

# WEC CO-OP CURRENTS

## Environmental Court Upholds 'Vermont Wind' Permit In Sheffield

A 40-megawatt wind-power project supported by Washington Electric Cooperative cleared a significant legal hurdle on August 26, 2010, when the Vermont Environmental Court amended and approved the project's existing construction storm-water permit. The ruling in essence rejected an appeal of the permit brought by a group of seven opponents, and represents another step toward construction in the Caledonia County town of Sheffield. When the 16-turbine wind farm commences operation, WEC will purchase 10 percent of the power it generates.

*Vermont Wind's contractors have devised methods in keeping with recognized Best Management Practices to meet state criteria for erosion prevention and sediment control.*

For the company now known as Vermont Wind, the ruling follows a string of legal and regulatory successes. In May 2007, the Vermont Public Service Board (PSB) awarded the proposal a Certificate of Public Good, making it the first commercial-scale wind farm to win the PSB's approval since Green Mountain Power Corp.'s 6-MW Searsburg project in 1997, which is a much smaller project and representative of an earlier phase of wind-power technology. Opponents of the Sheffield project, organized as "The Ridge Protectors, Inc.," appealed the PSB's approval to the

Vermont Supreme Court, which on February 6, 2009, ruled that it found no error with the Public Service Board's decision.

Since then, Vermont Wind (a subsidiary of Massachusetts-based First Wind) has been busy obtaining various permits related to site alteration and construction. The

August 26 decision was in response to the opponents' appeal of a storm water-discharge permit for the construction phase of the project; the permit had been awarded by the state Department of Environmental Conservation (a department within the Agency of Natural Resources).

Construction will involve building a 25-foot-wide access roadway to and along the turbine locations (after construction is completed the roadway will be narrowed to 16 feet). The site includes headwaters of small, unnamed tributaries of several local brooks; many of the tributaries, according to court documents, are less than one foot in width. Still, they must be protected, and Vermont Wind's contractors have devised methods in keeping with recognized Best Management Practices to meet

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State Archivist Gregory Sanford stands in one of the new climate-controlled vaults at the VSARA building in Middlesex. After decades of storage in inadequate facilities in Montpelier, the state's most important historical records have found a new home in Co-op territory.

## Something New Under The (Hot) Sun State Archives Move Into WEC Territory

It's been hot this summer (no news there), causing Washington Electric Co-op to record new summertime highs in electric-power demand as WEC members resorted to fans, dehumidifiers and air conditioning to keep comfortable, and their refrigerators and freezers worked harder to preserve their food. The Co-op hit its record summer peak usage on Tuesday evening, July 7, drawing 13.5 megawatts of power.

It was an unusual event, historically, for Washington Electric, though not a mystery because its cause was known. Nevertheless, the new summer peak triggered an inquiry by the Co-op's management to analyze where the largest draws came from, to see if WEC could

render assistance to members who were using a lot of power and to make sure the Co-op was prepared to serve them in future hot- or cold-weather events.

The analysis turned up something interesting: There's a new customer on the Co-op's lines, a state agency known as VSARA – the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration, housed in a sprawling, flat-roofed building behind the state police barracks on Route 2 in Middlesex.

Actually, the records center, and the state print shop and mail center that occupy the same building, are not new. They've been there

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### Washington Electric Cooperative

East Montpelier, VT 05651

### Inside

**Heading toward a rate increase.** It's been almost 11 years since WEC raised its rates, but eventually it had to happen. General Manager Avram Patt provides more details in his report on page 3.

**Capital Credits time again.** WEC will soon be issuing capital credit distributions to some Co-op members, and would like your help finding former members who could benefit. Page 4.

**Save money on heating fuels.** With winter approaching perhaps you should consider joining one of the area's fuel buyers clubs. See page 5.

**If only we had acted then.** In a column reprinted from his "Voice from the Vault" series, State Archivist Gregory Sanford reminds us how close we came to enacting visionary alternative-energy and conservation policies in the 1970s. Page 8.



Some called it a "microburst," some just called it a bad storm. Whichever it was, the July 27 event caused significant damage and power outages for WEC members in Brookfield. Page 2.



## Vermont Wind

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state criteria for erosion prevention and sediment control (EPSD).

The road is to be constructed in segments, starting at the entrance and proceeding to the sites on Granby Mountain and Libby Hill where the turbines will be erected. The work plan calls for each disturbed area to be stabilized before the next section of road construction begins; similarly, the EPSD measures – which include things like sedimentation ponds and traps, and silt fences to minimize erosion should storms occur during construction – must be fully in place before work on the next road section begins.

The opponents' appeal contended, in large part, that the planned procedures were inadequate to protect against erosion caused by storm-water runoff during construction. However, following a 10-day trial and review of extensive documentation, Environmental Court Judge Merideth Wright ruled that the appellants had failed to rebut the presumption that, since the agency had conferred its approval, the project was in compliance with ANR-mandated standards and practices.

The ruling also included small revisions to the ANR permit to ensure that the roadway construction would proceed with these safeguards in place, and that there would be official supervision with powers to halt the construction at any time.

"We are pleased with the ruling by

the Court, which upheld the DEC's decision to issue a storm water permit to the Sheffield Wind Project," said First Wind Vice President Matt Kearns. "First Wind will continue to move forward with the project, in accordance with the Vermont Public Service Board's conditions as detailed in the Certificate of Public Good granted for the project."

WEC General Manager Avram Patt said the Co-op also was pleased with the Environmental Court decision – which could be the final legal hurdle for the Sheffield project.

"We have backed this project because First Wind has worked to earn our faith that the company is thorough and responsible in its dealings, both with the people of Sheffield and with the environment itself," said Patt. "The court's decision confirms this. And furthermore, the residents of Sheffield voted in favor of the wind project being constructed in their town. So we view this as a good step forward."

WEC does not have an ownership stake in the project. The Co-op did, however, contribute almost \$900,000 from a government grant to help the company conduct feasibility and environmental impact studies, in exchange for which WEC will receive a discounted price for its power purchases.

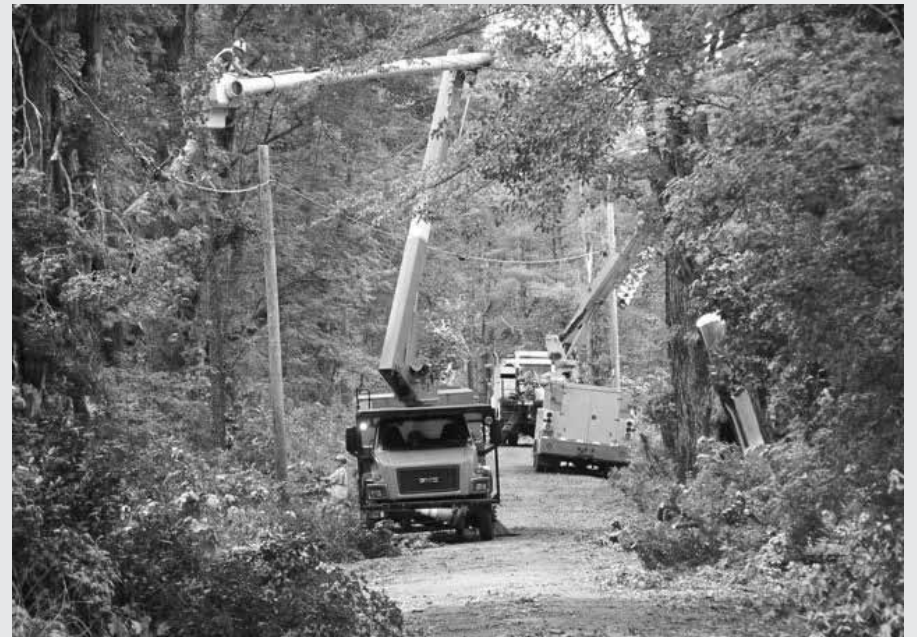
Once the project is operational, all of the power generated there will be sold to Vermont utilities – Washington Electric, the Vermont Electric Cooperative, and the Burlington Electric Department – rather than out of state.

