

## Vernon Electric Cooperative

### iPads for Kickapoo Elementary

Kickapoo Elementary School received a Federated Youth Foundation Grant from Vernon Electric Co-op. First Grade Teacher, Samantha Mueller, applied for and received the \$750 grant. The money will be used to purchase iPads for students to use in the classroom. Pictured from l to r: Kim Johnson, Elementary Principal; Dave Drege, VEC Director; and Samantha Mueller.



*"Information for our member-owners."*

### Lights for Westby Athletics

From l to r, Dave Maxwell, Dir., Marketing & Communications and Orlan Bakkum, VEC Director; hand over a \$500 donation to Paul Lempke from the Norsemen Booster Club, to help install the field lights shown in the background. These lights will allow Westby High School to have evening football games and track meets in the future. The Booster Club hopes to have enough money raised to install the lights before the first football game this fall.



## High Temps Impact Electric Bills

Hot temperatures combined with high humidity in Southwest Wisconsin caused electric bills to rise. Temperatures were in the 90s some days in July with heat indexes much higher. When temperatures outside are high, air conditioning systems must work overtime to keep the air indoors cool.

July is typically the hottest month of the year, but August will most likely be hot, too. Follow these tips to reduce energy use where possible to save money.

### Be air conditioner smart

A high percentage of the electricity used at home goes to condition the air inside. To impact cost, the air conditioning system needs to run less.

- Set your thermostat to 78 degrees.
- Don't turn off the air conditioner when you're gone; instead set it higher. Turning it off makes the system work much harder to overcome the heat built up in the house when you do turn it on.
- Use a programmable thermostat; set it to start bringing your home's temperature down to 78 degrees 30 minutes before you get home.
- Replace air conditioner filters, then inspect once a month. The dirtier the filter, the harder your air conditioning system must work.
- Your air conditioning system will operate most efficiently if you trim nearby foliage to allow adequate air flow around the unit.
- Don't block vents with furniture or other objects.
- Use ceiling fans when you are in a room to provide additional cooling; they also provide better circulation, which reduces air conditioning costs. Make sure you turn the fan off when no one is in the room to enjoy it.

### Reduce the heat inside

- Restrict use of heat-producing appliances like ovens, dishwashers and dryers to the early morning (before 11am) or late evening (after 7pm) when temperatures are cooler.
- Grill outside or use a microwave or toaster oven. A toaster oven uses one-third to one-half as much

energy as a regular oven and releases less heat into the home.

- Turn off heat-generating devices when not in use, including lights, televisions, coffee makers, and computers.
- On warm days, close blinds and drapes, especially in south-facing windows which allow in the most heat.
- Hang clothes to dry outside. Using a clothes dryer, even though it is vented to the outside, still adds heat to the inside of your home.

### Cut energy use everywhere else

- Activate "sleep" features on computers and office equipment that power down when the equipment is not in use for more than an hour.
- Do full loads when you use clothes washers, dryers and dishwashers. Let your dishes air-dry instead of using the heated drying feature.
- Use dimmers, timers and motion detectors on indoor and outdoor lighting.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with LED light bulbs, which last longer and produce less heat.

### Plan long-term

- Plant deciduous trees to shade the south side of your house.
- Insulate floors, walls and attics to keep cooler in summer and warmer in winter.
- Get your air conditioner tuned-up. Consider a maintenance contract that provides a checkup in the spring.
- If your HVAC unit is 15 years old or more, consider replacing it.

To minimize the impact weather has on electric bills, Vernon Electric offers Budget Billing that levels out the costs from summer and winter energy usage over a 12-month period. The Budget Billing plan for members works by averaging the current month and the last 11 months of electric use, which becomes the new monthly payment amount. Members interested in budget billing should call Vernon Electric at 1-800-447-5051 or 608-634-3121.

# Directors Achieve Gold Award

**B**ernadine Hornby, VEC Board President, and Daniel Korn, VEC Director and VEC representative on the Dairyland Power Board, each received NRECA's (National Rural Electric Cooperative Assoc.) Director Gold credential. Completing the Director Gold Program demonstrates their ongoing commitment to advancing their knowledge and performing their fiduciary duty as a director.



## Energy Efficiency Rebates Available – Water Heater Rebates

• Standard Water Heater, 50-74 gallons .....	\$50
• Standard Water Heater, 75 gallons or greater.....	\$125
• High-Efficiency Water Heater, 75-99 gallons with an Energy Factor (EF) of .90 or greater .....	\$250
• High-Efficiency Water Heater, 100 gallons or greater with an Energy Factor (EF) of .85 or greater ....	\$400
• Commercial Water Heater, 75-99 gallons.....	\$250
• Commercial Water Heater, 100 gallons or greater.....	\$400
• Heat Pump Water Heater with an Energy Factor (EF) of 2.00 or greater (load management control not required).....	\$300
• Solar Storage Water Heater with Electric Backup.....	\$1,200

### Eligibility and Instructions

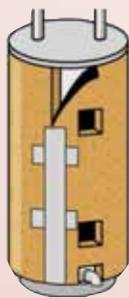
- The water heater must be new and purchased and/or installed, on Vernon Electric lines, in 2018.
- A load management control must be installed (free of charge) by a Vernon Electric technician (heat pump water heaters exempt). A load management control will turn your water heater off for a few hours during periods of high demand or high market costs for electricity. During these periods, you will rely on the stored hot water in your water heater's tank.
- Rebates are in place through December 31, 2018 or until funds are depleted.
- Submit rebate form and receipt no later than 3 months from installation.
- Rebate forms are available on-line at [www.vernonelectric.org](http://www.vernonelectric.org), or by contacting our office.

See Vernon Electric's website at [www.vernonelectric.org](http://www.vernonelectric.org) for more energy efficiency rebates available.

- High-efficiency electric water heaters, including heat pumps, are readily available.
- Electric water heaters are safe. They produce no carbon monoxide, and they pose no threat of combustion or explosion.
- Electric water heaters can run on power generated from a range of energy sources, including solar, wind, hydro and other renewables.
- Electric water heaters don't lose energy from exhaust or the replacement air that circulates into and out of a house.
- Electric water heaters are easy to install. They require no expensive gas lines or exhaust flues.
- The price of electricity is less volatile than for other fuels.
- Electric water heaters are used in energy storage and load control programs to keep costs low, integrate renewable resources and reduce greenhouse gases.

### 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 or two.



- Check the owner's manual 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 to allow easier access if necessary.

### The Benefits of Electric Water Heating

Electric water heaters have many attributes that appeal to home owners:

### Line Department Update

We are nearing the completion of our meter replacement project. We just have one substation (Liberty Pole) left to do. Once completed the obsolete Turtle meter system will be retired. The new meters will have many advantages over the old system:



- Near real-time, remote reading. It can help members find problems in their electrical system, especially when their bill increases for unknown reasons.
- Quicker response time to outages, therefore reducing outage time to members.
- Online access to usage history in near real-time. Allows member to manage their energy use and energy efficiency measures easier.
- Opportunity for development of rates to allow options for member savings, such as Time-of-Use Rates.
- Remote disconnect/reconnect of meters offers money savings by reducing employee trip time, fuel, carbon emissions, and vehicle wear and tear.
- Quickly identify individual outages and responding even before the member may know their power is out.