2009 and Beyond for VEC

By Thomas Bailey, President of the Board of Directors

As we begin 2009, we are all reflecting on the financial benefits of reduced fossil fuel and commodities pricing. This is a welcome relief for everyone and we are all hoping that it will last or that future prices will fluctuate in a more rational manner.

While VEC has secured intermediate term power supplies in advance of the peak of the fossil fuel bubble, the Coop had to request an electric rate increase primarily to meet increased regional power transmission expenses and to fund the electric infrastructure upgrades on our system in northern Vermont. A recent system assessment recommended a stepped-up rebuild of certain areas of our electric system to meet standards and improve service reliability to our member-customers. At the same time, New England’s multi state regional transmission system is undergoing infrastructure upgrades. Under mutually agreed to pro-rata billing formulas the state’s utilities must share in the increased costs associated with the upgrades. The New England rate-payers all benefit from the transmission system’s ability to move power between states. It is sometimes difficult to imagine the millions of dollars of necessary investment in infrastructure to ensure that you have a reliable supply of electricity at your home or business.

VEC and most electric utilities in Vermont are preparing for the expiration of major long term power contracts with Hydro Quebec and Vermont Yankee in the year 2012. At this time, VEC’s management and power supply analysts are discussing the possibility of renewing contracts with these major suppliers and/or increasing our purchases from local alternative generation such as wind, wood, solar, methane or other pelleted fuels. VEC members can be sure that our management and Directors are researching all potential and viable options to develop a power supply portfolio which will be affordable to you, our members.

VEC also strongly supports energy efficiency measures in member’s homes or businesses. Efficiency measures not only play an important role in reducing member’s consumption but also have an impact on our power planning and the amount of power we are required to purchase.

There has been, and will continue to be a great deal of media coverage on the benefits and drawbacks of all of the forms of generated power supply for Vermont. It will be a challenge for each of you to become fully informed on our future power supply options. To the extent that you have an interest and wish to reach informed conclusions on Vermont’s power supply future, we at VEC, as well as area legislators need to hear from you to help us make the right decisions in representing the rate payers in Vermont.

On behalf of the VEC Board of Directors and all VEC employees, I wish you a safe, healthy and Happy New Year! * * *

Ice Storm 2008

By Elizabeth Gamache, Manager of Corporate Services

Electric utility officials plan for the worst and hope for the best. Advance preparation for emergencies is a part of the business, but at times outcomes are so widespread that utilities must call on one another for assistance.

On December 11, 2008 a powerful ice storm barreled through New England leaving more than one million electric utility customers without power by the next morning. The magnitude of the storm was so great, that in order to restore power quickly in the face of plummeting temperatures, many electric utilities called out for emergency help. Fortunately for VEC, northern Vermont was spared the damaging effects of the ice storm, but neighboring utilities in Vermont and New Hampshire faced an uphill battle to restore power quickly as temperatures were expected to drop into the single digits. “In this business, we depend upon mutual aid,” said Jeffery Wright, Chief Operator of the Board of Directors. “Sometimes we are on the receiving end. This time it was our turn to help.”

VEC officials were briefed on the magnitude of the outages in a statewide conference call early on December 12, 2008. Vermont Emergency Management and utility representatives throughout the state, weighed in on the severity of the storm.

When Green Mountain Power, Central Vermont Public Service and New Hampshire Electric Cooperative asked for assistance to restore power to more than 80,000 customers collectively, VEC mobilized crews and equipment to join fellow line workers from as far away as Virginia and Ohio in the restoration effort. VEC also coordinated efforts to send several crews from Vermont municipalities to the areas in need of aid.

VEC employees were sent home to pack their bags and prepare for a three to five day event. Just two weeks before holiday plans without hesitation to help those in need. More than 24 employees and contractors braved the elements and worked long hours to get the lights back on. Others stayed back to ensure that VEC members had coverage in the event of outages within the VEC territory.

“At times like this, everyone makes you feel like a hero because they show so much gratitude,” said substation meter technician, David Young, as he prepared a truck to head south to hard-hit Wilmington, VT.

“Losing power at any time is a problem,” commented line worker Bruce Lamb. “But when it happens in December and the temperatures are below freezing, people realize just how much they rely on electricity.”

Mutual aid agreements are common in the electric utility business. By cooperating with each other, utilities are better able to serve customers by deploying resources effectively to areas in need. VEC receives reimbursement for the costs associated with sending crews and equipment when providing assistance. By the same token, when VEC is on the receiving end, VEC pays for the associated expenses.

