



# ELECTRICAL SAFETY IMPORTANT FOR ALL, BUT ESPECIALLY FOR CHILDREN

by Craig Buros, CEO & General Manager



Over time, you've probably heard or read about Vernon Electric's concern for our community. This is one of the core principles that sets cooperatives apart from other types of utilities and businesses. We've always taken this mission and responsibility to heart. It's who we are as a co-op.

Throughout the years, like so many of you, we've risen to meet new challenges and strengthened our community, and we've made numerous adjustments to programs and operations to keep rates stable while staying focused on the bigger mission of helping our consumer-members during these turbulent times.

While we are seeing rapid transformation in the electric industry and are working through the challenges of high prices, reliability, and other concerns, it is important that we do not lose track of the importance of electric safety. As we move into the new year and set new year resolutions, I encourage everyone to set aside time to focus on electric safety—especially for the children that often do not understand the dangers.

We also understand their attention spans run short, so here are a few creative ways to get them involved.

- Take the electrical safety quiz on our website: [www.vernonelectric.org/safety-quiz](http://www.vernonelectric.org/safety-quiz).
- Complete the electrical safety word search on the next page. (See answer key on page 18.)



While it is fun and engaging to turn safety into a game, it is important to ensure your children understand the risks they are facing if they do not practice electrical safety.

One of the most important safety tips you can give your kids is to avoid any downed power lines. In fact, it is best to avoid power lines, transformers, and substations in general. A downed power line can still be energized, and it can also energize other

objects, including fences and trees. Make sure your kids understand the potential dangers of coming in contact with a downed power line or low hanging wire. And, if they encounter a downed power line, ask them to tell you or another adult to call Vernon Electric.

Here are a few other safety tips to share with your kids:

- Never put metal objects in outlets or appliances.
- Do not overcrowd electrical outlets.
- Never mix water and electricity.

We know that our core job is to keep the lights on, but our passion is our community. As we move into the new year, help us to keep our friends and neighbors safe around electricity. Vernon Electric is here to help. To learn more about electrical safety, visit [www.safeelectricity.org](http://www.safeelectricity.org).

## TAX EXEMPTION OPPORTUNITIES



Vernon Electric Cooperative is updating the tax exemption forms we have on file. If you are currently receiving a tax exemption for electricity, you will need to fill out an updated form. If you are not currently claiming a tax exemption, and if you use electricity for agriculture or manufacturing purposes or have a 15-digit state-issued tax exemption certificate (i.e. 501(c)(3) organizations), you may qualify for tax exemption on your electric bill.

The tax exemption form can be found under "Forms" online at [www.vernonelectric.org](http://www.vernonelectric.org), by stopping in the Vernon Electric office, or on the Wisconsin Department of Revenue website.

If you have questions regarding sales tax exemptions, please contact your tax advisor, visit the Wisconsin Department of Revenue website, or call their office at 608-266-2776.

Completed forms should be returned to Vernon Electric Cooperative by February 1, 2023. Please email to [info@vernonelectric.org](mailto:info@vernonelectric.org), mail to our office, or bring a paper version to our office.

# WOLF KNOWS WINDOWS

By Leah Call

When Vernon Electric Cooperative member Clinton Wolf launched his window manufacturing business in 2008, he was prepared to do some carpentry jobs on the side until the business got going. That side gig never happened. Wolf Windows quickly built a customer base and gained a reputation for quality products and top-notch installation. In operation for nearly 15 years, this family business sells windows, doors, and blinds to homes and contractors throughout south-central Wisconsin and beyond.