## Wasn't That a Mighty Storm

On Wednesday, July 21, abrupt and powerful storms swept through many places in the Northeast. The storms wreaked havoc with electricity infrastructure in many places. In WEC's territory the worst damage was centered in the East Hill area of Brookfield. According to observers, several acres of trees there were sheared off at the 20-foot mark. Healthy trees outside of the Co-op's right-of way were broken and crashed down on a stretch of WEC power line, adjacent to the Chelsea Road, some three-quarters of a mile long. The entire section had to be rebuilt, including replacing around a dozen power poles. But the storm damage was so severe that WEC crews had to wait until highway workers had cleared a lane of roadway sufficient to allow the Co-op's trucks to pass through.



Washington Electric's crews toiled through Thursday and Friday, setting the new poles and anchors, then stringing wire – with the assistance of two crews from the Hardwick Electric Department. By Saturday afternoon power had been restored.



## Co-op Currents

*Co-op Currents* (Publication No. USPS 711 -210 and ISSN No. 0746-8784) is published monthly except February, May, August and November by Washington Electric Cooperative, Inc., Route 14, P.O. Box 8, East Montpelier, Vermont 05651. The cost of this publication is \$.44, which is included in the basic monthly charge to each member. Periodical postage rates paid at East Montpelier and at additional offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Co-op Currents*, P.O. Box 8, East Montpelier, Vermont 05651.



WEC is part of the alliance working to advance and support the principles of cooperatives in Vermont.

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*The Board of Directors' regularly scheduled meetings are on the last Wednesday of each month, in the evening. Members are welcome to attend. Members who wish to discuss a matter with the Board should contact the president through WEC's office. Meeting dates and times are subject to change. For information about times and/or agenda, or to receive a copy of the minutes of past meetings, contact Administrative Assistant Deborah Brown, 802-223-5245.*

## Meter Reading: New Look, Same Service

The meter readers who come to your property to get an accurate reading of your electric meter, making sure that your charges are correct, will now arrive with a new insignia on their vehicle doors. Washington Electric Cooperative has contracted with a company called Mountain Ltd. to provide the meter-reading service, a change that has already started.

Nothing else will be different for our members: Your meters will be read on the same schedule as they have been – and, importantly, the meter readers will be the same people. But rather than working as independent contractors, their services have been consolidated under Mountain Ltd.

**Keep Access Clear.** Particularly with winter coming soon, this is a good opportunity to remind WEC members to do the meter readers the courtesy of maintaining a clear path to your electric meter. Please make sure there are no obstructions, hostile dogs or other dangers. And don't let the snow pile up, as that makes their job much more difficult considering the large numbers of properties they must visit.

Look for the Mountain Ltd. sign on their vehicle doors, and help your Washington Electric meter readers serve you. 



## Manager's Report

# Plans Now Taking Shape For A WEC Rate Increase

## *New Rates Could Begin in 2011*

By Avram Patt

We are very proud that we have not had to raise rates at Washington Electric Cooperative in 10 years. However, we have been telling Co-op members for a while now that a rate increase would be necessary soon. For the past two years, Board President Barry Bernstein, Treasurer Don Douglas, and I have reported this in *Co-op Currents*, as well as at our annual meetings in May and our local community meetings in October. We now plan to file a rate increase request with the Public Service Board this fall, to take effect in 2011.

Your Board of Directors keeps a very close watch on our finances to make sure that we provide reliable services at the lowest cost possible. As the time when we would need to raise rates has approached, your board members have redoubled their focus on controlling costs, because they could see that the increase would need to be a pretty big one. At the end of July, the full board reviewed our financial forecast and discussed the major factors driving the need for more revenue. Although we still have a lot of number crunching to do, we want to let members know that it looks like the rate increase request may be in the 20-percent range.

In coming issues of this newsletter and at our community member meetings in October, we will be providing you with more information about the reasons why we need to increase rates. As we have already reported, the biggest drivers include:

- Relatively flat sales of electricity to members (less revenue than we had forecast a few years ago).
- A decline in the market value of the renewable energy certificates (RECs) from our Coventry landfill-gas plant. We sell these RECs in Massachusetts, and that extra revenue has played a big part in avoiding a rate increase up until now.
- Increases in a number of costs of operations that have built up over the last 10 years.

In October we will be providing more details, including discussing what we have been doing to control costs. Once we file our formal request, it will be reviewed by the Public Service Board and there will be opportunities for members to get information and to



comment in that process, as well.

No one likes to see bills go up. Although it will have been 11 years in January since WEC last increased its rates, a double-digit increase is still a big increase. How much this means in dollars will, of course, depend on how much electricity you typically use. While I'm

sure WEC members are very aware of what has happened to some of their other energy and household costs, it helps to put this all in perspective by using some numbers we can all relate to.

The graph below shows what has happened to some other familiar costs in the 10 years that WEC members have seen no increase in rates. Not shown are other costs that we all are aware have risen dramatically, such as health care, taxes, and insurance. Electric bills for ratepayers across the country have gone up on average by more than 40 percent. Fuel costs for transportation and home use have more than doubled, and even the cost of food items found in most WEC members' refrigerators has gone up considerably. I know most Co-op

members will appreciate that the rate increase we are facing will be below the rate of inflation during this time. It is actually a modest one compared to what has happened to electric bills elsewhere, and to other energy costs. But it is an increase, nonetheless.

### Progress Report on Rate Design Changes

In October 2009, Washington Electric Co-op filed a proposal with the Public Service Board that would make changes in our rate design. This is also a subject which we have reported on in *Co-op Currents* (a detailed description was included in the September 2009

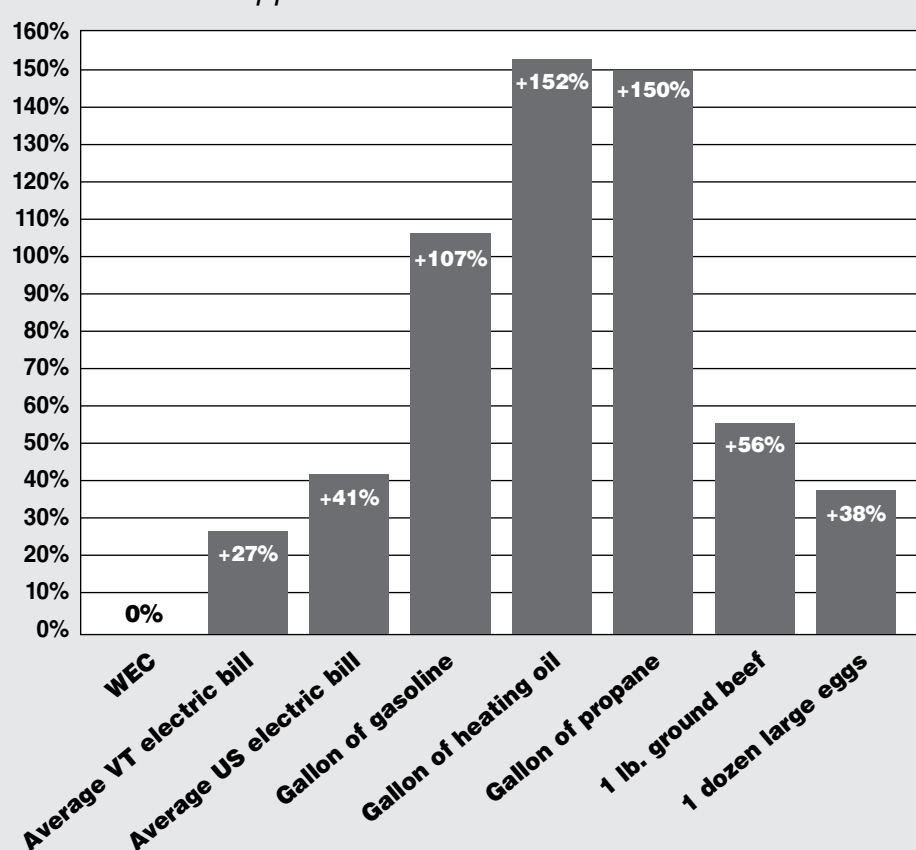
issue) and at member meetings. A table showing our present and proposed rate structures has also been posted on our website.

A rate design is not a rate increase. It is intended to be revenue neutral, and to collect no more or less in total dollars from our members than we collect in rates now. Utilities are

expected to conduct what is known as a cost-of-service study from time to time, to see if they are collecting funds equitably among the different rate classes (residential, small commercial, large power users, etc.) and among ratepayers within each class.

