

Save Money and Stay Safe with LED Holiday Lights

As the seasons change and colder weather arrives, we see homes, businesses, and even entire communities starting to brighten up with colorful holiday decorations and lights. Light emitting diodes (LED) holiday lights offer a lower energy cost alternative to traditional incandescent light strings and are a great way to show your holiday spirit while maintaining your smart energy sense. LED light strings are up to 90 percent more efficient and last up to 10 times longer than traditional light strings, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

LED holiday lights are cooler than incandescent light strings, reducing the risk of fire and personal injury. Each light does not have moving parts, filaments

or glass so they are much more durable and shock-resistant than other light strings. Bulbs are constructed of a



hard plastic, which makes lights safer to use since there isn't any potential of broken glass. And because they use less power, it is safer to connect multiple strings of LED holiday lights end-to-end without overloading the wall socket.

Energy Star-rated LED light strings are independently tested to meet strict lifetime and electrical requirements. For a list of manufacturers and brands of Energy Star-rated holiday lights which have been tested for both energy efficiency and quality standards, visit www.energystar.gov/lighting. 

RECIPE

Cranberry Hootycreeks

This is a beautifully festive cookie in a jar recipe that makes a delightful gift.

5/8 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup rolled oats
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/3 cup packed brown sugar
1/3 cup white sugar
1/2 cup dried cranberries
1/2 cup white chocolate chips
1/2 cup chopped pecans

Layer the ingredients in a 1 quart or 1 liter jar, in the order listed. Attach a tag with the following instructions: Cranberry Hootycreeks 1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a cookie sheet or line with parchment paper. 2. In a medium bowl, beat together 1/2 cup softened butter, 1 egg and 1 teaspoon of vanilla until fluffy. Add the entire jar of ingredients, and mix together by hand until well blended. Drop by heaping spoonfuls onto the prepared baking sheets. 3. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes, or until edges start to brown. Cool on baking sheets, or remove to cool on wire racks.



Visit us on the Internet at: www.vvec.com
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[Agencies Offer Assistance with Electric Bills p. 3](#)

VVEC Partners with Area Fire Departments to Collect Dues

"It's just another way we can lend a helping hand," is how Clyde Willard describes the new service VVEC is offering area fire departments. Willard is VVEC's director of finance.

Beginning in early 2012 VVEC will help participating fire departments collect their annual dues by including those dues on VVEC's monthly electric bills.

"It's a win-win situation. VVEC members who are also members of a rural or volunteer fire department will be able to pay their dues at the same time they pay their electric bills," explains Willard.

"Once a month, we will then forward a check to the fire districts for the dues we have collected.



"VVEC members can enjoy the convenience of paying two items with one payment, and fire departments will receive members' dues without doing all the billing and collecting."

Willard says VVEC has invited all rural and volunteer fire departments in its five-county service territory to take advantage of this service, and already Wann and Owens & Co. near Vera have opted in.

Soon VVEC will mail out invitations on behalf of the fire districts to their members who are also VVEC members, offering them this monthly billing service. Members choosing to participate will need to return the bottom portion of the mailing in an envelope that will be provided.

They will send it to their fire department.

The departments will then forward all positive responses to the cooperative, who will then begin billing their fire dues monthly.

There is no charge for participating in this service, and members can opt out of the monthly charge at any time.

Members with questions about this program can contact their fire departments. Fire districts interested in participating can contact Willard at 918-371-2584, between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Changes to Rebate Program Beginning in January

Beginning January 1, 2012 the SEER/EER ratings are increasing on heat pumps eligible for rebates.

Air-to-air and dual-fuel heat pumps will be required to have a minimum of a 16.5 SEER to qualify for rebates. The current SEER is 15.5.

Ground source (geothermal) heat pumps must be a minimum of 19.1 EER. The current EER is 17.1.

The clothes washer and dishwasher rebate programs will end June 1, 2012.

If you have questions about our rebate programs, heat pumps or other energy-efficient appliances, please call our member services department at (918) 371-2584, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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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

VVEC offices will be closed Friday, Dec. 23 and Monday, Dec. 26 in celebration of Christmas, and Monday, Jan. 2 for New Years. Call 918-371-2584 or 1-800-870-5948 to report an outage.

Winter Residential Rates

October through March usage, November through April billing

Customer Charge \$20.00

Energy Charge
 1st 1,000 kWh \$0.0731/kWh
 Over 1,000 kWh \$0.0671/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.

She's a Winner!

Barnsdall resident Patti Wyrick (right) is the winner of the \$500 grand prize at annual meeting, held Saturday, Oct. 15 at the Bartlesville Community Center. A VVEC member since 1971, Wyrick receives the prize as a credit on her monthly electric bill.

