much savings can you get by reducing light output?** The Imaging Science Foundation, an organization that provides professional calibration services, estimates that their calibrations can save 30 to 50 percent of your set's current

energy consumption.

**Control room lighting.** Many of these tips are going to make the TV less bright, but controlling the light in your home theater room can compensate for that. While this may be a little overboard just for power consumption, limiting the light in your home theater also goes a long way toward creating the "theater" experience, as well as getting the most out of your TV.

And beyond TV concerns, good-quality blackout shades offer thermal benefits that keep other energy costs low; they keep heat in during the winter and keep it out during the summer.

**Buy a smaller screen.** If you're looking to buy a new TV, you can limit your power consumption by buying a smaller set. This doesn't always exactly hold — for example, rear-projection sets are often larger and draw less power than plasma TVs — but once you pick your display technology, going smaller will almost always use less juice. As always, you can compensate for smaller screen size, to a point, by sitting closer to the screen.

**Watch TV together.** Having multiple TVs in a house is more of a norm than a luxury these days, but that also means your power consumption is going to increase as well. You can cut that power consumption by watching with your family or housemates. You might need to make a few compromises on what you watch, but sometimes it's more fun to watch with friends and family.

**Watch less TV.** Instead of sitting down for another dose of reality TV, you could opt for reality instead. Not only might you get some exercise, but you'll be cutting your energy bill. ■

Source: [http://reviews.cnet.com/4520-6475\\_7-6400401-1.html?tag=nl.e722](http://reviews.cnet.com/4520-6475_7-6400401-1.html?tag=nl.e722)

# \$750 Scholarship Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent(s)/guardian(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of parent/guardian who is a member of and a bona fide resident of Vernon Electric Cooperative: \_\_\_\_\_

High School currently attending: \_\_\_\_\_ GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

College, vocational, or technical school you are planning to attend: \_\_\_\_\_

Major or course of study you intend to pursue: \_\_\_\_\_

High School activities: \_\_\_\_\_

- Entry deadline is March 10, 2008. Completed entries must be returned to Vernon Electric Cooperative office, 110 North Main Street, Westby, WI 54667, by 4:30 p.m. and must be postmarked by March 10, 2008.
- One recipient per school will be chosen in a random drawing at Vernon Electric Cooperative's Annual Meeting on Saturday, March 29, 2008.
- THE APPLICANT OR ONE OF THE APPLICANT'S PARENTS OR LEGAL GUARDIAN MUST BE PRESENT AT THE ANNUAL MEETING (Saturday, March 29, 2008) to meet attendance requirements. If the applicant or one of the applicant's parents or legal guardians is not present at the annual meeting, the applicant will not receive the scholarship should his/her name be drawn. Instead, a new name will be drawn until the scholarship can be awarded to an applicant meeting attendance requirements.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Youth are Part of our Cooperative

*These young people recently attended a cooperative education session at WFU Camp Kenwood. Pictured at left are Mali and Beny Collins, daughter and son of Diane Collins of rural Viroqua. At right is Hillary Grim, daughter of Brad and Cynthia Grim of rural Westby.*

**VERNON**  
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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



110 N. Main Street  
Westby, WI 54667  
(608) 634-3121

Michael McMahan, Manager  
Dave Maxwell, Editor

vec@mwt.net  
www.vernonelectric.org