VEC was pleased to be able to respond to requests for help from other utilities in the aftermath of the Ice Storm of 2008, knowing that if the situation were to be reversed VEC would be able to rely on others for help as well. *
**Co-op Board of Director Elections**

**this Spring 2009**

**Seeking Candidates for Elections in Districts 4, 8, 9, and 11**

by Mark Woodward, District Director 7

are eligible to become a Director. To run in 2009, you must have your principal residence within VEC territory in one of the towns listed above.

**Becoming a candidate for Director is very simple!**

Any member interested in running must first file a petition signed by at least 15 members from their district. The Bylaws provide the rules concerning submission of petitions. In order to be a qualified signer on the petition, the signer's name and signature on the petition MUST exactly match the name on the member's billing statement, and the electric account and membership number must be in the signer's name. Only one name can appear per membership. We encourage each candidate to obtain more than 15 signatures.

Once a candidate has all their signatures, they must submit the petition along with a brief biography, statement of interest, and a photo to VEC no later than April 15, 2009. The deadline is stipulated in the Bylaws (Article IV, Section 2(a)). Once the petitions have been received, they will be reviewed by the Board according to the stipulations set forth in the Bylaws (Article IV, Section 3(c)), and the Secretary shall post such nominations.

All eligible candidates will be announced in the Spring 2009 issue of Coop Life. The statements of candidacy and ballot for Director will be included in the mailing with the Notice of Annual Meeting to members in the districts with candidates due for election.

These are exciting times to serve the members of VEC. Every member should consider that your Co-op is a democratic run organization that functions best with member input. Take the next step: become involved and run as a candidate for the Board of Directors.

If you are interested in becoming a candidate, please contact VEC's Internal Communication Specialist at 1-800-832-2667, extension 1131. ★

---

**Spotlight on Director: Daniel Carswell, District 2**

by Jennifer Savage

Oftentimes people take it for granted that the lights go on and off,” says Dan Carswell, VEC's District 2 Director (representing Highgate, Swanton, and Franklin) and 1st Vice President of the Board. “It’s a pretty multifaceted business really – it’s more than lights and policies.

Dan and his wife of 27 years, Claudette, live in Franklin. Both graduated from Missisquoi Valley Union High School. After graduation, they spent time in New Hampshire, where Dan earned his Master Plumbers license at the age of 23. In 1988, they made the decision to move back to Vermont so that Dan could start his own business and they could be closer to family. The couple has two sons, Alex and Chris, who will be 21 and 18 this year, respectively.

Dan’s first official VEC Board meeting in 1996 marked the announcement of the decision to enter bankruptcy. Though the company has made great strides in the 12 years of his Board tenure, he acknowledges that purchase power supply costs continue to be a challenge given that 75% of VEC’s operation costs are related to energy.

“Fortunately, we’re subject to market costs,” says Dan.

Dan knows a thing or two about the effects of energy costs on business. He is a co-owner in Bossin Bros. Oil, a home heating business, and Dekbo, Inc., a trucking transport company.

“Being on the Board allows me to keep up to date with others’ input—on the energy market in general, which I work in every day,” says Dan. “Financial stability is something we all need, and

---

**VEC’s 71st Annual Membership Meeting and Energy Fair**

Vermont Electric Cooperative, Inc. has set the date for its 71st Annual Membership Meeting for Saturday, May 30th at VEC headquarters in Johnson. This year the format will be a bit different. Rather than the traditional breakfast and meeting, VEC is focusing on making this a family event by combining the Annual Meeting with an Energy Fair. We are very excited about our first Energy Fair Annual Meeting and encourage members and their families to save the date.

The day will begin at 10:00 a.m. and will host tents of activities including safety demonstrations, events for kids, member information booths, entertainment, and a cookout. Childcare will be provided while members attend the membership meeting which will begin at 11:30 a.m.

Won’t you show up for a fun day of activities and demonstrations and become active in your Cooperative? After all, VEC is here to serve our members and we need your participation and involvement for continued success.
Winter 2009 - Page 3

CEO CORNER

CEO Update — January, 2009

Kingdom Community Wind

Vermont Electric Cooperative, Inc. (VEC) is investigating the property owned by Trip Wileman on Lowell Mountain as a potential wind generation facility. VEC will work closely with surrounding towns and landowners to determine the feasibility and interest in such a project. VEC has not made any commitments to this new facility, but in-state renewable generation is a top priority for the Coop and our members. Initial review of the wind data shows that the ridgeline at the Wileman site is a very good one. However, a lot of work has to be done also on the financial analysis before any decision is made.

VEC also recognizes that Vermont puts a high value on its landscape and its views.