*Although we still have a lot of number crunching to do, it looks like the rate increase request may be in the 20-percent range.*

**Ten Years Without A Rate Increase**  
*What Happened To Other Costs From 2000-2010*



Sources: July 2010 data from U.S. Energy Information Agency and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics


Our cost-of-service study showed that we were over-collecting slightly from commercial and industrial members, as classes, and under-collecting slightly from the residential class, so adjustments are proposed that correct this. Another feature of our proposal is that it would continue the type of rate structure we have used for residential members for many years, whereby the first block of kilowatt hours you use each month is at a lower per-kWh rate, and usage beyond that block is at a higher rate. For the vast majority of our members, the change caused by the proposed rate design would be very modest, and probably not noticeable.

On August 20th the hearing officer in the docket (# 7575) issued a "proposal for decision," which recommends that the Public Service Board approve WEC's rate design proposal. The Public Service Board will be making a decision and issuing an order in this case very soon. The PSB could accept the hearing officer's recommendation, but it is also possible that the Board could reject or amend it. As I write this, we are awaiting that decision and cannot say whether or not a new rate design will be implemented. However, if the Public Service Board does approve our proposal, the new rate design will be implemented this fall, and a notice will be included as an insert with your bill. (If the new rate design is implemented this fall, then the overall rate increase I discussed earlier in this report will be based on this revised rate structure.)

### In Closing....

As a cooperative, we are committed to keeping you, our member/owners, openly and fully informed about changes that affect you. That is why we began talking about the eventual need for a rate increase more than two years ago, and will continue to do so as we finalize the numbers this fall.

While we are working hard to control our costs, we also know that Co-op members expect reliable and safe service in our rural territory, and that they care about where WEC gets its power from and how we operate in our communities. I expect that most members will understand the need for the change in rates, but I also know that for some, it will be an additional financial burden at an unwelcome time.

I am sure that some members will have questions, and we invite you to be in touch in that regard. I am committed, as are the members of your Board of Directors, to making sure your questions are answered. 

## WEC 2010 Equity Distribution Plan

# Co-op Seeks Former Members For Capital Credit Refunds

Washington Electric Cooperative is preparing to issue capital credit refund checks to current and former members, as authorized by WEC's Board of Directors. Under the 2010 Equity Distribution Plan, capital credits will be returned to eligible people who bought power from the consumer-owned electric utility during the years 1991 and 2009. Safeguarding the Co-op's financial stability, the Board of Directors has targeted a total amount of approximately \$273,000 for distributions in 2010, which is a slight reduction from the \$275,000 allocated in 2009.

Capital credits are returned to Co-op members (customers) for those years in which WEC's revenues exceed its operating expenses. Capital credits are a way of dividing those surplus revenues – called margins – among the member-owners. The amount of a member's refund is based on the size of the Co-op's margins in the years in question, and how much electricity that member purchased. Each co-op member has a capital credit account in his/her name, which is a bookkeeping entry managed on an annual basis by the Cooperative.

This year \$198,000 of the money earmarked under the 2010 Equity Distribution Plan will go to Co-op members from 1991. The remaining \$75,000 in the plan will address capital credits for 2009. WEC's margins in 2009 totaled \$654,169. (Frequently – as in the 2010 Equity Distribution Plan – the Co-op will retire only a portion of the capital credits from a given year. That does not mean that some members or former members are paid and others are not. Rather, each person who qualifies for an equity-distribution payment is paid proportionally.)

For former Co-op members, refunds of \$20 or more will be paid by check. Those checks will be issued once the Co-op has received a properly executed authorization form (contact WEC for details). Current members who are eligible for refunds based on their 1991 electric payments and/or their 2009 payments – depending whether or not they were Co-op members during both years – will receive their refund as a credit on their electric bill, regardless of the amount.

Former members (as well as current members) can choose to contribute their 2010 capital credit refund to the Community Fund administered by Washington Electric Cooperative. Funds contributed by members in 2010 will be combined with any remaining 2009 contributions and with the contributions from people who have elected to always donate their capital credit refunds to the WEC Community Fund. The Fund makes financial contributions to qualifying community causes, per WEC Policy 6. A year-end report on the 2010 Community Fund donations will be published in Co-op Currents early in 2011.

All individual retirements will be reduced by any uncollectible or delinquent amount(s) owed to the Cooperative, as permitted by the WEC Bylaws. No early retirements will be made to the estates of deceased members. No distribution will be made in 2010 for construction capital investments credited to patrons' accounts from contributions-in-aid-of construction for new power line extensions. No distribution will be made to patrons who purchased and paid for renewable energy credits (RECs) in 2009.

WEC may impose a \$10 annual service charge on all patronage (capital credit) accounts for years in which the credits have been retired and went unclaimed. This service charge can be applied to unclaimed accounts annually, until the balance in those accounts is \$0.

Earlier this summer WEC sent out Capital Credit Patronage Refund Authorizations to eligible former members, using the person's last-known address. Listed below are the names of people or accounts whose authorizations were returned as undeliverable. WEC is asking friends, acquaintances, and relatives of the people listed here to contact those potential recipients or their rightful heirs, and have the former member or beneficiary contact Washington Electric Cooperative directly at 802-223-5245, or toll-free at 1-800-932-5245.

WEC will issue this year's capital credit refunds in November 2010.

