



Watt's New

AUGUST 2026



Vernon Electric Cooperative

"Information for our members."

Monthly Co-op Trivia

JULY TRIVIA:

In what year did Vernon Electric Cooperative build the Hillsboro outpost at the intersection of Highways 82 and 33, which is still used today?

Answer: 1966

AUGUST TRIVIA:

Each year Wisconsin Electric Cooperative's sponsor students to attend the Youth Leadership Conference (YLC). How many years has YLC been held?

(See next month's newsletter for answer.)

Dorm Safety

When you are preparing and shopping for dorm supplies, décor, snacks and other back-to-school items, take a moment to discuss safety tips with your child.

Here are some safety topics to help keep your college student safe.

Electrical safety tips:

- When shopping for items that require electricity, look for a safety endorsement label, such as UL (Underwriters Laboratories).
- Do not put a cell phone under a pillow or place it on or under bedding. It could overheat and catch fire.
- In the dorm or apartment, make sure outlets near water sources are equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). If they are not, contact the resident assistant, campus housing staff or landlord. (Look for a test and reset button on the face of the outlet.)
- Use power strips with an over-current protector that will shut off power if too much current is drawn.
- Avoid overloading extension cords, power strips or outlets.

- Do not hang decorative lights with nails or tacks; always use plastic hooks.
- Do not run electric cords across traffic paths or under rugs.

General safety tips:

- Find out what type of public safety department is on campus and how it functions; ask which services the department offers and the steps it takes to prevent crime.
- Locate emergency call buttons or phones across campus in case of an emergency.
- Walk with a friend, especially at night.
- When attending events or parties, go with at least one person you know and trust. If your friend leaves, do not stay.
- Always be aware of your surroundings.
- Avoid being distracted (listening to music, texting, and so on) while walking on campus.
- Find out what types of mental health services or counseling the campus offers.

To learn more electric safety tips, visit www.safeelectricity.org.

MariBell Transmission Project: Advisory Resolution Update

Resolution response: An advisory resolution on the MariBell Transmission Project was proposed and adopted at Vernon Electric Cooperative's 2026 annual meeting. The resolution requested additional project information from Dairyland Power Cooperative, which (together with its partner GridLiance Heartland) will develop and own the 765 kV transmission line after the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) assigned Dairyland the 140-mile segment between Marion, Minn., and Bell Center, Wis.

Dairyland's response to the Vernon membership's resolution is now publicly available on Dairyland's

website (www.DairylandPower.com) in the Press Room – Press Releases section, along with additional project information, contact details for the MariBell team and links to the MariBell website and route map.

Virtual Town Hall: Dairyland will host a virtual town hall meeting on MariBell for Vernon members in August. Dairyland leadership and members of the MariBell project team will provide an overview of the proposed project and answer member questions. More information, including the date and registration details, will be announced with the Vernon membership soon.

2026 Youth Leadership Conference Recap



The WECA Youth Leadership Conference (YLC) took place on July 14-16 at the UW-Stout campus. Vernon Electric Cooperative sponsored six local students to attend the event. The annual event is sponsored by the 24 electric cooperatives throughout the state to help students enhance their teamwork and leadership skills while learning about electric cooperatives.

Students arrive on campus and are greeted by the YLC Youth Board before checking into their dorm rooms with a randomly assigned roommate, initiating the potential for new friendships. There is little time to settle in, as students are pushed into team-building activities. Over 70 students are divided into six districts, where they will complete icebreakers and case studies, learn about campaigning for the youth board, and create a video on one of the cooperative principles.

The second day is the only full day, as students start with district meetings early in the morning to prepare for motivational speakers, safe driving, technological advancements, youth board interviews, an etiquette dinner, and end the night with a hypnotist.



Each year, students are given the opportunity to run for the “Youth Board” by requesting signatures from their peers and participating in a mock interview with their district leader, a current youth board delegate. If selected, candidates must deliver a short speech explaining why they would make a good leader or board member.

This year, one VEC student was selected to the board, and we, as a co-op, are very proud of it. Bennett Gehrke of Kickapoo High School was selected to represent Vernon Electric Cooperative on the YLC Youth Board. His selection awards him a trip to attend the National Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. next summer and he will help plan next year’s YLC with the seven other delegates.

VERNON ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

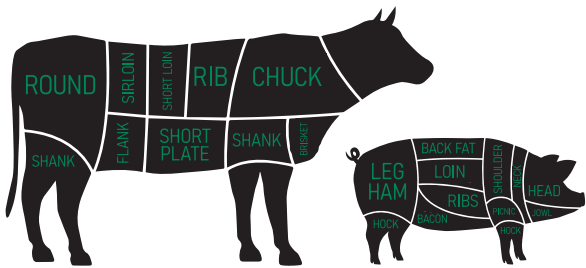
MEAT GIVEAWAY

5th Annual Meat Giveaway Underway

Our 5th Annual Meat Giveaway is going strong! This annual fundraiser helps support ongoing improvements to the livestock buildings at the Vernon County Fairgrounds.

Stop by our office during regular business hours to enter for a chance to win one of four \$100 gift certificates to a local meat locker. Entries are available for a \$1 donation each or six entries for \$5.

You can also enter at Vernon County’s National Night Out on Tuesday, August 4, and the Vernon County Fair September 16-20.



Join us in supporting our community—all proceeds go directly toward fairground improvements.

The drawing will be held after the Vernon County Fair.

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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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