• Vermont Yankee License Extension

VEC has intervened in the Vermont Yankee license extension docket at the Public Service Board. VEC does not take a position as to the safety and reliability of the facility, as that is a decision for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Vermont Department of Public Service, the Public Service Board and the legislature. VEC is in negotiations with Entergy for a power contract if the license does get extended. Our participation in the docket ensures that the VEC membership is represented by the best possible deal.

• Member Meetings

VEC held five member meetings in Williston, Eden, St. Albans, Newport, and North Hero over the past two weeks. I want to thank the members who attended these meetings to learn about the factors that drove the current request for a rate increase. It has been a very difficult decision to increase rates. The VEC Board of Directors and managers have been working on developing a rate path since 2005. The current request is for a 9.24 percent increase. VEC’s last two rate increases were strictly for increases in power costs, and were not asked for an increase in rates for its operations and construction since 2002. VEC is seeking this rate increase largely as the result of two major components: increased regional transmission costs and capital improvement expenditures. The capital expenditures will bring VEC’s infrastructure system up to industry standard over a ten-year period. Just like our transportation infrastructure problems, the VEC system has been underfunded for decades. At some point, the system has to be rebuilt. Unlike the transportation infrastructure, where bridges are shut down for major repairs, VEC cannot shut down its power system.

VEC has developed a ten-year Strategic Capital Work Plan which is included in the rate case. The plan prioritizes critical projects to be completed over the next ten years and focuses first on the safety and operability of VEC’s system, proposing projects that first correct deficiencies on the system. The projects proposed in the early years of the plan, will rebuild necessary infrastructure to provide a safe and reliable transmission system that can be configured to adapt to changing interconnected system conditions. Full substation automation on the 40kV system will be an integral part of all of these projects. The second phase of the Plan focuses on upgrading aging substation infrastructure and increased access to power, including demand from the two ski areas within VEC’s service territory. These ski areas will appropriately share in the cost of these upgrades.

While the capital plan represents an increase in spending over a ten-year period, we believe we are demonstrating good judgment in some might argue that we should be moving faster to fix the deficiencies in our system. After an unfortunate accident in September, 2006, which resulted in injury to a VEC lineman, we made it clear to all parties that we address any deficiencies that could affect the safety of our workers or the public. Spreading remaining capital improvement projects over a ten-year period should not compromise the safety of our system in any way. Many of the problems identified have been present for many years. They arose over time and will be addressed in a step-by-step way.

Compression of the schedule would result in an unnecessary burden to VEC members. We believe that compressing the capital schedule is not prudent because it will add cost. VEC would need to hire more contractors, including project managers, to do the work and we would be competing with other ongoing projects for workers and materials.

VEC represented at signing

On October 6, 2008, VEC Board President Tom Bailey, Randy Pratt, Manager of Government Relations, and I represented VEC at a signing event celebrating common bonds between Governor Douglas of Vermont and the Province of Quebec’s Premier. The event was in recognition of cooperation on hydropower, U.S.-Canadian border access and environmental protection issues. Governor Douglas and Premier Jean Charest also signed an agreement they hope will lead to establishment of a “green zone” encompassing both jurisdictions in hopes of protecting the environment and generating new renewable energy projects.

They signed the agreement — actually an addendum to a 2003 cooperative agreement — in a ceremony at the border-straddling Haskell Library and Opera House in Derby Line, with Charest sitting on his side of the international border and Douglas on his, yet both in the Vermont territory. The agreement calls for establishment of a “Green Energy and Trade Task Force” to analyze renewable clean energy sources, particularly those that could use “locally available resources such as wood and other biomass.” The panel would report annually to the premier and governor.

Jean Charest was asked if Hydro-Quebec would be interested in a favorable electricity contract for Vermont. His response was that Quebec is building a transmission line to carry 2250 megawatts of energy (more than double the load of Vermont) to Ontario, and Ontario is interested in buying everything. He also stated that he believed HQ power was more valuable than New England fossil-fuel based power.

Community Service Bulletin Board

October 28th Blood Drive

Set a 10 Year High Mark!

On October 28, 2008 VEC partnered with Johnson State College JSC to host a Fall Red Cross Blood Drive. In our first co-sponsorship with JSC, this collaborative effort broke the ten year record for the amount of blood collected. The drive was held at the JSC campus with the help of several VEC employees who participated by promoting the drive, volunteering time and donating blood. Members of the community gene up to donate blood and a total of 124 productive units of blood were collected. In addition, 35 first time donors participated. On behalf of VEC, JSC and the Red Cross, we would like to thank both volunteers and donors who may have saved a life by giving blood!

VEC will co-sponsor a second blood drive with JSC in March of 2009. Stay tuned for the exact date and time!

