

Vernon Electric Cooperative

"Information for our member-owners."

Vernon Electric Crew Responds to Hurricane Irma Damage

Vernon Electric Cooperative sent a crew to Florida early Monday morning, September 11, to help with hurricane relief efforts. Journeymen Line Workers, Jason Berklund and Jason Johnson, both volunteered to make the trip, with plans to be gone for at least two weeks.

Vernon Electric's crew were joined by 51 crews from other Wisconsin electric cooperatives all over the state, converging on Florida to help restore power.

The week before Hurricane Irma hit, the Florida Electric Cooperative Association put out a call for assistance in anticipation of widespread outages across Florida. The Wisconsin Electric Cooperative association coordinated response efforts with the 25 electric cooperatives in Wisconsin. The convoy arrived in Florida on Wednesday, September 13.

Berklund and Johnson specifically worked alongside crews of Clay Electric Cooperative which serves north-central Florida. 89% of their 171,000 members were without power on September 11. Clay Electric will reimburse Vernon Electric for the use of our line workers and equipment.



Jason Berklund (left) and Jason Johnson pause briefly for a photo before heading off to restore power to Florida early September 11.

Electric cooperatives from more than 25 states participated in daily mutual aid coordination calls. Approximately 1,900 crews were deployed to Florida and Georgia for a total response size of approximately 4,200 people. Of the estimated 4 million outages because of Irma, roughly 785,000 are electric co-op outages in the state of Florida.

Co-op Open House and Picnic

Come celebrate with us!

Wednesday, October 25
11am – 2 pm.

Come help us celebrate Co-op Month at the Vernon Electric Cooperative office in Westby from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Serving sandwiches, hot dogs, baked beans, chips and dessert.

Our area is ripe with vibrant cooperatives, and now we come together to celebrate a form of business that provides services and products at affordable prices – even in rural areas.

Displays and Activities:

- Blood pressure (free) and cholesterol (\$20) & glucose (\$5) screening by Vernon Memorial Health Care
- Well-water nitrate screening by Vernon Co. Land & Water Conservation (bring in a cup of fresh water in clean container)
- Hybrid electric/gas vehicle
- Electric Grills
- VEC Program displays
- Games & activities
- Line Trucks & equipment
- Door prizes!

LED Yard Lights – A bright and efficient option

Vernon Electric can provide you with a yard light for a monthly fee. The yard light must be mounted on a Vernon Electric pole.

Vernon Electric yard lights turn on automatically from dusk to dawn using a photoelectric controlled, LED (Light Emitting Diode) fixture. The monthly fee includes installation and repair, if the light ever quits working from normal wear. Yard lights are night-sky compliant, very efficient, durable and emit good quality light.



There is a different monthly charge depending if the yard light is before the meter (unmetered) or after the meter (metered).

Monthly Fee:

- **Unmetered\$9.25 per month**
- **Metered\$6.50 per month**

Vernon County Cooperative Association Presents the "Cooperative Connection" Game

Win Great Prizes!

During October Co-op Month, participating Vernon County Cooperatives will be offering punch cards to their members to win a chance at some great prizes. The idea is to help promote the fact there are many cooperatives in our area that help our economy grow and provide us with essential services.

The Cooperative Connections game will run from October 1 – 31. You can pick up your playing card at any participating co-op. Visit any of the participating co-ops to have your playing card stamped. Once you have eight stamps from the eight participating co-ops you can return the card for a chance to win over \$1,000 worth of prizes including a Toshiba 40" LED TV or co-op gift baskets



valued at over \$200 each (including gift cards).

Your playing card must be returned to **any of the participating cooperatives** by November 3, 2017 for a chance to win.

Prizes and full details will be available in the **News & Events** section of our website.

Participating Co-ops:

- Vernon Electric Cooperative
- Vernon Communications Cooperative
- WCCU Credit Union
- Westby Co-op Creamery
- Compeer Financial (formerly Badgerland Financial)
- Viroqua Food Cooperative
- Organic Valley
- Chaseburg Co-op

Electric Co-op Facts

Electric cooperatives are an integral part of the \$393 billion U.S. electric utility industry. They play a critical role in our nation's economy and in local communities. Electric cooperatives are:

- democratically controlled, not-for-profit electric utility businesses
- owned by the customers they serve
- governed by a board of directors elected from the membership

In addition to providing high-quality electric service, electric cooperatives are deeply committed to their communities. They empower members to improve the quality of their lives through economic development and revitalization projects, and job creation.

To perform their mission, electric cooperatives:

- own and maintain 2.6 million miles, or 42%, of the nation's electric distribution lines, covering three quarters of the nation's landmass
- deliver 11 percent of the total kilowatt hours sold in the U.S. each year
- employ 70,000 people in the U.S.
- refund \$974 million in capital credits annually (money that comes back to you)
- pay over \$1 billion in state and local taxes

Compared with other electric utilities:

- Vernon Electric serves an average of 5.5 consumers per mile of line and collects annual revenue of approximately \$9,300 per mile of line
- Investor owned utilities average 34 customers per mile of line and collect \$75,500 per mile
- Publicly owned utilities, or municipals, average 48 consumers and collect \$113,000 per mile

Protect Yourself from Power Outages

This past summer Vernon Electric Co-op members were hit with many storms packed with high winds, lightning, and lots of rain. As a result, line crews were kept busy – many times on weekends in dark, chaotic conditions. Fortunately, we made it through with no injuries.

Having a reliable power provider, like Vernon Electric, can cause complacency when it comes to being prepared. But power outages do and will happen. Falling trees, animals, lightning, wind, ice, and accidents, will cause unpreventable power outages and we all need to be prepared to avoid expensive losses due to power failure. Here's some ideas:

- Install a battery backup on your sump pump
- If you have a seasonal home or are away often, install moisture, heat, and freeze sensors hooked to an automated calling system that will notify you of problems
- Install a backup generator for critical loads (well, refrigerator, freezer, furnace blower). Make sure it is tested at least once per month.

These options may sound expensive and time consuming, but they could save you many thousands of dollars in damage in the long run.

**Watt's
New**

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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