



Visit us on the Internet at: www.vvec.com
JANUARY 2014

Published for the members of Verdigris Valley Electric Cooperative
A Supplement to Oklahoma Living.

[How Your Electric Service is Restored Following a Storm](#) p. 3

Students Now have Two Ways to Participate in Youth Tour

Visiting the nation's capital is a great way to start summer vacation, and VVEC can be your ticket to the trip of a lifetime. Two high school juniors will spend a fun-filled week in Washington, D.C. in June with young people from across the nation as winners of VVEC's annual Youth Tour contest.

To compete, students must be juniors this year, single, and attending high school in VVEC's service territory. Their parents do not have to be members of VVEC.

"We are making a change in the program this year, one we hope will be attractive to more students," says VVEC Youth Tour Coordinator, Kay Rabbitt-Brower. "This year students can choose if they want to write an essay or take a test to participate in the program."

For those students writing an essay, it will need to be between 600 and 800 words on a specific co-op related topic. The topic, along with the program's rules and regulations, are detailed in the Youth Tour Information Packet, which is available from schools' English teachers or on VVEC's Web site at www.vvec.com.

"This year's topic is 'What are the Advantages and Benefits of Cooperative Ownership?'"

Deadline to submit essays to the co-op is 4 p.m. Friday, March 7.

The test, for those students interested in participating via this method, will be over information in the packet. It is multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, true-false, and two brief essay questions. Test dates will vary per school, and will be determined after entry forms are submitted.

There will be one essay winner and one test winner. There will be four runners-up;

two will win \$750 scholarships and two will win \$500 scholarships.

"Youth Tour is a great opportunity, and we are excited to offer it to the young people in our area," says Rabbitt-Brower.

If you have questions about Youth Tour or want to obtain an information packet, please contact Rabbitt-Brower at (918)371-2584, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

8th Graders Have Great Fun at Energy Camp

VVEC has a great way for your 8th grader to kick-off his or her summer, while making new friends and lots of memories.

YouthPower Energy Camp is four days spent with young people their age learning about electric cooperatives by forming a Coke and Candy Co-op, climbing a utility pole, and riding high in a bucket truck.

They will also get to go swimming, spend an evening at Celebration Station in Oklahoma City, and tour a generation and transmission cooperative.

The camp is held each year at Camp Canyon near Hinton.

Eighth graders wanting to participate in our Energy Camp competition are asked to write a 300 word essay on "How Does Electricity Impact My Life?"

Deadline to submit essays to the co-op is 4 p.m. Friday, March 7. They can write their essay individually, or with a friend as a team, and then both can attend the camp as winners of VVEC's program.

This year's Energy Camp is May 27-30. For more information, contact VVEC's Energy Camp Coordinator Kay Rabbitt-Brower at (918) 371-2584.

VVEC Board of Trustees

- District 1 - **Jim Brackett, 720-4531**
- District 2 - **Jack Bogart, 371-9587**
- District 3 - **Vernon Lewis, 341-5225**
- District 4 - **John Hibdon, 847-2320**
- District 5 - **Jimmy Lambert, 760-7029**
- District 6 - **Dennis Lenox, 396-1574**
- District 7 - **Charles Huerter, 333-3107**
- District 8 - **Ken Howard, 724-9965**
- District 9 - **Buddy McCarty, 272-5134**
or **272-5364**

General Manager - Alice Houston

VVEC Headquarters

8901 E. 146th Street N., Collinsville

Mailing address

P.O. Box 219, Collinsville, OK 74021

Phone number

(918) 371-2584 or 1-800-870-5948

Office hours

7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.,
Monday through Friday

Editor - Kay Rabbitt-Brower

Winter Residential Rates

October through March usage,
November through April billing

Customer Charge \$20.20

Energy Charge

1st 1,000 kWh \$0.0738/kWh
Over 1,000 kWh \$0.0678/kWh

A power cost adjustment (PCA) will be applied to all bills when the actual cost of power purchased exceeds or is less than 55.993 mills per kWh.

In addition, a gross receipts tax of 2% of revenue will be included, plus additional taxes if applicable.



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Fighting winter chills? A crackling fire in the hearth warms the house, but don't let it heat up your electric bill. To cool energy costs, keep the fireplace damper closed when not in use. Caulk around the fireplace hearth. Double up on wood-earned warmth by lowering the thermostat setting to between 50 degrees and 55 degrees Fahrenheit. Learn more at www.energysaver.gov.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