“Not since November, 1998 has a JSC blood drive produced the numbers that it produced in this drive. In short, it was a fantastic success and we owe it all to the great support of the梓ctor for Service Learning and the VT Electric Co-op! Congratulations” said Dave Carmichael, American Red Cross Account Executive.

Turkey Drive

For the second year in a row, VEC employees participated in the Chris Challenge, a local community service turkey drive in memory of Chris Potter. Turkeys are collected each November to be distributed to needy families throughout Lamoille County.

Upon learning of a shortage of See “Community,” cont. on pg. 4

Construction Corner

by Harry Abendroth, Mgr. Regulatory & Planning Engineering

Construction work has been completed on our distribution lines in the Coventry area to connect another farm methane generating facility to VEC’s system. VEC will purchase the power produced from the facility, which has a rating of 225 kW. Construction work has also started to install circuit breakers in the Cooperative’s transmission line in Enosburg. When installation is complete in the spring of 2009, these circuit breakers will greatly reduce the number of extended transmission outages, especially in stormy weather.

Engineering and environmental assessment work has begun for replacement of 6.5 miles of transmission line in the towns of Lowell and Charleston. At this time, it is anticipated that the replacement line can be configured entirely within the right of the existing line.
Mr. Hallquist,

I wanted to email my thanks and praise for your workers you sent from VT to help NH recover from the recent ice storm. We lost power on Friday, Dec 12th at midnight. Assessing our damage Friday morning, a tree had fallen across the road and snaked a utility pole with a transformer. The pole damage tore the wiring from our house, damaged our meter box and tore the main feeds from the main panel inside our home. We knew we would need repairs to the house and scrambled to find a generator, supplies and an electrician. Unsure what would be covered by NHEC crews and what would be our responsibility, we quickly assessed our plan. Your crews arrived at our site on Sunday, 12/14 and removed the transformer from the pole suspended over the road. I spoke with them and found them courteous, professional and sympathetic to our situation. In fact, they commented that they were glad to have a chance to come to NH to help, as NH had sent Co-op workers to help VT in the past, and they had not had an opportunity to return the favor.

Over the next several hours on Sunday, we were away from the home and upon returning found that the pole had been replaced. On Monday, power had been restored to our street, but we had not completed repairs. The power from the pole had been extended to our house, but no hook up for us as we still needed repairs. With our stress increasing as we struggled to juggle work, children, a generator and repairs, we scheduled a master electrician to make our repairs Tuesday AM. These were completed by noon Tuesday and successfully inspected by the town. We then called NHEC to schedule a turn on of our power. As I had feared, the crews had moved on to other areas with more customers affected and we were now in a wait mode for crews to double back for individual home hook ups. As another day passed and a snowstorm arrived, we were feeling last on the list.

On Wednesday around 4 PM I arrived home to see a truck with bucket arm extended hooking up our power! I was extremely excited as was my wife. To my surprise and delight, the workers hooking up our power were the same two VT Co-op employees from Sunday afternoon that I had spoken with. We discussed their efforts and I found they had been working 16-18 hours per day since Saturday. No complaints, completely professional and again a credit to your organization, especially considering Wednesday was extremely cold and it was clear they had been working at least 12-14 hours when they arrived at my home. I didn’t catch their names, but in an age where we spend more time complaining, I wanted to write and express my appreciation to your crews. Perhaps you could determine who they were by my address below – they certainly deserve to be recognized for their service. I understand from them that VT sent 4 crews to NH and they had not seen their colleagues the entire time they were in NH. They were also grateful for the accommodations provided to them.

So from one NHEC customer, thanks for your help in our recovery efforts in NH!

Sincerely,
Tom Lavallee

Safety Tips for Winter Outage Preparedness

Power outages during summer months can cause major inconveniences in our lives. A power outage during the winter in cold climates like Vermont can also bring additional risk to human lives.

The goal of Vermont Electric Cooperative (VEC) is to restore all power outages quickly and safely. During winter storm outages where the damage is extensive and working conditions are difficult, the duration of outages can often be lengthy and take days before all members’ power is restored. Being prepared for winter outages by having a plan and an emergency outage kit is not only important but necessary.

There are three major essentials to consider in being prepared for extended outages.

Health and Sanitation
If a member of your household is dependent on electricity for life support, make sure you and have portable oxygen tanks, backup power and/or a temporary relocation plan. Make every attempt to check on your elderly neighbors and relatives. For sanitation purposes maintain an adequate supply of water for uses such as flushing toilets and sponge bathing.