Trustee John Hibdon presented the grand prize to Wyrick.

After registering their attendance at the meeting, members enjoyed free donuts, hot coffee, hot dogs with all the trimmings, and soft drinks. They could also visit the "Take Control and Save" booth where they learned about energy efficiency.

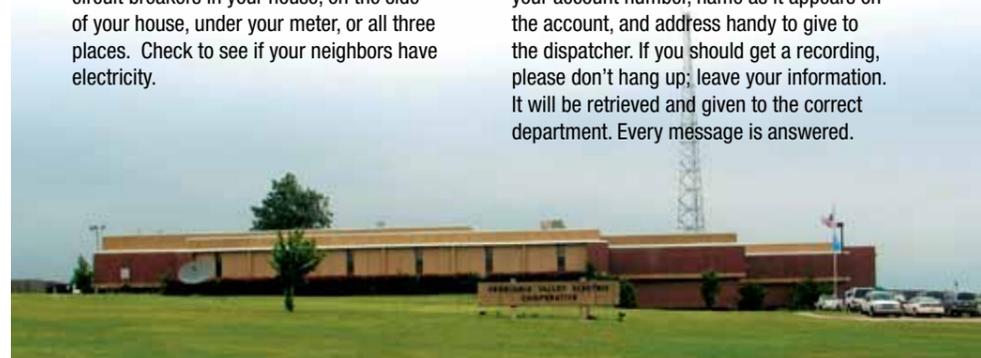
Renowned local country and western singer and song-writer Paul Bogart returned from Nashville to entertain the crowd.

"Annual meeting is an integral part of a cooperative's foundation," says VVEC General Manager Alice Houston. "Each year our members come together to exercise their ownership of the cooperative. Few businesses offer this type of relationship with their consumers." 



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.



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Prevent Interruptions in Your Electric Service by Paying Bill Promptly

Interrupting electric service for non-payment is a job we don't like. It has never been our intention to disconnect service in this manner, but to be fair to those members who pay their bills, and to keep down bad debt, we must adhere to established policies for non-payment.

During winter months we make an extra effort to work with members so disconnecting service isn't necessary. But many times members fail to respond to the disconnect notice on their bills, or don't contact us to make payment arrangements.

When you realize you may have difficulty paying your electric bill, please contact our consumer service representatives as soon as possible. We can possibly work with you to make payment arrangements. If you abide by the terms of those arrangements, then your electric service will not be disconnected.

There are government agencies, charitable, and religious organizations who offer energy assistance; some of them are listed here. Although the assistance is certainly helpful, it rarely pays the entire amount a member owes. In that case, members need to contact us so we can develop a payment plan that will help bring the accounts up to date.

If a life-threatening situation exists in your home, you need to provide us a certificate completed by a licensed medical doctor or osteopathic doctor, indicating the nature of the life-threatening situation. Although the certificate can remain on file as long as it applies to your situation, it can only be used to suspend service disconnection for 30 days.

The co-op is not required to fur-

nish service beyond a total of 30 days for a life-threatening condition, without full payment of the account or acceptable payment arrangements on any unpaid balance.

Elderly and/or consumers with disabilities have the option of having either condition noted on their account. Any consumer requesting such notation needs to notify the cooperative in writing. Consumers who qualify are those who have a permanent impairment which substantially limits the disabled consumer's ability to pay for utility service, or are 65 years old or older.

Before we schedule a lineman to disconnect your service, we provide a

cut-off notice on your electric bill, and an automated phone call advising you the delinquent bill needs to be paid within 24 hours.

You can avoid additional charges by paying your bill on time, or adhering to payment arrangements.

Meters disconnected for non-payment will not be reset on weekends, holidays, or after 7 p.m. on weekdays.

While in the process of interrupting service, our linemen can accept payment. There is a \$50 trip fee to collect payment or disconnect service and a \$50 fee if the lineman has to return to reconnect, for a total of \$100. That fee goes up to \$150 if the lineman has to return between 3 and 7 p.m. 

Agencies Offering Assistance with Electric Bills

SEAC	Avant, Sperry, Skiatook	396-4108
Community Action	Nowata County	273-2868
DHS	Nowata County	273-2327
DHS	Osage County	287-5800
DHS	Rogers County	283-8300
Community Action	Rogers County	341-5000
DHS	Tulsa County	581-2401
		430-2300, 581-2689
Helping Hand	Tulsa County	584-6923
Salvation Army	Tulsa County	582-7201
Owasso Comm. Res.	Tulsa/Rogers Counties	272-4969
Community Action	Washington County	333-8115
Concern	Washington County	336-4693
DHS	Washington County	338-5700