Ahearn III, Donald R.	Blair, Pamela	Carriveau, Michael A.	Davis, Sr., Clayton	Ferguson, Floyd	Griffin, Bridget R.	Hodgeman, Irma T.
Aldrich, Georgia	Blair, Richard N.	Carroll, Wayne M.	Delaney, George O.	Ferno, Herbert W.	Griffin, Dennis R.	Hodgkins, Sr., John R.
Allen, Charlotte A.	Blair, Robert J.	Casey, George	Demingware, Cora	Feuerstein, Robert G.	Griffin, Robert	Hodgson, Clara T.
American Tel & Tel Co	Blais, Raymond A.	Catlin, G. Peter	Depalo, Caroline	Finley, III, James T.	Griffith, James A.	Holder, Steven G.
Anderson, Lou Ann	Blau, William	Cavalier, Marie	Deuso, Lisa M. & Timothy	Fisher, Stephen C.	Grossman, Henry L.	Holmes, June E.
Anderson, Roland V.	Blay, Donna A.	Cavender, Peter J.	Deuso, Todd A.	Fisk, Carol P.	Grossman, Sallie E.	Holmstrom, Raymond &
Andrews, Kathleen	Blodgett, Arthur D.	Ceplikas, Alison P. (Estate	Deutsch, Irving	Flanders, Arlene	Grout, Clifton J.	Robert G. Lister
Appleton, Sylvia	Blow, Paul J.	of)	Devenger, Glen & Connie	Fletcher, Romaine	Grout, Katharine	Holtermann, Hildegard C.
Argent, Jr., Parker & Joyce	Boguzewski, Michael J. &	Chamberlin, Shirley	Deyo, Sr., Donald P.	Flinn, Edwin K.	GTE Vermont	Holtslag, Joseph P.
Elaine	Sharon	Champany, Sydney	Dickinson, C. F.	Fogg, Alan C.	GTE Vermont	Hood, Terrance
Arndt, Jr., Walter T.	Boisvert, Robert & Catherine	Chase, Andrew & Christine	Dilts, William C.	Fontaine, Marc	GTE Vermont	Hooper, Curtis J.
Arruda, Mary A.	Bolin, Oscar A.	Chase, Candis C.	Dolan, Robert E.	Foote, Peter A.	GTE Vermont	Horowitz, Michael F.
Asbridge, San & Marjorie	Bolton, William	Cher, Faye R.	Dolinsky, Ann M.	Fortin, Lawrence	GTE Vermont	Horst, John
Ashtek Properties, Inc.	Bonney, Cynthia & C. James	Cherington, Davis	Donahue, Timothy A.	Franklin, Martha	Guarcello, Giovanni	Hostetter, Karla
Asquith, Laura	Mathis	Chipman, Stanley J.	Dorr, Cynthia	Franks, Hope	Guillette, Robert	Houle, Roger E.
Atkins, Donald	Bosma, Mikel	Choen, David & Gertrude	Dorr, John L.	Freeman, Ronnie	Guy, Stuart	Howard, Jeffrey S.
Atkinson, Trevor R.	Bowell, Erlene M.	Cholewa, Raymond J.	Doubleday, Elsa (Estate of)	French, Jr., Bert		Howe, Mandeville
Atwood, Renee	Brickett, Vera (Estate of)	Claghorn, Carley	Dow, Wendall W.	French, Beverly		Howell, Gail A.
Audette, James R.	Bridges, Lucy L.	Clancy, David W.	Dowd, Blanche M.	French, Colleen		Howland, Susan (Estate of)
Austin, Norma O.	Briggs, David H.	Clark, Daniel H.	Downing, Audrey M. &	French, Steven		Huestis, Thomas G.
Ayer, Patrick	Briggs, Lori E. & Craig Clark	Clark, Harry	Albert F.	Fuller, Gail		Hughes, Leslie A.
	Brissette, Robert R. &	Clarke, Robert A.				Hulbert, Lloyd B.
	Suzanne E.	Clifton, Glenn S.	Drew, Marie A.			Hunka, Ronald G.
Bacon, John E.	Brock, Bernard J.	Clifton, Jr., Ernest F.	Driscoll, Peter	Gable, James	Hackmann, Jeff	Hance, Jr., Borden L.
Bailey, Steven	Brolin, Ruth	Coffin, Barry A.	Driscoll, Peter M.	Gahagen, Jacqueline	Haggett, Lori & Thomas W.	Hance, Jr., Borden L.
Bair, Samuel (Estate of)	Broner, Heidi	Colburn, Judith P.	Duchaine, Jr., Morris	Gahagen, Jacqueline	Hagopian, G.	Haney, Shirley
Baker, Joseph	Broner, Heidi	Cole, Susan	Ducharme, Andre	Gallucci, Anthony J.	Haile, Dennis R.	Hardy, Viola P. (Estate of)
Baker, Jr., Leonard J. & Ulla	Brooks, James D.	Collins, Charles M.	Duggan, Rita C.	Gardella, Sandy E.	Halsted, Louis D.	Harrington, Dean A.
Britt Baker	Brooks, Karen	Collins, Norbert (Estate of)	Dunklee, Norman	Garfield, April	Hamelin, Charles E.	Harrington, John
Barch, J. Ralph	Brown, H. Webb	Colombo, Robert	Dunn, Monique	Garneau, Traci	Hamelin, Charles E.	Harrington, Timothy J.
Barfield, Coy L.	Brown, James E.	Coltey, George J.	Dunster, Gary C.	Gauthier, Linda A.	Hance, Jr., Borden L.	Harris, Fredrick J.
Barnard, Leon	Brown, Philip F.	Conger, Ethel Z.	Dupont, Roxann	Gay, Cora C. (Estate of)	Hart, John R.	Hart, John R.
Barnett, Anna F.	Brown, Thomas E.	Converse, Joseph	Durocher, Sr., David L.	Gazaway, Sr., David L.	Hart, John R.	Hartnett, David J.
Barnett, Dorothy K.	Brown, Walter F.	Conway, Katherine	Dutcher, Marguerite	George, Christie	Hartnett, David J.	Hatch, Margaret
Barnocky, May A.	Brownell, William & Verna	Cooper, Jon J.	Dwinell, Joanna R.	Giantonio, Patrick	Hatch, Margaret	Hatch, Marguerite
Barral, Robert & Line P.	Buck, Arthur D.	Costa, Jr., William T.	Dworkin, David & Susan	Gilbert, Louise B.	Hatch, Ralph J.	Hathaway, Lynn M.
Barrett, Rita	Bunce, Harold S.	Coughlin, David A.		Gillander, Mae E.	Hawkins, Joanne D.	Hawthorne, Jarrett
Bartlett, Jr., Floyd	Burbo, Charles E.	Counter, Dorothy B.	Eastman, David B.	Gillespie, Robert S.	Hawthorne, Jarrett N.	Hayes, Kathleen
Bartlett, Robert N.	Burdick, Louise S.	Coutant, Florence	Edson, Theresa	Gilman, Charles A.	Hayes, Kathleen	Heald, Lester R.
Bash, John F.	Burgieliwicz, Seila	Coutu, David R.	Edwards, Jane M.	Gilroy, John	Heald, Lester R.	Heath, Donald
Bassett, Paula P.	Burnham, Ellen	Couture, Laurent P.	Eiriksson, Karl J. & Susan	Glidden, Benjamin T.	Heath, Jr., Parker	Heath, Richard (Estate of)
Bates, Bess	Bushey, Ralph L.	Couture, Matthew	Eldred, Allan	Glidden, Benjamin T.	Heath, Richard (Estate of)	Hebebrand, William E.
Beadle, Rubie A.	Buswell, Gordon & Caroline	Covey, Rebecca & Shawn	Eldridge, Laura	Goddard, Norman C.	Hebert, Agnes M.	Heffernan, Pamela
Beadsley, John D.	Butler, Daniel E.	Manwaring	Elkin, Milton	Godfroy, Brian	Goodrich, David S.	Helburn, Margaret
Beardsworth, Rhonda	Butler, Jr., Walter R.	Coxon, Cynthia C.	Emerson, Charles A.	Godin, Brenda H.	Gordon, II, Michael L.	Helgesen, Bernice F.
Beck, Florence L.	Buttitta, Mary E. & Mary S.	Craw, Robert W.	Emerson, Russell	Gonyaw, Myrtle	Goslant, Jr., Elmer L.	Henderson, Gary L.
Beckler, Minnie W.	Pierce	Crawford, John R.	Engborg, Evelyn R.	Grab, Robert & Eileen M.	Gove, Robert	Henry, Tom
Bedle, Julia M.	Button, John H.	Cressey, Earl (Estate of)	Eniti, Anita T.	Grady, Jeremiah	Grady, Jeremiah	Herman, Sylvia
Beier, Deborah J.	Buxton, William	Crowther, Irene M.	Enriken, Jane S.	Graves, Leo F.	Graves, Leo F.	Herrick, Jr., James E.
Bell, Richard		Cullen, Joan M.	Estes, Brian	Graves, Virginia H.	Graves, Virginia H.	Herriott, Cynthia
Bellemare, Susan A.	Callahan, Timothy E.	Czajkowski, Frances T.	Evans, Marie M.	Gray, James R.	Gray, James R.	Hetzler, Gregory J.
Bellemare, Susan A.	Canfield, William J.		Everett, Sue A.	Gray, Joan	Gray, Joan	Hierons, Robert & Janis
Bennett, Patrick L. & Jill B.	Cano, Victor	Dailey & Bryant		Greaves, Pamela	Greaves, Pamela	Hill, William G.
Bent, Robert	Cantiin, Timothy & Gail	Daino, Robert	Fadden, Linda	Green Mtn. Chocolate	Green Mtn. Chocolate	Hilliiker, Leonard
Benton, Michael A. & David	Cantwell, Richard J.	Danforth, Ike	Fagant, Carol L.	Greene, Roland C.	Greene, Roland C.	Hiner, James D. &
Bergeron, Laurie A.	Caplan, Karen & Patrick	DAntonio, Louis A. & Carol	Fairbrother, Lawrence W.	(Estate of)	(Estate of)	Patricia G.
Bernier, Judy	McCulloch	A.	Farland, Eugene W.			
Berry, Alan R.	Carey, Brett	Davidson, Mark & Jeanne	Farnham, Conrad			
Beyerle, Mary J. & George	Carignan, James A. & Doris	G.	Farnsworth, Gary F.			
Bicknell, Bernice	G.	Davis, Charles	Farr, Sr., Gary M.			
Bielecki, Mark	Carlson, Katherine M.	Davis, Lorena	Fenner, Ernest			
Billado, Robert W. & Regina	Carrig, Blaise & Leslie	Davis, Ronald F.	Fenner, Sandra			



Kindestin, William R.  
Kinney, Wayne  
Kjier, Christine  
Klein, David  
Knapp, Leo D.  
Knowles, Florence S.  
Knowlton, Deborah J.  
Kohl, Arlene W.  
Kokoszka, Lawrence A.  
Kotman, Barbara  
Kramer, Lawrence R.  
Kreisz, Shirley G.