Warmth and Lighting
Always have adequate lighting available such as plenty of candles and flashlight with a sufficient stock of batteries. If using candles please use extra caution to only burn them in occupied rooms and never go to sleep leaving them burning. Sleeping bags, extra blankets, and extra dry and warm clothing are essential. If you are using alternative sources of heat be sure fireplaces and chimneys are clean and functioning properly. Do not use any heating source which is not intended for indoor use, such as charcoal or gas grills, and do not use any appliances that are not designed for home heating, such as gas ovens.

Food and Water
Be sure to have a supply of foods which can be consumed with little to no preparation such as canned fruits, vegetables, or fish, plus instant foods and dry goods. Maintain an adequate supply of drinking water to stay hydrated.

Vermont Electric Cooperative uses all forms of media to keep our members up to date on the status of outages, including radio. Your outage kit should include a portable radio and extra batteries. By listening to the radio, members can obtain important information on outage status and duration as well as locations of emergency shelters.

During outages stay away from downed power lines and any debris that is resting on power lines. Always keep children inside if there are downed wires and call your utility immediately to report them. Turn off major appliances to help avoid a sudden surge of power when service is restored.

We hope these preparedness tips will help you and your families stay safe this winter in the event of an extended outage.
At the time of this writing, we are rapidly approaching year end and have been busy compiling our annual reliability statistics that will be filed with the Vermont PSB. I am pleased to report that we have made many improvements this year despite the many challenges that mother nature threw our way.

Our goals this year were to reduce “unknown” outages by discussing all outage causes in our daily operations meeting, to limit “company initiated” outages by using every available tool like mobile substations and insulated track vehicles, to reduce “animal related outages” by aggressively installing insulated animal guards and to reduce “tree outages” by increasing our tree trimming budget. I am pleased to report that despite an increase in tree related outages, we have shown significant improvement in all other goals.

VEC has worked hard to reduce the amount of unknown outages for two reasons: to accurately track outage causes and to ensure that we take extra steps to find the problem so it doesn’t happen again. We have experienced a 54% improvement because of our efforts and our members experience the benefit as a result of VEC taking these extra steps.

Tree related incidents continue to be a leading cause of outages. The 11% increase in this year’s tree outages are a reminder that we need to continue to increase our vegetation management funding. VEC has filed a request for a 9.24% rate increase that will go into effect on January 1, 2009. A part of this increase will provide necessary funding to allow a 30% increase in vegetation management activities. We are confident that the increase in funding combined with improved efficiencies in our management techniques will result in reliability improvements in 2009.

VEC has been thoughtfully planning the implementation of an Integrated Vegetation Management program which includes the use of herbicides. VEC carefully considered this concept before presenting it to the Board of Directors. Only after several informational presentations and field trips to witness demonstrations of current application methods was it endorsed by the Board. Today’s application methods are much different than in the past when a favorite application included the aerial spraying by helicopters and heavy broadcast spraying. Current methods include the use of back pack sprayers which are used to apply a very small amount of herbicide to only the targeted plant or tree. On average, only a pint of herbicide is used per acre, which costs approximately $200. To manually cut an acre of vegetation normally costs VEC $1,500. Additionally, the environmental benefit of reducing herbicides on your land may be something you wish to avoid. In addition to following all of the Vermont Public Service Board (PSB) rules regarding notifications to landowners, we will be knocking on doors to personally notify members who live close to the lines that will be treated. Your request to avoid the use of herbicides on your lands will be respected. Also enclosed in this newsletter is the Herbicide Notification Coupon which states that persons owning or occupying land within 1,000 feet of a utility right-of-way may request in writing that the utility notify them individually by mail anytime, but at least 30 days prior to treatment of the line with herbicides. If you are interested in being notified, you should fill out the coupon and return it to VEC 42 Wexcom Road, Johnson, VT 05656.

If you wish to learn more about the chainlaw new emissions and bar and chain oil far outweigh the impact that today’s herbicide products.

I personally understand that using herbicides on your land may be something you wish to avoid. In addition to following all of the Vermont Public Service Board (PSB) rules regarding notifications VT PSB rules regarding RULE 3.600 MAINTENANCE OF ELECTRIC UTILITY RIGHTS OF WAY, you can visit: http://www.state.vt.us/psb/rules/ OfficialAdoptedRules/3600_Maintenance_of_Utility_Rights-of-Way.pdf

Equipment failures have historically been a close second to tree outages as an outage cause. VEC continues to battle a manufacturer’s defect of line and transformer fuse devices. These fuse devices, commonly referred to as “cut-outs” have been the source of nearly 50% of all our equipment failures in 2008. An example of the damage that one of these failures can cause is the outage that South Hero members experienced on December 10th. The outage which occurred at 1:50 a.m. resulted in a pole fire requiring VEC to disrupt power to all circuits in South Hero. The pole replacement took VEC line workers nearly eight hours to complete due to the congestion of three circuits on the pole. VEC has plans to fund the replacement of all of these devices over a five year period, starting with the South Hero, Grand Isle, North Hero, South Alburgh and Isle LaMotte lines. We are confident that the mass replacement of these devices will result in quick and drastic reliability improvements.