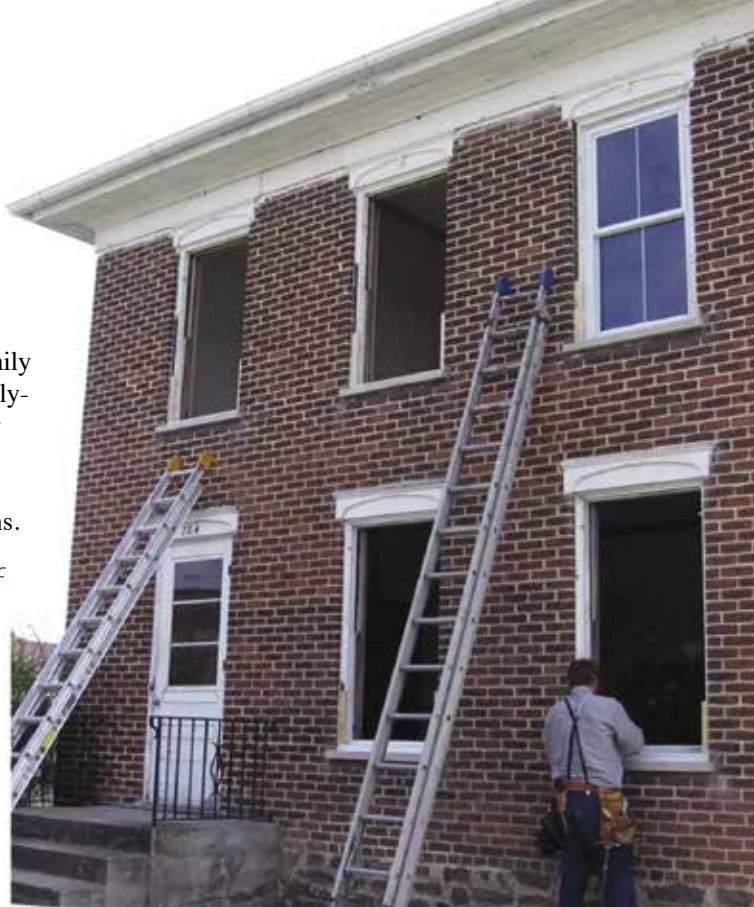
“I started the business with the goal of having a home business,” noted Wolf, who worked in construction as a machinist for the vinyl window industry before starting Wolf Windows. “My youngest son was 9 years old at the time; my oldest was 17. The idea was to work with my children and make a living. Overall, it has been a real blessing.”

Wolf’s son, Cainan, now leads the installation crew for Wolf Windows

along with two non-family employees. In true family-business style, daughter Keturah manages the shop, and wife Corinne handles office operations.

## Quality Sells Itself

Wolf Windows has experienced steady growth over the years. In 2022, it produced 1,500 windows from its home-based facility five miles outside of Hillsboro. The business manufactures vinyl double-hung, slider, and picture windows, along with octagon, trapezoid, and triangle windows. Additionally, the Wolfs make roller and vertical blinds in an array of fabric options. The doors Wolf sells come from an outside supplier.



You can hear the pride in Clinton Wolf’s voice when he talks about the quality of the windows he manufactures. “Our windows really are top of the line when it comes to strength and infiltration. The demand from our clientele here is for a higher-end window because of the Wisconsin weather.”

Air infiltration is the measure of air that enters your home through the window. When it comes to this air leakage rating, lower is better. While federal standards set the acceptable rate at .3, that’s not low enough by Wolf’s standards. He would like to see the minimum below .1. “Our windows are running .04 or .05,” he noted.

Whether you’re purchasing windows for new construction or replacing windows, you’ll appreciate a window with a low infiltration rating—especially when the cold January wind blows.

Replacing old, drafty windows can result in long-term energy savings. Some people choose temporary solutions, such as stick-on plastic film, to reduce air leakage around windows. “They’ll do that for 10 years; then they’ll call me,” joked Wolf.



Top left: Clinton Wolf, owner of Wolf Windows. Top right: Corinne Wolf, office manager. Bottom left: Cainan Wolf, installation manager. Bottom right: Keturah Wolf, manufacturing manager.



Wolf noted that locking windows is a simple, draft-reducing measure that people sometimes forget to do.

### Top-Notch Installation

While a quality window is important, installation is equally important. "How well the windows are installed makes a huge difference in how well they operate and how well they stop the wind," said Wolf.

Wolf Windows installs 80% to 90% of its windows within 40 miles of its facility. "A large percentage of our business is driven by the installs," said Wolf. "When it is done well, it sells the next job. As the old saying goes, 'your best salesman is your last satisfied customer'. Quality always pays."

Wolf will go far out of his way to make sure his customers are happy. With satisfied customers throughout the region and a growing demand for its products, this family business is in it for the long haul.

"A lot of people need windows," said Wolf. "I drive up and down the streets in any given town in our area and over half of the windows need to be changed, so there's plenty to do."