Labadie, Patricia  
Labrie, Hughes  
Lagasse, Donald (Estate of)  
Lakatos, Peter  
Lamery, Linda A.  
Lamp, Michael A. & Jael L.  
Lance, John E.  
Landino, Henry A.  
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Langlois, Robert  
Langone, Robert J.  
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Laperle, Alan  
Larivee, Annie (Estate of)  
Larkin, Edwin  
Larow, Gary  
Lash, Jonathan  
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Lefebvre, Kevin S.  
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Lemieux, Teddi  
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Lewis, Brian L. & Stephanie  
A. Schmitz  
Lezer, Doris E.  
Lindberg, Steven  
Locke, Norman  
Long, Eugene M.  
Lord, Charles D.  
Lord, Marian B.  
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Lowell, Neil  
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Lynn, John C.  
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Barbara Towne

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MacLaren, Shirley  
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MacNaughton, Gillian  
Magnus, Patricia  
Magoon, Sr., Edgar S.  
Magoon, Stanton R.  
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Marsh, Douglas A. &  
Paula J.  
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Massey, Edward  
Matthew, Thomas M.  
Maxfield, Terry  
May, Tanya & John Frazier  
Mayhew, Wanda  
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Mayo, Jr., David  
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McBride, Christine  
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McFarland, Stephen  
McFarland, Stephen J.  
McGill, Charles H. &  
Shirley H.  
McGrath, John R.  
McGrew, Sloan

McLaughlin, Harold  
McRae, Glenn  
Meau, A. G. & James A.  
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Meeks, Charles  
Meier, C. Padma  
Menard, Anita L.  
Menard, Katherine A.  
Menard, M. Ellen  
Menard, Robert W.  
Merchant, Melvyn  
Merritt, Barry  
Messer, Richard K.  
Metayer, Christopher  
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Miller, Frederic (Estate of)  
Miller, Grace  
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Miller, Lawrence J.  
Misiak, Ronald A. & Karen  
Mitchell, Diane  
Montgomery, Robert E.  
Moody, Susan L.  
Moore, Mavis  
Moore, Pearl F.  
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Morgan, Ruth M.  
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Morrison, Norman  
Morrissette, Michael P. &  
Jody A.  
Morse, Elliott D.  
Morse, Lucille L.  
Moses, Jessie  
Mosher, Gregory  
Moulton, Carolyn E.  
Mowery, Mary I.  
Moz, Jane M.  
Mudge, George C.  
Mugford, Don G.  
Mullen, Jeremiah S. (Estate  
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Munger, Ellen  
Murphy, James P.  
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Myers, Howard B.  
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Nadeau, Gregory P.  
Neader, Rhoda  
Nevens, Virginia I  
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Newman, Patricia  
Newman, Ric & Lisa  
Newton, Grant  
Nickerson, Benj  
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Noel, Lorenzo W.  
Noll, John C.  
Norman, Melissa A.  
Northrup, Jack  
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Oliver, Carol S.  
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Oneill, Myriam Strang  
O'Rear, Jay  
Ormsby, Deborah  
Orner, Frank J.  
Otten, Richard W.  
Ouellette, Arthur  
Overstrom, Brenda

Pacini, Cecile A.  
Page, Howard E. (Dr.)  
Paige, June S.  
Palmer, Scott T.  
Papineau, Fonda  
Paquin, Heather L.  
Paradise, Stephen  
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Parent, Jr., Edward A.  
Parker, Edith O. (Estate of)  
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Parker, Thelma F.  
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Paul, Armethia  
Paul, Kathleen L.  
Payne, Douglas  
Pearson, Robert A.  
Peatman, Linda C.  
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Pegnam, Martin L.  
Perdue, Charles G.  
Perkins, Timothy  
Perreault, Lawrence  
Perry, III, Courtland L.  
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Persons, D. W. (Dr.)  
Persons, Russell  
Peterson, Susan M.  
Pettibone, Mary  
Pierce, Ben  
Pierce, Donald W.  
Pierce, Linda R.  
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Pike, Francis H.  
Pike Hill Auto Serv Inc.  
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Plante, Renee  
Poor, Ronald F.  
Pope, Arthur  
Potvin, Laura  
Powell, Barbara  
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Powers, Wilfred H.  
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Protas, Alan  
Proulx, Annie  
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Pytte, Anders

Randall, Russell  
Rapp, Dorrie  
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Raynor, Raymond A.  
Rector, Russell H. & Mary  
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Rice, Joseph C.  
Richard, Morris (Estate of)  
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Richardson, Elizabeth  
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Richmond, William H.  
Ricker, Julie  
Rider, John  
Riley, Thomas  
Ringlee, Sarah  
Ripley, Beverly A.  
Riviere, Michael S.  
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Robinson, Marilyn  
Rochette, Elizabeth A.  
Rogers, Sr., Mark E.  
Rollins, Philip R.  
Romlein, Donald W.  
Rooney, Robert L.  
Rose, Robert C.  
Rossi, Alba  
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Rouelle, Alfred (Estate of)  
Rouse, Norbert C.  
Roux, Ellen L.  
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Roy, David  
Ruiz, Constance  
Rummell, Ralph E.  
Russell, Alex  
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Rutledge, Roy  
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Saldi, Robert F.  
Sales, Suzanne  
Salls, Wilfreda J.  
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Saltimbocca, N. V.  
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Sayles, Jr., Thomas D.  
Schafrick, Michael  
Schibuk, Norman  
Schiffert, George A.  
Schneider, Eleanor H.  
Schwartz, Robert & Alice B.  
Scott, Gary  
Selph, Sharon K. & Ben H.  
Sense, E. (Dr.)  
Settien, Cecilia L.  
Shangraw, Warren A.  
Shanley, Timothy W.  
Shannon, Diane L.  
Shapiro, Joshindh  
Shatney, Harry  
Shebel, William A.  
Shepard, Michael D.  
Shor, Betty  
Shor, Betty  
Sicely, Brent  
Sicely, Grace M.  
Simmons Cable TV of Barre  
Simmons, John T.  
Simoes, Nancy H., &  
Stephen W.  
Simpson, Danita  
Sirois, Michael

Skyview Casino, Inc  
Slater, Jaciline R.  
Slayton, Ina  
Slopnick, Patricia H.  
Smith, Anthony L.  
Smith, David C.  
Smith, Eric  
Smith, Glenn  
Smith, Jane E.  
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Spaulding, Robert W.  
Spencer, Carolyn  
Spencer, Fred P.  
Spencer, Lawrence A.  
Spooner, Forrest, (Estate of)  
Spooner, Ramon L.  
Squires, Jeffrey  
St. Cyr, Marcia  
St. Germain, Norman R.  
Staples, Charlotte E.  
Starr, William H. (Estate of)  
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Stephens, Alan T.  
Sterzinger, George J.  
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Stoeckel, Ronald  
Stone, Harvey A.  
Strayhorn, Alvin  
Stridsberg, Joseph G.  
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Stryker, Jon  
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Sullivan, Mark  
Sullivan, Robert E.  
Surviva, Joyal  
Sweetser, Clyde  
Swenson, Susan E.  
Swift, Frederick W.  
Symons, Helen  
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Szeg, Jr., Judy  
Szulc, Alfred V.

Tapley, Wilfred A.  
Taylor, Sr. Carlyle  
Taylor, Theophilus (Estate  
of)  
Tellier, Raymond R.  
Terry, Carlton P.  
Tescher, Donald B. &  
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Thibeault, Georgette  
Thivierge, Roger J.  
Thomas, Judson S.  
Thompson, Helen  
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Towne, Carol  
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Townsend, Zada  
Tripp, Yvonne L.  
Trombly, Joanne  
True, Gerald  
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Turner, Elizabeth M.

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Upham, Gregory & Penny  
Utt, Timothy

Vail, Braedon S.  
Vail, Edith  
Valler, Amy C. & Michael  
Vasquez, Claire  
Vazquez, Siro (Dr.)  
Verchereau, Michelle  
Vermette, John A.  
Vermont Sports Apparel,  
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Vigeant, Michael  
Vitt, James M. & Dianne  
Volpini, Frank  
Vreeland, Kurt A.  
Vt. Institute for Self Reliance

Wade, James M.  
Walbridge, Gerald L.  
Walbridge, Kathy  
Wallace, Marlene B.  
Ward, Marion  
Watson, Christopher A.  
Webster, Thomas D. &  
Lucinda  
Weed, Jennifer  
Weiss, Stephen L.  
Welch, Randy  
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Wentworth, Roderick S.  
Whalen, Thomas  
Wheeler, Helen (Estate of)  
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Whidden, Kim  
Whitaker, Jody T.  
White, Edward  
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White, Sherry

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Wild, David  
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Willey, Douglas  
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Willis, Kendall  
Wilson, Cindy  
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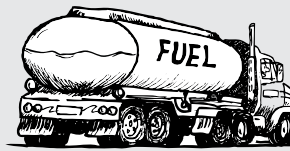
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Wright, Jeffrey F.  
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Wright, Robert  
  
Yates, Don  
Yeager, Peter & Jodi  
Young, J. Peter  
Young, Jr., Edward  
Young, Lisa  
Young, Roland A.  
  