VEC has recently taken measures to improve its phone infrastructure. We have increased our ability to handle increased volumes of calls during large outages. VEC has struggled with this challenge for some time and we are confident that our upgrades will result in better communication during outages.

Improvements have also been made to our website which now offers members up to date outage information including outage locations by town and restoration times directly updated from our control center. We also are making information available on the last twenty-five outages so members can keep track of the causes of outages affecting them. VEC continues to strive to stay ahead of the technology wave. We will continue to make available any form of technology which will enhance means of communication with our members.

I hope that all of you had a wonderful holiday season! All of us at VEC work for you, our members, and I encourage you to call me directly if you have questions or concerns.

VERMONT ELECTRIC CO-OP BOARD PRESENTS A NEW DISTRICT DESIGN TO ITS MEMBERS IN 2009

Each year VEC’s Board of Directors considers whether it is necessary to change its District districts, and action is taken on a “needed” basis. For example, the acquisition of the Vermont Division of Citizens Utilities along the northern edge of Vermont, and more recently the sale of our southern territory to Central Vermont Public Service, were developments that prompted the Board to propose District changes. In many years, however, no changes in Districts are recommended.

In 2007, the Board decided to re-examine the concept of Districts, and delegated this work to an ad hoc Redistricting Committee. One reason for the effort was to better balance the need for members in distinct geographic portions of the territory to have a voice on the Board, while allowing talented candidates to seek a Board seat even though they might live in an area already served by another District Director. Another reason was that there was an unequal representation of the number of members per District.

The Committee evaluated over a dozen complex alternatives and presented recommendations to the full Board. After much consideration, the Board passed a new District design that it plans to place into effect on January 1, 2009. The final design, which was approved unanimously by the Board, is a hybrid, representing a nearly equal number of members from the same town. This plan also reduces the total number of Directors from thirteen to twelve.

The new District design requires a change in the bylaws, which will document the plan and describe its implementation. Bylaws changes are only approved when approved by a member vote. More information will be provided updated members in the April, 2009 issue of Co-op Life.
by Sally Lumbra, Human Resource & Risk Management Supervisor

On October 20, 2008 four temporary laborers were offered permanent positions with the Cooperative. Codie Bryce, Chris Connelly, Paul Coons and Craig Godfrey are new VEC employees. Currently classified as Groundworker C, they are starting the 10-step apprenticeship process which, once successfully completed, will assist them in obtaining their 1st Class Lineworker status in 4.5 years. All four individuals demonstrated enthusiasm, drive and promise throughout their temporary assignments. Paul Coons joined the Newport District and Chris Connelly is working with our Grand Isle crews. Codie Bryce and Craig Godfrey were assigned to work out of our Johnson District.

We are very proud to announce that Nicole Thomas was hired as Staff Accountant on October 27th. Nicole previously worked as an accountant at Smugglers’ Notch Management Company and Lamolle North Supervisory Union. She brings strong mathematical and organizational skills to the position and takes pride in the accuracy of her work. Past experience includes banking, payroll, tax reporting and auditing assistance. As Staff Accountant, Nicole will be involved with the preparation and completion of financial services that include banking, general and cost accounting, general ledger accounts receivable, work-in-progress, and will also provide back up duties for energy billing and payroll.

Katie Lacos, former 1st Class Lineworker and Safety and Environmental Compliance Specialist, rejoined VEC’s workforce on November 10th as System Operator Trainee. Katie spent 19 years as Lineworker for Citizens’ Utilities and for VEC. In addition to his poles and wires experience, Kevin brings a background in safety from his work here at VEC, his work on the safety committee for Saint Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad, and years spent as a volunteer fire fighter for the City of Newport. As System Operator Trainee, Katie will obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to interact with members and line personnel to restore power and correct service problems in the Systems Operations area rather than in the field.

Katie Orost was intrigued by the Power Resource Planner posting and developed a keen interest in the position following conversations with VEC staff during the interview process. Katie has worked as an Accountant at Pine Ridge School, Inc. and held Staff Accountant positions at Angela Norder Company, Inc. and, most recently, at Bourne’s Energy, Inc. Her skills, knowledge, and experience are the perfect mix of assets needed for this position. Katie accepted our offer for the Power Resource Planner position and began work December 2nd. She will be mentored by the Manager of Power Supply and Rates, the Sr. Power Resource Planner and Rates Analyst in the areas of power supply requirements and resources, transmission, tariff rates and patronage capital.

