

## Cold Weather and Energy Consumption

They say there are only two things that are certain: death and taxes. However, there is a third certainty – when temperatures plunge or soar, energy usage and electric bills go up.

In the VEC service area, temperatures typically start dropping dramatically in December and January. The temperature change prompts many to call and ask why the December bill is so much higher than the November bill.

If our members heat their home using electricity, the answer is pretty straightforward – the lower the outdoor temperature goes, the more power a home’s heating system must apply to raise the indoor temperature to a comfortable level.

For example, if the outdoor temperature is 60 degrees and a home’s thermostat is set at 70 degrees, the heating system will have to use enough energy to raise the indoor temperature by 10 degrees.

However, if the outdoor temperature drops to 20 degrees, the home’s heating system will have to use enough energy to raise the indoor temperature by 50 degrees to maintain the thermostat setting of 70 degrees - that’s five times as much energy.

Even if the homeowner lowers the thermostat to 65 degrees during the cold snap (which is too cool for most people), the heating system will still have to use enough energy to raise the indoor temperature by 45 degrees. That’s more than four times the energy than was used on the 70-degree day.

So when an energy consumer compares their fall bills to their winter bills, many times they are not comparing apples to apples. A more accurate similarity is to compare a January energy bill to another year’s January energy bill.

For more specific information about your energy usage, visit our website [www.vec.org](http://www.vec.org) and sign into your account. You can get the same information on your smartphone by downloading the SmartHub app from Google Play or the App Store.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

**Use wool or rubber dryer balls in the clothes dryer to reduce drying time and static.**

Wool dryer balls can also absorb extra moisture. These are an efficient alternative to dryer sheets, which can create buildup on the dryer’s filter and reduce air circulation. If you prefer dryer sheets, scrub the filter once a month to remove buildup.

Source:  
[www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov)



## March 5 Lillard-Shadow Scholarship Deadline

Scholarship applications are available at any VEC Customer Service Center or from high school counselors in the VEC service area. Applications are also available online at [www.vec.org](http://www.vec.org).

**All application materials must be completed and delivered to VEC’s Corporate Office in Decatur no later than 5 p.m. Eastern Time on March 5, 2021.**



## Tennessee Valley Authority

Residential & Outdoor Lighting  
Fuel Cost Adjustment Effective  
**January 1, 2021**

**1.709¢**



For the most current FCA information, visit [www.vec.org](http://www.vec.org)

*Volunteer Energy Cooperative is an Equal Opportunity provider and employer.*

## Committed to a Co-op Culture

Over the years, you’ve heard me expound on why and how Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) is different—because we’re a cooperative. Our business model sets us apart from other utilities because we adhere to seven guiding cooperative principles that reflect core values of honesty, transparency, equity, inclusiveness and service to the greater good of the community.

Electric cooperatives, including VEC, have a unique and storied place in our country’s history. We democratized the American dream by bringing electricity to rural areas when for-profit electric companies determined the effort too costly. Back then, cities were electrified, and rural areas were not, creating the original rural-urban divide. Newly established electric lines helped power economic opportunity in rural areas. Today, that spirit of equity and inclusion is a vital part of our co-op DNA.

When VEC was founded, each member contributed an equal share in order to gain access to electricity that benefited individual families as well as the larger local community. Each member had an equal vote in co-op matters. That sense of equity and inclusion is still how we operate today. VEC was built by and belongs to the communities and consumer-members we serve. Membership is open to everyone in our service territory, regardless of race, religion, age, disability, gender identity, language, political perspective or socioeconomic status.

By virtue of paying your electric bill each month, you’re a member of the co-op, and every member has an equal voice and vote when it comes to co-op governance. This ties back to our guiding principles of equitable economic participation and democratic control of the co-op.

We know members of our community have different needs and perspectives, and we welcome diverse views on all issues under consideration by the co-op. The more viewpoints we hear, the better we are able to reflect the needs of all corners of our community.

While our top priority is providing safe, reliable and affordable energy, we also want to be a catalyst for good in our community. Because we are your *local* electric cooperative, co-op revenues stay right here in our community. In turn, we invest in our diverse community base through scholarship programs, charitable giving, educational programs and more. We strive to make long-term decisions that improve and enrich the communities we serve.

