

Watt's New

April 2026



Vernon Electric Cooperative

"Information for our members."

Monthly Co-op Trivia

MARCH TRIVIA:

True or False – Touching a downed power line can be deadly even if it's not sparking.

Answer: False. Downed lines can still be energized and extremely dangerous—even without visible sparks or movement

APRIL TRIVIA:

What is the primary purpose of a "load management" or demand response program in electric cooperatives?

- A) Increase electricity sales
- B) Shift or reduce electricity use during peak demand times
- C) Eliminate outages entirely
- D) Replace renewable energy

(See next month's newsletter for answer.)

Capital Credit Allocations – What are they?

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 remaining margins left at the end of the year are allocated to the members as capital credits.

Once a year, a formal audit determines 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, in proportion to how much electricity each member purchased.

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 like you, decides on the amount of capital credits that can be allocated to members each year while keeping the cooperative on a sound financial basis. The retained amount belongs to you and will be paid out at a later date.

Telling the story of capital credits emphasizes the most important principle of the cooperative - it belongs to you!



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.

Tree Contractor Work Begins

Vernon Electric Cooperative members may notice tree-clearing activity beginning at the end of March in the Kendall Substation area, as our contracted tree service, Zielie's Tree Service, begins scheduled maintenance work.

Tree clearing plays a critical role in maintaining a safe and reliable electric system. Overgrown branches and trees near power lines are one of the leading causes of outages—especially during storms, high winds, and heavy snow. By proactively trimming and removing vegetation in key areas, we reduce the risk of power interruptions and help ensure consistent service for our members.

This work is part of VEC's ongoing investment in system reliability. While it may sometimes be inconvenient to see crews working or temporary changes to the landscape, these efforts help prevent larger issues down the road, including extended outages and costly emergency repairs.

We appreciate your understanding as Zielie's completes this important work to keep your power safe, reliable, and resilient.



Line Worker Appreciation Day

As April 13th rolls around, Vernon Electric Cooperative eagerly anticipates the arrival of Line Worker 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.

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 linemen of Vernon Electric Cooperative reflect on their work 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 Line Worker 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 linemen of Vernon Electric Cooperative, every day is a testament to their commitment to service, and on April 13th, please take a moment to acknowledge the importance of their work. They may not seek the spotlight or expect applause, but their contribution to their community is invaluable, and on this day, they are celebrated in the quiet moments of reflection and gratitude.



Vernon is proud to support local students

Vernon Electric Cooperative (VEC) is proud to support local students through a recent \$2,000 donation to STEM programs at Kickapoo and Westby Schools. This includes a \$1,000 contribution from VEC, matched by an additional \$1,000 from CoBank through its Sharing Success program.

At Kickapoo, the funds will support the SeaPerch program, where students design and build underwater robots that must complete assigned tasks, such as navigating an obstacle course. The team recently placed 1st, 2nd, and 3rd and the 1st place team will advance to the International Championship this May at the University of Maryland.

In Westby, the donation will benefit the Norse Force robotics team, which recently competed at Lambeau Field. The team placed 10th out of 71 teams and earned the Build Award. In their competition, the robot's objective is to pick up balls and shoot them into a basket. According to their advisor, the robot is capable of rapidly firing balls one after another at very specific angles—highlighting the impressive level of engineering and programming involved.

VEC is proud to invest in these programs, supporting student success and helping build the future workforce in our communities.



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The information in this newsletter has been prepared for you by Trevor B. Clark, Director of Member Services. Comments or questions regarding information contained here should be directed to:
VERNON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
110 Saugstad Rd; Westby, WI 54667
Call (608) 634-3121 or 1-800-447-5051.

www.vernonelectric.org • E-mail: info@vernonelectric.org
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