Internally two advancements have taken place in our Richford District. On December 2nd Brian Farrar advanced to 2nd Class Lineworker C on January 2nd. At this level a Lineworker can begin “on-the-job” training in the final six months of his apprenticeship. Fred Jowett advanced to 2nd Class Lineworker C on January 2nd. At this level a Lineworker can begin “on-call” duties.

With all the new additions and advancements comes a retirement! On January 2, 2009 VEC gave best wishes to Linda Reeve, Rates Analyst for a very happy retirement. Linda first came to work for VEC in the early 1970’s. She has provided support to VEC’s finance area in a variety of positions; Accountant, Accountant A, Sr. Accountant, and VEG&T System Coordinator. Linda left VEC for two years in the mid 1990’s. Upon returning she accepted the Accountant/Financial Analyst A position and worked her way to VEC’s Rates Analyst. Linda’s strong work ethic and unyielding persistence has been an asset to VEC for almost 40 years. All of us at VEC wish Linda the very best.

In July of 2008 VEC announced the offering of “eBill,” a new electronic billing and payment option to our membership. As of today, over 2,000 member accounts are enjoying the convenience of viewing and paying their bills online through a secure process at the touch of a keyboard!

Won’t you join these members in saving time, money, and energy by signing up for eBill? We encourage all members to do their part to conserve on paper waste, unnecessary postage costs, and fuel to mail or drop off payments by signing up for the paperless billing option.

With eBill members also have the ability to view up to three years of historic billing for their account(s) and can automatically chart monthly usage, review monthly cost, and compute average cost by month. For members with multiple accounts, eBill allows you to make a single payment that covers all of your accounts.

Signing up for eBill is quick and easy through our web site: www.vermontelectric.com or directly by using https://ebill.vermontelectric.com. If you have any questions or concerns regarding eBill please contact our member service department at 1-800-832-2667.

During an outage check these FM Stations for updates

- WEZF 92.9 FM
- WMOO 92.1 FM
- WLVB 93.9 FM
- WOKO 98.9 FM
- WKOL 105.1 FM
- WIZN 106.7 FM
- WVPS 07.9 FM

Over 2,000 members sign up for eBill!
Home Power Generation – Series Two of Four

Wind Power for your Home

by Chris Lamonia, Alteris Renewables

It seems like every time I turn on the radio, TV, or on the internet, breaking news can be found regarding renewable energy. Whether it is T-Boone Pickens, or Arnold Schwarzenegger, renewable energy seems to be on top of everyone’s mind. This is partly because there are more incentives making renewable energy financially viable and the systems are becoming easier to install. In this article, we will explore the steps that you can take to supply your own renewable electricity through installing a wind turbine.

Getting Started

There are a number of steps you can take to qualify your site for wind power. First, you need to assess if you have sufficient wind. It may seem like the wind blows all of the time at your site, however, it is beneficial to check reliable wind maps you can find on the internet. To get started assessing the wind at your site check out the following wind maps:

- 3Tier Group: http://firstlook.3tiergroup.com
- AWS Wind Navigator: http://navigator.awstruewind.com

Every wind speed that you look at will have a corresponding height at which it was measured. That height is important because your wind turbine will have to correspond to that height. The higher you go, the stronger the wind. A typical height for a residential wind turbine will be around 20-30 meters (m) high. If your wind research yields a resource above 5 meters per second (m/s) or 11.1 mph, at 20-30 meters then it may make financial sense to install a wind turbine at your site. Most small wind turbines start spinning at a wind speed as low as 2.5m/s however; the wind maps have a margin of error. Therefore, you can be confident if the wind maps show a wind speed of around 5m/s that your site has the wind to support a wind turbine. The last thing you want to do is install a wind turbine that does not spin.

The next step is to establish your budget for your wind project. Are you happy with a 10 year pay back or 15 or maybe you just want to contribute and payback does not make a difference to you? Regardless, make sure you have a number you are willing to spend for your system. There are incentives including grants, loans, and tax incentives, but you will have to put some money down to start your project.

Although it has become easier to install a wind system, it is still very complicated. There are a number of additional steps in the process. If you have come this far in the process, you may want to consider working with a local wind contractor or developer to help you continue your project.