Zirblis, Suzannah C.

## Fuel Buyers Groups: Saving Money on Winter Fuels *But the Time to Act is Now*

With winter again glowering at us from around the corner, Co-op members who use fuel oil, propane, and/or kerosene for heating and household appliances might want to consider joining one of the fuel buyers groups in our area. Sometimes, in past years, fuel buyers groups have finished compiling memberships and fuel orders by the end of August, but this year there is still time for people to contact the groups and place their orders – although we recommend that you act quickly if you wish to do so.

The local fuel buyers groups active in WEC's service area are:

- **The Ruth Clark Fuel Buyers Group** ([www.RuthClarkFuelGroup.com](http://www.RuthClarkFuelGroup.com); 802-476-0066);
- **VHeat** ([www.vsecu.com](http://www.vsecu.com); 802/800-371-5162).



Buyers groups have been around for several years in central Vermont. Think of buyers groups as networks of property owners, managers, and tenants

who combine their individual fuel needs so they can go to fuel dealers as a single, large account. With their eye on volume sales, dealers will often agree to sell fuel at a reduced per-gallon charge.

WEC urges its members to plan now for winter, evaluating both groups' offers and making a choice to lock in price protection for the upcoming season.

Here's a look at the Ruth Clark and VHeat organizations, and what they are planning for the winter.

**Ruth Clark Fuel Buyers Group.** The suppliers for this well-established buyers group include AmeriGas, Conti, Pyrofax/F.G. White, and Suburban. The pricing for fuel oil, kerosene, and propane varies by vendor and with volume. The Ruth Clark group also offers off-road diesel (also known as low sulfur diesel), which is used for tractors and other farm equipment, and for equipment in the construction industry. The group charges a \$35 membership fee.

**VHeat:** VHeat is sponsored by VSECU, formerly known as the Vermont State Employees Credit Union. VHeat contracts for both oil and propane through Irving Oil. Participants are charged a membership fee, which is based on their planned purchase volume. That means you should calculate your expected fuel usage ahead of time. The VHeat program charges a 5-cents-per-gallon fee, with a minimum fee per customer of \$25.

WEC urges its members to consider purchasing winter fuel through a fuel buyers group, as it will probably reduce your fuel costs. Of course, another way to reduce fuel and energy costs – for home heating and hot water, as well as for lighting and all other purposes – is to increase the energy efficiency of your house or building. For advice in this realm, including costs savings available through state, federal, and local (for example, credit union) programs, contact Washington Electric Cooperative and ask to speak with Products & Services Director Bill Powell.



## State Archives

continued from page 1

since 1989. What's new, as of June 10, is the archives – Vermont's official collection of irreplaceable documents and records that trace the state's history in fascinating depth and detail. Those documents are making their way over, a little at a time, from the Redstone Building in Montpelier; upon arrival they find a new home – three vaults (two new, and one refurbished) with state-of-the-art climate control to preserve the documents, and fire-suppression technology to safeguard them against disaster.

Thus, the higher demand on WEC's power from this little corner of the Co-op's territory in Middlesex.

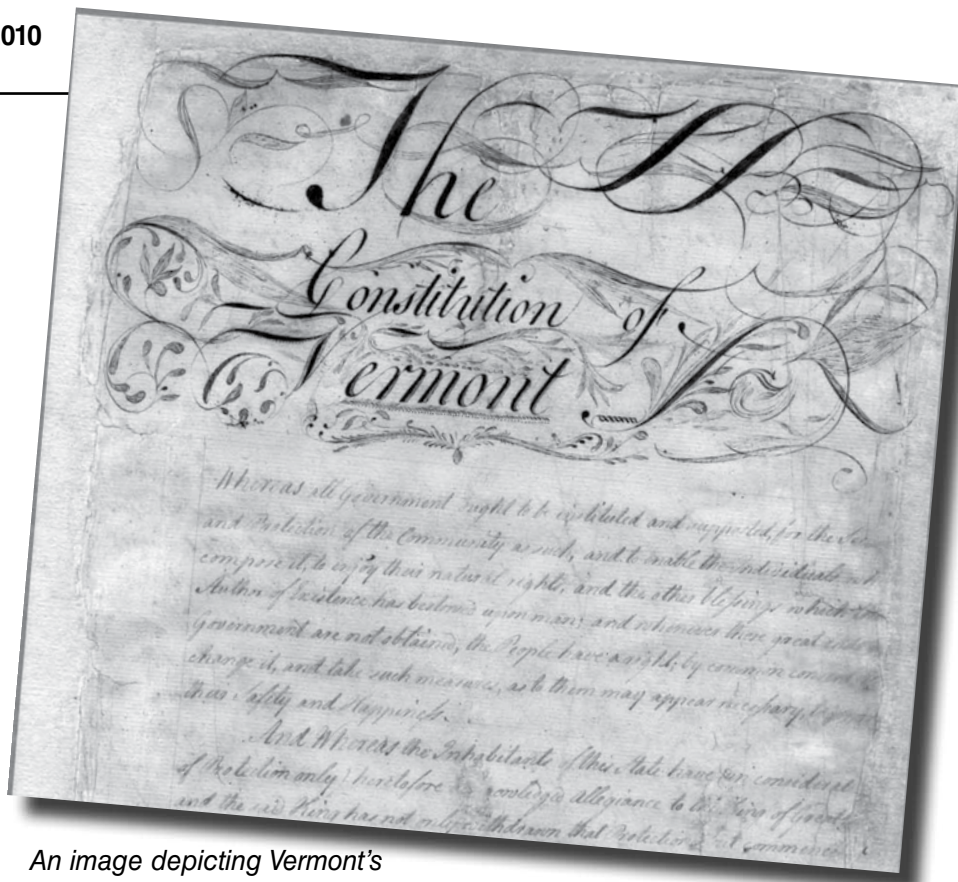
"It's something of an anomaly for us to have territory on Route 2," says Washington Electric General Manager Avram Patt. "Homes, farms, and businesses on Route 2 in central Vermont are generally served by Green Mountain Power while WEC's territory is confined to the more rural areas, away from major state arteries. It just happens that we have a very short stretch of Route 2 in our territory, and that some of our largest users are located there: the records center, the print shop, the state police barracks, the state highway garage, the Fairpoint maintenance facility, and now the state archives, which will soon include Vermont's Constitution and other valuable historical documents. It's a responsibility the Co-op takes quite seriously."

It turns out that the state archivist, Gregory Sanford, is a Washington Electric Co-op member from Marshfield. Sanford reads *Co-op Currents* and applies an archivist's mind and historical perspective to the topics addressed in its pages.

"There are issues that we as a society are always discussing and debating," he says. "Education, the environment, and the proper role of legislators in our system... For a long time energy has been one of them."

The state archives are not merely old documents and records (now taking newer forms as the world operates in a digital environment); Sanford also sees them as a resource that legislators, advocates, and others could use to advance policy decisions beyond where we have gotten in similar discussions before. Subjects like school consolidation, tax-equalization for education, concerns about decommissioning Vermont Yankee, and state support of alternative-energy development – hot topics in Montpelier in 2010 – have been debated and in some cases tried before. The documents in Sanford's care frequently reveal that Vermonters decades ago – even a century and more ago – were arguing about them and voicing the same urgencies and anxieties we hear today.

With his staff, Sanford tends the archival documents – selecting them from the constant tide of new state records, cataloguing them, preserving them, making them accessible – out of a love of history, as well as his limitless curiosity about how Vermonters in the past arrived at the decisions that



An image depicting Vermont's original 1777 Constitution. The Constitution will now be housed at the new state archives facility in Middlesex.

cumulatively created the Vermont we inhabit now.

More than that, he offers the state archives as an alternative to what he describes as "government by mood ring."