### When to Replace a Window

If the curtains are moving and the window is closed, it's time for a new window. The lifespan of a window is typically 15–20 years. What are the signs you need new windows?

- Window is single-pane glass
- Wind leaking around window
- Visible gaps or cracks in frame
- Water damage or rot
- Condensation on inside of window



# ELECTRICAL SAFETY

1. Do not go near a \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Never fly a \_\_\_\_\_ near a power line.
3. Stay away from large electrical equipment that is fenced in, called a \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Never climb a \_\_\_\_\_ that has a power line running above or through the top of it.
5. If I ever see a power line on the ground, I should STAY AWAY and have an adult call the electric \_\_\_\_\_ or 911.
6. I should not climb or sit on a green metal box in a yard, also known as a padmount \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Anything that is plugged in is dangerous around \_\_\_\_\_.
8. I should never fly a remote-control plane, toy or \_\_\_\_\_ near a power line.
9. Electrical cords that are \_\_\_\_\_ should not be used.
10. I should always be \_\_\_\_\_ around anything that is plugged in.
11. If something goes wrong with the flow of electricity, it could give you a \_\_\_\_\_.
12. Tell your parents to call \_\_\_\_\_ before digging in the yard.
13. Power lines run both overhead and \_\_\_\_\_.

P P H V C P C B H W V S U W C I M Q  
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#### WORD BANK

TREE  
 UNDERGROUND  
 811  
 CAREFUL

SUBSTATION  
 DRONE  
 KITE  
 CRACKED

TRANSFORMER  
 SHOCK  
 POWER LINE  
 UTILITY

WATER



# SCHOLARSHIPS

## AVAILABLE FROM VEC



In 2023, scholarships will be made available to students whose parent(s) or legal guardian(s) are a member of Vernon Electric Cooperative. High school seniors will each receive a \$750 scholarship for the college or university they decide to attend. Funding for the scholarships comes from unclaimed capital credit checks which are forfeited to the Federated Youth Foundation. This Foundation, in turn, makes this money available for youth scholarships to Vernon Electric Cooperative. A Non-Traditional and Line Worker scholarship will also be offered.

Applicants from each of the high schools listed below, plus one at-large applicant who is either home-schooled or attends a high school outside Vernon Electric's service territory, will be chosen in a random drawing at the January board meeting from all the completed and verified applications received. Each applicant, or one of the applicant's parents or legal guardians, are welcome, but not required, to be present during the drawing.

Aquinas	Hillsboro	Sparta
Brookwood	Kickapoo	Viroqua
Cashton	La Crosse Central	Westby
Cornerstone Christian Academy	La Farge	Wonewoc
De Soto	Onalaska Luther	Youth Initiative
	Royal	

Of all the seniors, four will be eligible to attend the Youth Leadership Conference (YLC) at UW-Stout July 11-13, 2023 on a first come, first serve basis. The YLC is a first-class event put on by the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association (WECA), and the students are chaperoned and transported by a Vernon Electric representative. The students who attend the YLC will receive an additional \$250 added to their VEC scholarship. Students will have the option to enter the WECA's Youth Leadership Conference Essay Contest and win \$1,000 for first place, \$500 for second, or \$250 for third. One student from VEC's service territory could potentially win a total of \$2,000 worth of scholarship money.

### \$750 Non-Traditional Scholarship

This scholarship is awarded to a member who is returning to school in a two- or four-year program at least three years after graduating from high school.

### \$1,000 Line Worker Scholarship

This scholarship is awarded to a high school senior or older and an active member of Vernon Electric Cooperative. If the applicant is a high school senior, their parent or legal guardian must be an active member. Enrollment in a full-time power line program is required with a minimum grade point average of 2.0.

Scholarship applications are available online at [www.vernonelectric.org/scholarships-applications](http://www.vernonelectric.org/scholarships-applications), by calling our office, or through school counselors. The deadline to apply is January 18, 2023.

#### Answers:

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1. POWER LINE
2. KITE
3. SUBSTATION
4. TREE
5. UTILITY
6. TRANSFORMER
7. WATER
8. DRONE
9. CRACKED
10. CAREFUL
11. SHOCK
12. 811
13. UNDERGROUND

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