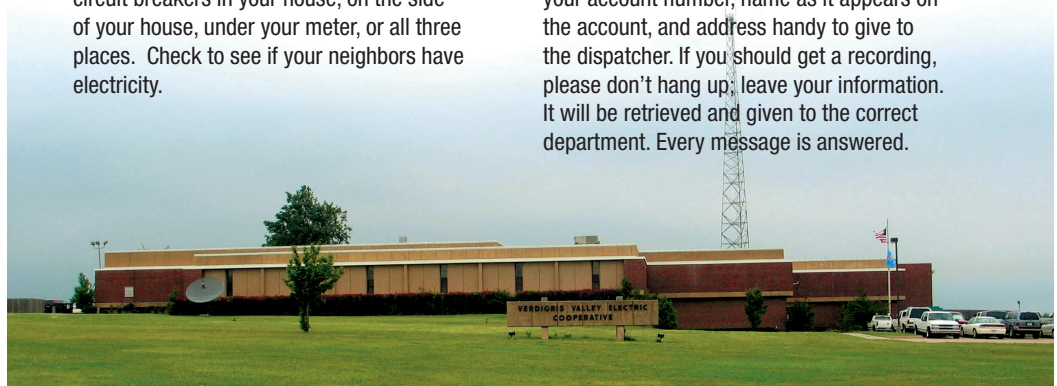
Pay • as • you • go
New Pre-Pay Program

Choose when to pay your electric bill. **Buy** electricity when it is convenient. **Monitor** your electric consumption.

Call our Consumer Services Representatives to enroll.

What to do if Your Power Goes Off

1. Check your fuses or circuit breakers. Every service is different. You may have fuses or circuit breakers in your house, on the side of your house, under your meter, or all three places. Check to see if your neighbors have electricity.
2. Call the Co-op at 371-2584, or 1-800-870-5948 if the call is long distance for you. Have your account number, name as it appears on the account, and address handy to give to the dispatcher. If you should get a recording, please don't hang up; leave your information. It will be retrieved and given to the correct department. Every message is answered.



Power Circuit is published monthly by Verdigris Valley Electric Cooperative, Collinsville, Oklahoma (ISSN 10884378) for its members in Tulsa, Rogers, Washington, Nowata and Osage counties. Periodical postage paid at Tulsa, Oklahoma and other additional mailing offices. Subscription price is \$0.19 per month. POSTMASTER - send address changes to Power Circuit, P.O. Box 219, Collinsville, OK 74021.

VOLUME 73 • NUMBER 1 • JANUARY 2014

Winter Storms: Prepare for the Worst

The devastating ice storm of 2007 is still a clear, but not pleasant, memory for both VVEC members and employees. With the exception of the blizzard in February 2011, we have enjoyed few bouts of outage-causing severe weather. Just a few outages were caused by last month's winter weather.

While we count our blessings, we also believe readiness is always wise. Here are a few tips to bear in mind:

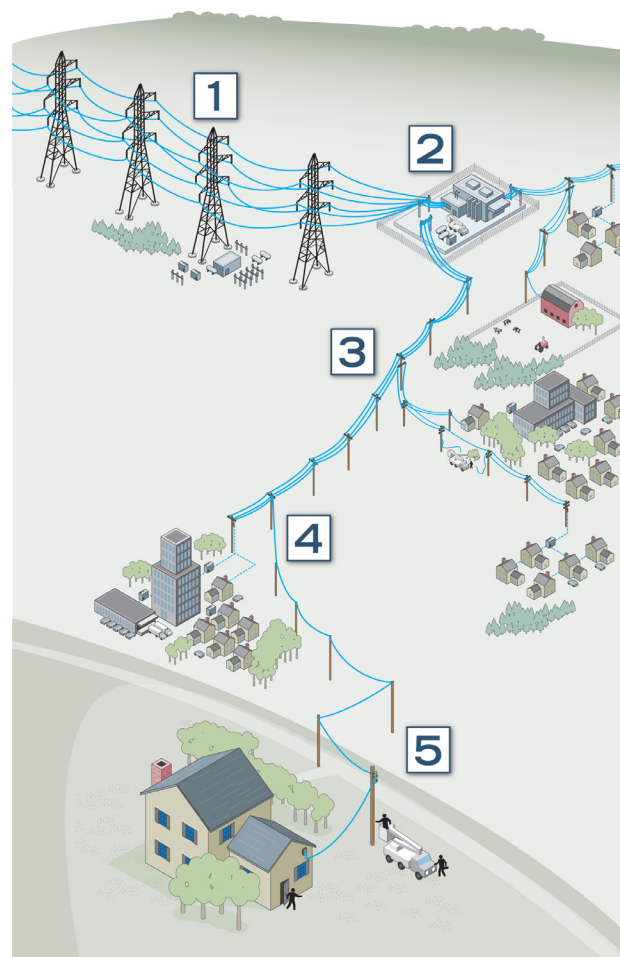
1. Create a weather emergency plan for your family.
2. Fill a backpack or a cooler with a couple of days' worth of food and water. Toss in a flashlight, a portable radio, a first-aid kit, some cash and your medicine.
3. Before bad weather starts, turn off your water heater, stove and air conditioning units. Unplug TVs, stereos, the microwave oven and computers.
4. Leave one light switch on so you will know when the power is restored.
5. Keep extra batteries in multiple sizes on hand.
6. Stay far away from fallen power lines and flooded streets.
7. Teach youngsters about the dangers of mixing water and electricity.
8. Hook-up generators correctly, and let us know you are using one.

Finally, remember VVEC employees are working in extremely dangerous and difficult conditions. Your patience and cooperation are always greatly appreciated.