While today’s world is radically different than it was in 1935 when VEC was founded, our cooperative values have stood the test of time and remain relevant today. We recognize today’s co-op members expect more, and my pledge to you—the members we proudly serve—is to promote a cooperative culture of inclusion, diversity and equity for all.



Rody Blevins  
President/CEO  
Volunteer Energy Cooperative



The VECustomers Share program funded community service grants totaling \$22,000 in December. Since the inception of the program in October 2001, over \$7.2 million in grants has been awarded. The deadline for grant applications is the last working day of each month. For additional information, contact the Office of Marketing and Economic Development at 423-334-7051. Applications are also available online at [www.vec.org](http://www.vec.org).

In December, Karis Community Health received a grant from VEC Customers Share. Karis Community Health is a Bradley County dental clinic for uninsured adults that live at the poverty level. Dr. James Ohlsson, DDS, and his wife Kelly Ohlsson, BSN, in coordination with the United Way and The Caring Place, established Karis Dental Clinic in 2013. Karis seeks to extend God's grace by providing excellent, yet affordable dental care. They offer comprehensive dental care and life-changing and recurring services such as dentures and regular cleanings for patients. For more information, go to <https://karisdental.org/>



### Organizations receiving grants in December

Meigs County - Decatur Chamber of Commerce	\$2,000	Readers Choice Club	\$750
Cumberland County Rising Anti-Drug Coalition	\$1,500	Monterey Junior High Girl's Basketball	\$750
Clearwater Volunteer Fire Department	\$1,250	W4RGT - Fourth Regiment Communications Support Team	\$750
Midway Middle School Student Supply Outreach Program	\$1,200	The Caring Place	\$700
West Polk County Baptist Association Food Bank	\$1,000	Hwy 58 Volunteer Fire Dept. Inc.	\$600
Fentress County Food Bank	\$1,000	Crossville Lions Club	\$500
Fentress County Children's Center	\$1,000	Lake Tansi Security Police Department	\$500
Kids On The Rise	\$1,000	The Kidney Foundation of the Greater Chattanooga Area	\$500
Karis Community Health	\$1,000	Pickett County Historical & Genealogical Society	\$500
Byrdstown Angel Tree Project	\$1,000	Friends of the Pickett County Library	\$500
Polk County Education Foundation	\$1,000	Cumberland County High School Bowling Team	\$300
Dec My Room - Chattanooga Chapter	\$900	Foundation House Ministries	\$300
Midway Quarterback Club	\$800	Eastland Fire Department	\$250
		Veterans Museum of White Co.	\$250
		Dorton FCE (Family, Community, Education)	\$200

## 2022 Calendar Contest

Our 2021 Calendar winner is Michele Munyak's image of a Hummingbird. For our 2022 calendar, we are asking for photo submissions from our Co-op members.

To qualify:

- This year we are looking for photos that include Barns and must be found within our service area.
- The composition must be horizontal (landscape).
- Digital not printed.
- Submitted by email to [jjones@vec.org](mailto:jjones@vec.org) or by dropping off a flash drive at your local office.
- Have a resolution of 300 dpi or higher and be a minimum of 8mb image. Cropped images often do not have the resolution or size for a quality print.
- Have the photographers name and contact information along with the location of the photo.
- **Photos must be submitted by March 6, 2021, for the 2022 contest.**
- There is a limit of five photos per account.

We will have a team review the photos submitted for the calendars. If your photo is picked for one of the months, you will receive credit on the last page of the calendar. The overall winning photo will be chosen for the cover of the calendar. If your photo wins the cover, you will also receive a \$50 bill credit certificate.



Cover - Michele Munyak



January - Tom Kinser



February - Kristy Kelly



March - Denise Kean



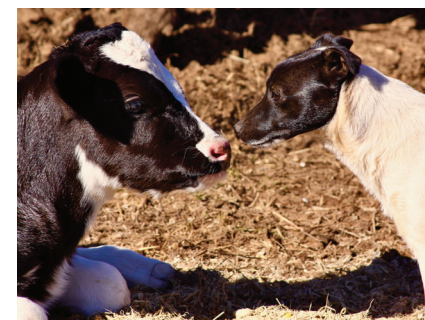
April - Michele Munyak



May - Donna Mullins



July - Michelle Bettis Smith



September - Donna Mullins



November - Kristy Kelly



June - Tom Kinser



August - Michele Munyak



October - Tom Kinser



December - Donna Mullins