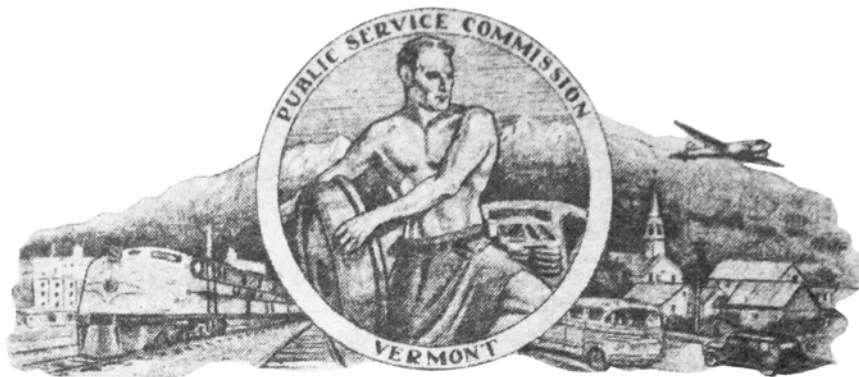
"If all I do is create an environment in which we can have a more-informed public dialogue, I will have done well," he says.

It just so happens that he does this important work in WEC territory, in a

new location. "It was a compromise," he says, "but it was above the flood zone."

Yes, but it was *below* the Redstone parking lot, and the runoff tended to flow toward the basement where the archives were housed. "We had an incident of water penetrating the vault," Sanford recalls, "which also raised the threat of mold." Furthermore, the space was cramped – room for 1,500 cubic feet of records, which was by far the smallest state-archival

*The documents in Sanford's care frequently reveal that Vermonters decades ago – even a century and more ago – were arguing about many of the same issues, and voicing the same urgencies and anxieties, we hear today.*



Included in the state archives are town maps of rural electric power lines, each bearing this striking insignia of the Public Service Commission.

modern facility unusually dependent on electric power to preserve the irreplaceable record of how Vermont got to be what it is today.

### The journey

It was no mean feat for Sanford to get the archives out of the basement of the Pavilion Office Building in Montpelier, where they were housed when he took the archivist job in 1982, to the far-safer, far-larger facility in Middlesex. In fact, it took him nearly 30 years.

"In the Pavilion, the vault was below the flood line," he says. "I wanted out. It was a disaster waiting to happen."

He convinced the powers that be (the Vermont State Archives reside, bureaucratically, within the Secretary of State's office) to move the collection to the Redstone Building a half-mile from downtown Montpelier in 1984.

Sanford was not delighted with the

facility in the country. And the climate-control mechanisms deteriorated over the years, causing fluctuations in temperature and relative humidity, conditions that are critical to preserving aged documents.

"We were trying to oversee the most valuable records and documents of 200 years of Vermont history," says Sanford, "and we spent more time managing the space than the archives."

Sanford was relentless in pushing for construction of an adequate, technologically current facility. But even after he convinced the state to earmark the money and plan for the project it took years to come to fruition. Carolyn Antone – VSARA Administrative Services Coordinator – puts the timeframe in perspective.

"Governor Douglas was the secretary of state when they started this project," she says.

The new facility has three climate-

controlled storage vaults: two archive vaults for permanent storage of the most significant materials, and a high-rack storage area. In total they provide space for 26,000 cubic feet of archival storage. Climate-control systems are supposed to keep the temperature at 65 degrees Fahrenheit, and the relative humidity at 40 percent. The system is monitored by computers in Montpelier, which also monitor conditions at a number of other state buildings, including Vermont's new forensics laboratory in Waterbury, the Caledonia County Courthouse, and the Emery Hebbard office building in Newport. Being a new system, the bugs are still being worked out, and climate fluctuations have occurred. Antone can view the climate records since June on her computer screen.

"It provides us a profile, so we know we're getting the climate controls we ordered when we built this building," she says, adding (without intending a pun), "It's pretty cool."

Technology abounds. In addition to the climate controls, the vaults are equipped with an air-filtration system that eliminates particles and contaminants, and there's fire-suppression equipment originally designed, Antone says, for nuclear submarines. "The vaults and the high-rack storage area have a mist system; if there's a triggering event the system releases a mist that eventually extinguishes [the combustion] without soaking the contents."

A review published by the Heritage Protection Group gives the following, rather startling, information: "The main vault that will house the most valuable items, including the State Constitution, is enclosed in a four-hour rated assembly that is designed to withstand the complete collapse of the surrounding structure."

The expansion also included construction of a 2,000-square-foot reference room. Its users are often people doing genealogical research, and otherwise researching Vermont's, and their own, past.

"There's electric power for security, for running pumps and lights (sunlight is a no-no for document protection; so is fluorescent lighting), and climate control and air filtration and mechanical operations," Sanford summarizes. "It is indeed an energy consumer."

But he points out that the building was well-constructed, with efficiency and conservation in mind, and many of the protective systems "are passive, until something happens." Plus, visitors drive past a large solar collector near the parking lot.

### Pondering "archives"

What are "archives," and why should we save them?

As the state accumulates an ever-growing mountain of documents and records (which, ironically, it's VSARA's mission, in part, to destroy) the question of what should be set aside and kept is an important one. And it's a question always under review and re-examination.

Sanford's basic answer is this: "Archive records are institutional records that have a continuing value."



He gives an example. "We have original town-survey records that are 233 years old." They are historical, he says, but their *continuing* value lies in our need to know precisely where those boundaries are. Archivists have an additional, related objective: to record evidence of transactions between government bodies, from government to citizens, and from citizens to their government.

But what of records that are less-obviously archival, within the definition of providing continual value? Some historical records potentially provide value by informing ongoing public debate. "From 1890 to 1932 there was an equalization formula for education," says Sanford, "a statewide property tax, which was a longtime, primary means of taxation. This sheds

new light on arguments that a statewide tax does violence to the customs and beliefs of our ancestors."

Determining which things, among newer records, are likely to be of continual value as Vermont makes its way into the future is VSARA's charge. The legislative debate about civil unions, which dramatically altered Vermont society, was largely preserved. Sanford points out that documents pertaining to the rural electric movement are also in the archives, as are records of Vermont's struggle to change its energy-usage practices during the OPEC oil embargo of the 1970s (a concern that evaporated when the embargo went away).

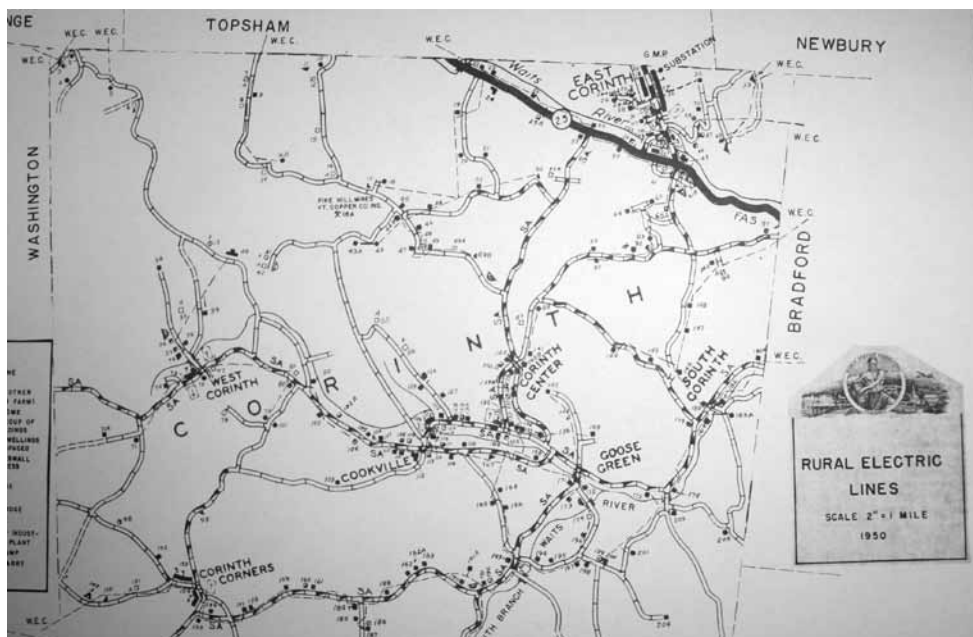
Sanford's 14-member staff includes four records analysts and an archivist in addition to administrators and clerks.

They examine records from all state agencies, aiming to preserve those that meet the archival criteria while making sure that VSARA does not become the state's unofficial, cramped attic. They also wrestle with ever-evolving media (paper, to tape, to compact disc, to digital) – how to sort through it, manage it, dispose of it, preserve it. As a rule of thumb, Sanford says, about 2 percent to 5 percent of the records generated by state government are deemed archival.

