

# Watt's New April 2024



## Vernon Electric Cooperative

*"Information for our member-owners."*

## Monthly Co-op



### January Trivia:

Electric cooperatives are in 47 of 50 states. What three states do not have electric cooperatives?

**Answer:** Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island

### April Trivia:

What tree species are typically used for power poles?

*(See next month's newsletter for answer.)*

## VEC Sponsors EV Safety Seminar

Even though electric vehicles are less likely than gas powered vehicles to catch fire in an accident, Vernon Electric Cooperative (VEC) recently took a proactive step towards ensuring the safety of its community by hosting an Electric Vehicle (EV) Safety Training seminar in collaboration with EVsafe. This initiative aimed to equip over 50 members from various area fire departments with essential knowledge and skills necessary to respond effectively to emergencies involving electric vehicles.

The seminar covered a wide array of topics, ranging from understanding the unique components of EVs to implementing proper protocols during rescue operations. Participants gained insights into identifying high-voltage systems, managing thermal runaway situations, and safety hazards that can occur while extricating occupants from electric vehicles.

The cooperative's commitment to community safety was evident as it coordinated efforts with Vernon County Emergency Management (VCEM) to provide this invaluable opportunity for local fire departments



at VEC's headquarters. The collaboration between VEC and VCEM reaffirms their role as responsible stewards of community wellbeing.

Attendees left the seminar empowered with newfound expertise and confidence, poised to tackle potential EV-related emergencies with efficiency and precision. This initiative not only underscores the importance of continuous education in emergency response but also exemplifies the cooperative's dedication to cultivate a resilient and prepared community for the challenges of tomorrow's transportation landscape.

## Sub-Contractors Out and About

Vernon Electric works with many sub-contractors who may need to access our rights-of-way on private property. During the month of May, **Badgerland Utility Solutions** will be inspecting VEC's underground electric utility enclosures ("green boxes") to make sure they are in good condition and to mitigate any potential problems to ensure the best reliability possible to your electric service. Their employees carry employee identification, wear marked clothing and drive marked vehicles.

Badgerland Utility Solutions will have employees and vehicles working in the Sauk Substation area in the Towns of Greenwood, Henrietta, Ironton, LaValle, Westford, Wonewoc and Woodland. They will also be working in the Westby Substation area in the Towns of Christiana, Clinton, Coon, Viroqua, Webster, & Liberty.

If you see them on your property, please know they are there to do important work. Feel free to approach them for proof of identification if you are unsure about who they are.



*Badgerland Utility Solutions trucks will be working in Rights-of-way in May.*

# Lineworker Appreciation

As April 8th rolls around, Vernon Electric Cooperative eagerly anticipates the arrival of Lineworker Appreciation Day. For these dedicated professionals, it's more than just a celebration; it's a moment to honor their tireless commitment to keeping the lights on and the community connected.

In the early hours of the morning, before the sun paints the sky, the lineworkers gather at their headquarters. They share stories of challenges overcome, storms weathered, and the camaraderie that defines their kindred bond.

As dawn breaks, they head out into the field, each team assigned to different parts of the community. From the remote countryside, they climb poles, mend frayed wires, and restore power to homes and businesses. Their efforts may go unnoticed, but on this day, the appreciation should radiate from every corner of our service area.

As the day draws to a close, the lineworkers of Vernon Electric Cooperative reflect on their labors with a quiet sense of pride. There are no grand celebrations or formal accolades; instead, they find satisfaction in the knowledge that they've helped keep their community-powered and connected.

On Lineworker Appreciation Day, these dedicated individuals stand as unsung heroes, their efforts often going unnoticed by those they serve. Yet, within their tight-knit team, there's a deep sense of camaraderie and mutual respect that transcends the need for public recognition.

For the lineworkers of Vernon Electric Cooperative, every day is a testament to their commitment to service, and on April 8th, please take a moment to acknowledge the importance of their work.



## Capital Credit Allocations – What are they?

Recently, you may have received a notification about your capital credit allocation from the Cooperative. Here's some detail on what that means...

Your cooperative generates margins (profits), which are returned to the members over a period of time. The cooperative must generate enough revenue to cover all costs of providing service and operating the cooperative. Any margins left at the end of the year are allocated to the members as capital credits.

Once a year, a formal audit confirms the cooperative's income and expenses. Income remaining after deducting all expenses is the "net margin." This amount represents members' capital credits. Capital credits are divided among the members, who are the owners of the cooperative, in proportion to how much electricity each member purchased. This follows

the cooperative principle that ownership benefits are generally in proportion to use.

Although the margins are annually allocated and assigned to members, they aren't necessarily distributed at that time. Capital credits represent an important source of financing for the cooperative. Just as the benefits of a cooperative are tied to use, so is the responsibility to finance the business. The cooperative is financed when you pay for electric service and through the Co-op retaining capital credits.

Your board of directors, made up of members just like you, decides on the amount of capital credits that can be allocated back to the members each year and still keep the cooperative on a sound financial basis. The retained amount belongs to you and will be paid out at a later date.



1

Your cooperative tracks how much electricity you buy and how much money you pay for it throughout the year.



2

At the end of the year your cooperative completes a financial analysis and determines the amount of excess revenues, called margins.



3

Your cooperative allocates the margins to members as capital credits based upon their use of electricity during the year.



4

When the cooperative's financial condition permits, your board of directors elects to retire, or pay, the capital credits.



5

Your cooperative notifies you of how and when you'll receive your capital credit retirement.

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The information in this newsletter has been prepared for you by Trevor B. Clark, Manager of Communications & Member Relations. Comments or questions regarding information contained here should be directed to:  
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