

Watt's New

January 2008

Vernon Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

"Information for our member-owners."

Cast your ballot for your co-op representative

Members in the following Divisions received a list of all the members in their township (mailed in December):

Division I Towns of Medary, Shelby, Hamburg and Bergen

Division IV Towns of Viroqua, Christiana, and Coon

Division VII Towns of Webster, Stark, Liberty-Forest, and Kickapoo

We ask that you select five members to represent you at the District Conference to be held February 2, 2008. The two lowest of the five top vote receivers will be the alternates. Your vote is important, and those elected need to attend the District Conference. Business reports and work plans will be discussed, and director candidates will be selected for those divisions having elections.

Remember, when you get your ballot, choose five members, sign the ballot envelope, and return it to our office in the self-addressed, stamped envelope by January 18, 2008.



Avoid the Silent Killer!

Use caution when taking steps to tighten up your house. You may be inadvertently creating a situation that would cause the deadly gas, carbon monoxide to build up in your home. Carbon monoxide is an invisible and odorless gas that, if breathed, can replace the oxygen in your lungs, causing you to slowly suffocate. Carbon monoxide is produced by the combustion of fuel, such as LP (liquid propane), natural gas, fuel oil and wood.

In a typical house the same amount of air that moves in must also move out. Homes have a natural balance. Just one example of a potential imbalance would be if you have a fireplace or wood stove heating your home and then air from inside the home moves rapidly to the outside via the chimney when you have fire going. That air going up the chimney has to be replaced in the home. If your home has tight seals around the doors and windows, and there is no other mechanisms to replace the exhausted air, then you could back draft the vents on your gas water heater, furnace, dryer or stove. This, in turn, could create a deadly situation for you and your family as you unknowingly breathe in the carbon monoxide.

Other things that could cause back drafting in a tight home are exhaust vents over stoves and in bathrooms, exhaust vents for other gas appliances and a window air conditioner. Anything that creates negative pressure in the home may cause gas appliances to back draft.

There are things in homes to check for to know if back drafting is a potential problem. One thing you can do if you have a gas water heater is to check the water heater for dust or iron particles that can be a sign of a back draft problem.

Experts say a working carbon monoxide detector is the best backup. Experts also advise having appliances that vent, such as ovens and air conditioners, checked at least once a year by heating and cooling companies.



Notice: Due to high gas prices Vernon Electric has noticed many people switching to electric heat. Please let us know if you do this so that we can make sure your transformer is properly sized for the extra new demand being placed on it. Otherwise you run the chance tripping your transformer causing a lengthy power outage for yourself, and possibly your neighbors.

VEC Payment Policies

- 1% late payment penalty after the 25th of the month on total unpaid balance
- After the 5th of the month a "Disconnect Notice" will be sent to members owing more than \$30 in 30 days past due or any amount over 60 days.
- Disconnection will take place 10 days from the date the "Disconnect Notice" was processed. The notice will list the local county Department of Human Services and Coulee CAP phone numbers if the member feels they may be eligible for assistance.
- If a satisfactory payment arrangement has not been made by the disconnect date, a phone notification will be used to inform the member that if payment is not received by the specified time on the message that the member's location will be visited on collections.

Collection Fees

- \$35 for each visit to the premises for collection of past due accounts, installation of a 30/30 meter*, or disconnection of service.
- \$35 if a member requests reconnection of service or removal of a 30/30 meter prior to 3 p.m.
- \$75 if a member requests reconnection of service or removal of a 30/30 meter after 3 p.m. on a regular business day, or Saturday, Sunday or holidays.
- Minimum of a \$200 security deposit per meter.

*Vernon Electric Cooperative will continue collection procedures for the winter months through March. During this time period, the Cooperative will install a 30/30 meter which will provide the member full power for 30 minutes and no power for 30 minutes on a continued cycle.

If an account is disconnected for nonpayment, in order for that account to be reconnected, the balance owed, collection charges and possible security deposit must be paid before reconnection of service.

Want to pay your bill online? Sign up for E-Bill at www.vernonelectric.org

Kid's



Corner

Last month's Kid's Corner winner was Austin Lockington age 11, son of Jeff Lockington of rural DeSoto.

Win a chance for a gift certificate from a local restaurant by completing the following activity and mailing it back to our office by February 7th. You must be 12 or under to enter.



Add the correct words to complete the messages below:

Electrical, Throw, Read, Equipment, Danger

Stay away from electrical _____.

Do not _____ things at the insulators!

_____ the warning signs on electrical equipment. Never try to open

_____!

_____ HIGH VOLTAGE!



Name _____ Age _____

Parent(s) or Guardian _____ Account # _____

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 listed high schools, 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

Due to new tax laws the scholarship election process is changing. Pending board approval, 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 are not present at the annual meeting, the applicant will not receive the scholarship should his/her name be



Nontraditional scholarship also offered

This \$750 scholarship is generally awarded to a person who is beginning a two or four-year program a number of years after graduating from high school.

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.

"Seventeen seniors will each receive a \$750 scholarship for the college or university they decide to attend."

Local Calendar of Events

- Jan. 11** **Smithsonian Exhibit "Between Fences"** begins at the Kickapoo Reserve Visitor Center. Ends February 16. <http://kvr.state.wi.us>.
- Jan. 22** **Coulee Region Professional Women New Member Event**, 5:30-7 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites in La Crosse. For more information and RSVP call 608-791-5282.
- Feb. 2** Our Saviors Lutheran Church **Lutefisk & Meatball Supper** in Westby. \$12.50 adults. Age 8-12 \$6, under 8 free. Call 608-634-3415 for more info.
- Feb. 12** **Inventors and Entrepreneurs Club** meeting at the Gays Mills Community Building. 6 p.m. networking, 6:30 p.m. program. Call the Vernon Economic Development Assoc. at 637-5396 for more info.

If you know of a local event taking place between February 10th and March 10th, we would be happy to advertise it for you, for free, in this newsletter, at our discretion. Please provide us with information before January 12th.

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The information in this newsletter has been prepared for you by David Maxwell, Marketing and Communications. Comments or questions regarding information contained here should be directed to:

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