Powering Up

When electricity goes out, most of us expect power will be restored within a few hours. But when a major storm causes widespread damage, longer outages may result. Co-op line crews work long, hard hours to restore service safe to the greatest number of consumers in the shortest time possible. Here's what's going on if you find yourself in the dark.

Here's what's going on if you find yourself in the dark.



1 High-Voltage Transmission Lines

Transmission towers and cables that supply power to transmission substations (and thousands of members) rarely fail. But when damaged, these facilities must be repaired before other parts of the system can operate.

2 Distribution Substation

Each substation serves hundreds or thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, line crews inspect substations to determine if problems stem from transmission lines feeding into the substation, the substation itself, or if problems exist down the line.

3 Main Distribution Lines

If the problem cannot be isolated at a distribution substation, distribution lines are checked. These lines carry power to large groups of consumers in communities or housing developments.

4 Tap Lines

If local outages persist, supply lines, called tap lines, are inspected. These lines deliver power to transformers, either mounted on poles or placed on pads for underground service, outside businesses, schools and homes.

5 Individual Homes

If your home remains without power, the service line between a transformer and your residence may need to be repaired. Always call to report an outage to help line crews isolate local issues.

Members Owed Capital Credits Listed on Co-op's Web Site

A list of members who have not collected their Capital Credits can be found on our Web site – www.VVEC.com.

Frequently, members don't give us a forwarding address when they move off of co-op lines, or don't keep us up-to-date as they move, so we don't know where to send their Capital Credit checks.

If you know a former member, please encourage him or her to visit the Web site to see if they are on the list. Or call us if you have information on how to reach someone on the list.

Warning: Don't Bake All Bulbs

Oven lights are handy. Just flip the switch; no need to open the oven and release heat to get a baking update. But be careful when replacing this little light. Never put a bulb in the oven that's not built for high heat.

Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) use less energy than classic incandescent bulbs, but they're not safe in extreme temperatures. Most lighting labels designate safe temperatures, but warnings may be in fine print. Need to replace your oven light? Look for appliance light bulbs. Found at Home Depot, Lowe's, and other retailers, these bulbs are designed for extreme temperatures in ovens and refrigerators. The hardy bulbs are here to stay; 40-watt appliance bulbs are exempt from federal lighting efficiency standards.

Why won't CFLs work? Instead of heating a filament until white-hot to

produce light like an incandescent bulb, a fluorescent lamp contains a gas that produces (UV) ultraviolet light when excited by electricity. The UV light and the white coating inside the bulb result in visible light. Since CFLs don't use heat to create light, they are 75 percent more energy efficient. But the technology that cuts energy use doesn't stand a chance in an oven's 400+ degree heat.

CFLs are good for the pocketbook but not perfect in every situation. Keep these tips in mind:

1. Don't dim unless it's dimmable. Buy a specifically designed CFL for a dimmer switch application.
2. Don't flip too fast. CFLs work best if they are left on for more than 15 minutes each time they are turned on. Older bulbs take 30 seconds to three minutes to reach efficient operation. Frequently switching

them on and off shortens bulb life. Newer CFLs feature an 'Instant on' capability; look for that on the lighting label if you expect frequent flipping.

3. Give them air. CFLs may be used in enclosed fixtures as long as the enclosed fixture is not recessed. Totally enclosed recessed fixtures create temperatures too high for CFLs.

4. Protect CFLs outside. Look at the package or bulb for temperature restrictions before using a CFL outdoors.

5. Don't shake. Don't use CFLs in vibrating environments such as a ceiling fan or garage door opener.

6. Do the twist. Always screw and unscrew the lamp by its base. Never forcefully twist the CFL into a light socket by the glass tubes.

RECIPE

Upside-Down Shepherd's Pie

- 1 pkgs. (20-oz.) refrigerated mashed potatoes
- 1 lb. (90%) lean ground beef
- 1 Tbsp. margarine, substitute butter
- 1 cup (half a 10-oz. bag) chopped onions
- 1/3 cup ketchup
- 1 tsp. dried dill weed
- 1/2 cup loosely packed fresh parsley leaves, chopped
- 1/3 cup reduced-fat sour cream
- Dill sprigs, for garnish

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Spray 1 1/2-quart ceramic or glass baking dish or deep-dish pie plate with nonstick cooking spray. Press cold mashed potatoes onto bottom and up side of casserole. Bake potato crust 20 minutes or until edge is golden.

Meanwhile, heat 10-inch skillet over medium-high heat until hot. Add ground beef and cook 4 to 5 minutes or until beef is no longer pink, breaking it up with side of spoon. Spoon beef into paper-towel-lined bowl to drain.

In same skillet, melt margarine over medium heat. Add onions and cook 6 to 7 minutes or until tender and golden, stirring occasionally. Return beef to skillet with onions. Stir in ketchup and dried dill. Reduce heat to low; stir in parsley and sour cream.

Spoon ground-beef mixture into mashed-potato crust; garnish with dill sprigs to serve.