Next steps include (not in order):

1. Finding an experienced wind turbine installer is very important
2. Determining what size turbine matches your existing electrical load
3. Calculate your payback with incentives included (if this is important to you)
4. Understanding your local, town, and/or city height restrictions
5. Notification to all abutting property owners
6. Acquire building and electrical permits
7. Create electrical lines for electrical interconnect
8. Net metering applications
9. Certificate of public good application
10. Apply to the Vermont clean energy development fund
11. Apply for renewable energy credits

There are a number of additional steps beyond these above, but this list shows that these projects do get complicated. Most wind contractors and developers either do all of this for you or will help guide you through this process. It is very important to partner with a contractor or developer that you are confident can do the job correctly for you.

Wind projects are very site specific and the costs are going to vary significantly depending on location. Your foundation must be built for the specific soil it will be located in. Your turbine may be a long way from the electrical interconnection point, which adds cost to a project. Logistics play a large role in the price of your project as well. Again, an experienced installer will be able to help you with all of your needs.

Although wind projects seem complicated they can be done and are being done all over the state. Generating your own electricity through wind power can save you money and enable you to be a part of positive change for a cleaner environment.

About Alteris Renewable and Chris Lamonia

Chris Lamonia is the Director of the wind division of Alteris Renewables, formerly WindWrights, SolarWrights and SolarWorks Inc. These three entities have been installing commercial and residential renewable energy systems for over 30 years. Alteris Renewables are committed to building renewable energy projects for communities, businesses, municipalities, farms and beyond. Environmental and social responsibility is at the core of our mission. We have offices located throughout the east coast, with two offices in Montpelier and one in Waitsfield Vermont. For more information on Alteris Renewables please call 877.220.1588.

PUBLIC NOTICE PUBLIC NOTICE PUBLIC NOTICE PUBLIC NOTICE

HERBICIDE USE NOTIFICATION

Vermont utilities maintain electric line rights-of-way with several methods, including the selective use of herbicides on trees and brush. They also encourage low-growing shrubs and trees which will crowd tall-growing species and, thus, minimize the use of herbicides. They also encourage low-growing shrubs and trees which will crowd tall-growing species and, thus, minimize the use of herbicides.

It is the responsibility of the landowner or resident to make the utility aware of the location of any potentially affected water supply, and any environmentally sensitive areas where herbicide application ought to be avoided.

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

CONTACT YOUR ELECTRIC UTILITY WITH QUESTIONS OR SUBMIT THE COUPON PROVIDED

If you have further questions or concerns contact:

Plant Industry Division, Agenty of Agriculture
Phil Benedict, Director
116 State St., Montpelier, VT 05602
1-802-828-2431

Consumer Affairs & Public Information
Dept. of Public Service
112 State St., Montpelier, VT 05620
1-802-622-4496
1-802-628-2811

COUPON FOR PERSONAL REQUEST

Name

Town/City of Affected Property

Street Address

Telephone Number (Home)

Town

Zip Code

Days to Work Number: Yes ☐ No ☐

State

Electric Account Number

Best Time to Call

Property of Concern: Year Round Residence ☐ Summer Residence ☐ Commercial Property ☐

Water Supply ☐ Land ☐ Other ☐

Line and Pole Identification: Utility Initials Numbers

We need at least this information in order to determine if you qualify for personal notification. If information is unattainable, please state why. Use an extra sheet of paper if you need more space.

RETURN TO YOUR LOCAL UTILITY

VLEC09
Inside Co-op Life

Winter 2009

VEC 2009 and Beyond ............................................................... pg. 1
Ice Storm 2008 ........................................................................ pg. 1
Board of Director Elections .................................................... pg. 2
VEC’s 71st Membership Meeting @ Energy Fair ...................... pg. 2
Spotlight on Director: Daniel Carswell .................................... pg. 2
CEO Corner .............................................................................. pg. 3
Construction Corner ............................................................... pg. 3
Community Service Bulletin Board ........................................ pg. 3
Thank You From NH ............................................................... pg. 4
Safety Tips ................................................................................. pg. 4
COO Update ............................................................................. pg. 5
New District Design ............................................................... pg. 5
Employee Evolution ............................................................... pg. 6
eBill Sign Up Update .............................................................. pg. 6
Ask the Home Team .............................................................. pg. 6
Home Power Generation: Part 2: Wind ................................. pg. 7
Public Notice: Herbicide Use ................................................ pg. 7

Vermont Electric Cooperative
42 Wescom Rd.
Johnson VT 05656

PRRST-STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Burlington, VT
Permit No. 21

Coop Life

is published quarterly by
Vermont Electric Cooperative
42 Wescom Road, Johnson, VT 05656
1-802-635-2331 or Toll Free: 1-888-VEC-COOP
www.vermontelectric.coop

Editorial Committee: Dorothy Allard Susan Deuso
Kathryn Kantorski Howard Leighton Mark Woodward