

Watt's New

February 2012

Vernon Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



"Information for our member-owners."

Take Advantage of 2012 Rebates

Stay comfortable, save energy and save money

Energy Star Appliances and Recycling

Dehumidifier.....	\$25
Refrigerator.....	\$25
Room Air Conditioner.....	\$25
Dishwasher.....	\$25
Clothes Washer.....	\$25
Freezer Recycling.....	\$25
Refrigerator Recycling.....	\$25
Room A/C Recycling.....	\$25

Conservation

Flow Restrictor – Faucet.....	\$1
Flow Restrictor – Shower.....	\$1
Smart Power Strip.....	\$5

Lighting

LED Holiday Lights.....	\$2
Occupancy Sensor.....	\$5
CFL.....	\$1
CFL, 60 watt or greater.....	\$5
Hard-Wired Energy Star CFL.....	\$5
LED bulb or fixture.....	\$2
LED Security/Yard Light.....	\$15

Water Heaters (load control required except HPWH)

50 gallon.....	\$50
80-99 gallon.....	\$125
80-99 gallon with .90 Energy Factor.....	\$250
100+ gallon with .85 Energy Factor.....	\$400
Heat Pump Water Heater.....	\$300
Solar Water Heater w/ Electric Backup.....	\$300

Air Conditioners & Heat Pumps

Central A/C	
14 SEER.....	\$40/Ton
15 SEER.....	\$60/Ton
16 SEER.....	\$80/Ton
Air-Source Heat Pump 14+ SEER.....	\$120/Ton
Geo-thermal Heat Pump.....	\$200/Ton

Rebates are not all-inclusive and may require conditions. Find out more information or get a rebate form by visiting www.vernonelectric.org or call Vernon Electric at 634-3121 or 800-447-5051. Rebates are in place through **December 31, 2012 or until funds, by incentive or in total, are depleted.**

Focus on Energy may provide additional energy efficiency rebates for home heating and water heaters. Find out more, call 800-762-7077 or visit www.focusonenergy.com.



Increase your water heater's efficiency

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. Some of these upgrades cost just a few dollars and will take you only a few minutes to complete – others require a larger investment and installation by professional technician – but all will pay for themselves through reduced utility bills during the normal lifespan of your water heater.

Insulate the hot water pipes

A great deal of energy and water is 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. Some types are held in place with zip ties or tape, while others include self-adhesive strips along their cut lines. 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. You may need a couple of sizes if you're planning to insulate both the main hot water supply line (often 3/4" pipe) and the branch lines (1/2") to individual fixtures and appliances. 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.

Vacuum the dust and debris off the pipes before you begin installation; wear safety glasses to keep your eyes protected from any remaining debris that gets knocked loose; for fiberglass insulation, wear gloves and a dust mask, too. Insulate the first six feet of both the hot and cold water pipes, starting where

(continued on back...)



Snail Mail Getting Slower

Will your payment arrive on time?

Recent news articles have reported that the U.S. Postal Service is pushing ahead with unprecedented cuts to first-class mail starting next spring, which will slow mail delivery. The chance that a stamped letter will arrive the next day will all but be eliminated. They want to close more than half the mail processing centers.



What does this mean for you and Vernon Electric? According to John Shea, president of the local postal workers union, "There could end up being a week to get a letter mailed and delivered in the same town. That will greatly affect the delivery of bills and timely payment of them. People will need to send payments earlier to ensure that they arrive on time."

Fortunately Vernon Electric offers several options to avoid late payments:

- Sign up for the Automatic Payment Plan and have your payment automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on the 20th of each month
- Sign up for E-Billing to receive and pay your bill each month on-line and go paperless
- Use E-Billing to set up a reoccurring credit card payment
- Use our third-party payment service (NCO) by phone (866-295-0091) or on-line anytime (small convenience fee added to this service)
- Sign up with your financial institution's Bill Payer service
- Bring your payment into our office during business hours
- Use our convenient drop-box available 24-hours per day
- Use one of our convenient pay-stations located throughout our service area (for a listing of pay-stations view the back of your bill, visit our website or call our office)

First-time Vernon Electric members signing up for E-Bill or the Automatic Payment Plan will receive a \$5 credit on their next electric bill. If you sign up for both, you will get a \$10.00 credit. Visit www.vernonelectric.org or call us at 608-634-3121 or 1-800-447-5051 (toll free in 608 area code) if you have questions or need assistance.

Vernon Electric Offers Energy Assessments

Vernon Electric Cooperative, in partnership with Dairyland Power and Focus on Energy, is again providing home energy assessments as part of its Conservation Program. Vernon Electric members can receive the assessments through the end of the year at a discounted fee of \$100 after rebate. The usual fee is \$350. Members must make recommended changes from the assessment to qualify for the rebate.

"Energy efficiency improvements to your home can save you money and make you more comfortable," said Dave Maxwell, Director of Marketing & Communications.

Here's how it works: An energy assessment professional examines the house, checking structural and mechanical features and insulation. The expert will also check how well the house is sealed by using a blower-door test with an infrared camera. The blower door causes air to be sucked out of the house creating a negative pressure inside which, in turn, reveals where cold air infiltrates your home. The cold air infiltration is easily seen by the expert's infrared camera. The whole process takes less than three hours.

The assessment professional will offer tips on what should be fixed or replaced for better energy conservation. Members then can receive money from Vernon Electric and Wisconsin's Focus on Energy program toward energy-saving projects.

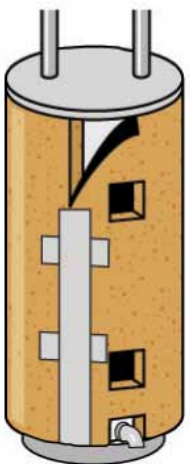
"The energy professional will give you a comprehensive report showing a list of recommended changes, who can make the changes, and how much money is available in incentives for making the changes," Maxwell said. "Then, after the changes are made, the energy professional will come back to re-test your home to make sure the changes made a difference."

Schedule an energy assessment

To find an expert energy professional to perform a residential energy assessment, Vernon Electric members can call Dave Maxwell at 608-634-3121 or 1-800-447-5051 or visit www.FindItWithFocus.com. This website will ask you to select the county you live in and then will give you a choice of services to choose from. You should choose "Existing Home Consultants" from the list. Local professionals will be listed with contact information.



Water heater efficiency... (continued from front)



the pipes go into the water heater. Also insulate the hot water pipe runs that go to frequently used fixtures or appliances.

Give your water heater a blanket

Wrapping an insulation blanket around the tank of your water heater can save you money on water-heating bills. The insulation blanket will reduce standby heat loss – heat lost through the wall of the tank – by 25% to 45%, and you'll likely recover the

cost of the blanket through reduced water-heating bills within a year.

- Check the owner's information that came with your water heater to make sure the manufacturer doesn't prohibit installing an insulation blanket.
- Look for a blanket with an insulation value of R-11 or higher.
- Buy a blanket kit designed for your type of water heater, and carefully follow the installation instructions. For example, on electric water heaters you should avoid covering the unit's thermostats.

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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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