At the moment, the archive vaults are strikingly bare – certainly not without content, but the vaults are larger than the immediate need, and the move from Redstone has a ways to go. The original 1777 Vermont

Constitution – the Hope Diamond of Sanford's collection – has yet to make the journey. Sanford anticipates that the move will be complete sometime this fall.

And from here on out it will be the joint responsibility of state engineers, the Middlesex Fire Department, and others, including Washington Electric Co-op, to see that the Vermont State Archives get what they need to preserve our past and unfolding history. That could become an increasingly demanding task in an era of climate change – another subject ripe for documentation in the vast new vaults, by the way.



The "Rural Electric Lines" map for Chelsea, from 1950, which depicts Washington Electric Cooperative's service to the town 11 years after the Co-op's founding.

### Take Advantage of CVCAC Weatherization Workshops

In 2008 and 2009, Central Vermont Community Action Council took its "Button-Up Vermont" program around the state, presenting workshops in more than 100 communities to educate people about how homes lose heat, and effective solutions for those problems.

This fall CVCAC is presenting a follow-up "Weatherization Skillsshops," to help people build on their Button-Up knowledge. Weatherization Skillsshops teach further hands-on skills in home weatherization. Visit the Council's weatherization website ([www.weatherizationskillshop.com/diy](http://www.weatherizationskillshop.com/diy)) to learn more about the program and the DIY (Do It Yourself) Home Energy Efficiency Pilot Program. Participation in the Pilot Program also incorporates financial and other incentives to help you accomplish your weatherization goals.

Check online for the location of the Weatherization Skillsshop nearest you. Two locations may be most convenient for WEC members:

- Sept. 25**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; River Bend Career and Technical Center, Bradford.
- Sept. 27**, 6 p.m.-9 p.m., and
- Sept. 29**, 6 p.m.- 9 p.m., both at the Barre Technical Center, Barre.

For more information, contact CVCAC at 1-888-514-2151 or by e-mailing [info@weatherizationskillshop.com](mailto:info@weatherizationskillshop.com).

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## VOICE FROM THE VAULT

## Running On Empty

**Editor's Note:** State Archivist Gregory Sanford has a keen interest and an intimate knowledge of the policy debates and decisions that have molded Vermont during the course of its 233 years as a republic and a state. He records his thoughts regularly in a column titled "Voice from the Vault," published on the Secretary of State's website, <http://vermont-archives.org/publications/voice/>. We found this column, from July/August 2007, particularly relevant to the discussions the state and nation are having today about conservation and alternative energy – even though it deals with events nearly 40 years ago.

by Gregory Sanford, State Archivist

**W**e should create a loan program and tax credits to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes and to require new construction to meet energy standards. We should explore alternative, renewable energy sources from solar to wind to wood to hydro. We should use methane from livestock manure to generate power. We should commit to conservation from energy efficient appliances to carpooling. States should be allowed to set fuel mileage targets for cars, coupled with tax incentives for buying fuel efficient automobiles. UVM should make a stronger commitment to energy research. We should be careful of committing to coal and not reduce clean air requirements. We should look at nuclear power only within the context of public safety and solutions to nuclear waste.

Thirty years can dim our collective memory. The above ideas, which sound familiar to us today, were proposed in the mid-1970s as part of Vermont's response to the 1973 oil embargo launched by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). The resulting energy crisis opened up a collective examination of sustainable and renewable energy that anticipated current energy concerns (though climate change had not yet been added as a major component within that discussion).

That earlier energy crisis cut across all levels of society. On November 11, 1973, Human Resources Commissioner Paul Philbrook wrote Governor Thomas Salmon, "It seems apparent that we are going to be one of the first departments in State government to feel the brunt of the results of the fuel crisis. It takes little...to imagine that very early this winter we are going to have folks coming to us and saying, "We are almost out of fuel...[and] we

do not have cash"...[We] ought to try to find a way to keep the fuel prices from impacting most immediately and most severely on low-income people." (Governor Salmon Papers, Box BBB, File 517). At the same time the tourism and recreation businesses, facing a Sunday prohibition on gas sales and possible rationing, plead with the governor to mitigate the impact of high costs and limited supplies of energy on travel, snowmaking, snowmobiling, and other activities upon which their economic lives depended. Other economic interests from service stations (which had already experienced a 20% decline before the embargo) to utility companies sought state support.

Former Governor Philip Hoff, who Governor Salmon appointed chair of a Commission on Electrical Energy, saw an even deeper problem beneath the immediate crisis. On May 4, 1973, he wrote Governor Salmon that, "The primary problem in terms of electrical energy...deals with the problem of growth...A 10.3 annual increase or growth factor means we are doubling our need for electrical energy in approximately seven years. This is intolerable. Unfortunately, from a straight business economic point of view, it may be virtually impossible for the utility industry to operate without a continuing growth factor. As a matter of fact, the whole business economy of this nation...is built upon growth and there is not a single economist...who would dare predict what would happen to the economy...if that growth cycle were interrupted." (Salmon Papers, Box CCC, File 521).

Governor Hoff was not the only Vermonter who questioned our basic economic assumptions because of the crisis. Representative Steve McLeod of Barre, among others, felt that Vermont state government should no longer support tourism and marketing since tourism was a significant consumer of energy and should be self-sustaining rather than subsidized (Box ZZ, Folder 513). Secretary Martin Johnson of the Agency of Environmental Conservation bemoaned decisions made in the 1960s, such as a commitment to four lane highways and motels that encouraged car-based tourism. He also expressed ire with "a fourth rate College of Engineering at the University" that frustrated Vermont's efforts to attract a solar energy research institute (Box CCC, Folder 527).

Secretary Johnson was not the only Vermonter disgruntled with UVM's engineering department. Jeff McDonald of Vergennes wrote the


governor that the search for alternative, renewable energy had overlooked an obvious source that could also bolster Vermont agriculture: "Vermont has 3,312 farms (1974) and 196,678 cows, plus countless other livestock... [A] cow produces 96 lbs of manure a day, or roughly 18 tons per year. This manure, in a natural process known as anaerobic digestion, will produce 38,000 cubic feet of methane gas a year... [which] can be used for heating and running machinery." Mr. McDonald went on to explain how he and a group of friends had developed such a digester but his request for a state grant lost out to a proposal to study the practicality of digesters from UVM's Engineering Department. The department ultimately produced a report saying such digesters were impracticable. Governor Salmon sent Gilbert Parker, Director of Market Development, to visit Mr. McDonald. He reported that the digester worked and could not only produce \$5,370 worth of gas a year, but also increased the value of manure as fertilizer by \$4,790 a year. Subtracting annual maintenance and depreciation costs, Mr. Parker calculated that the digester provided a net profit of \$2,000 a year (Box K, File 92).

Many of us recall the more obvious reactions to the energy crisis: lower temperatures in public buildings, lower speed limits on the interstate, and the Sunday prohibition on gas sales. Governor Salmon's records reveal a government and a society that, in the face of crisis, was willing to work together not only to explore new

ideas, but also to revisit basic social understandings.

The range of exploration is astounding: carpooling for migrant workers in Vermont's orchards; making Vermont food self-sufficient; development of local energy sources such as a wood pellet plant in Wallingford; and a host of other ideas. This was indeed a dialogue. The Vermont Chamber of Commerce weighed in on Governor Salmon's State Energy Plan; businesses offered alternatives to ideas they feared carried competitive disadvantages; public power advocates made counter proposals to utility plans, etc.

Governor Salmon ended his 1975 inaugural with a quote from Walter Lippman capturing a similar social essence that emerged immediately prior to World War II: "We shall turn from the soft vices in which a civilization decays. We shall return to the stern virtues by which a civilization is made. We shall do this because at long last, we know that we must, because finally we begin to see that the hard way is the only enduring way." For a brief moment, it appeared we would not shrink from the hard way. And then fuel prices fell.

A final reflection: archival management is sometimes represented by the Roman god Janus who had two faces, one turned to the past, the other to the future. As the Salmon records suggest it is not often the course of wisdom to leave the past behind when trying to peer into the future. 



## Find the Co-op in the Photo Below!

The intersection of Route 2 and Route 14 in East Montpelier is undergoing reconstruction, and much of the work is taking place in front of the Co-op's office building. The goal, according to a spokesperson for the project, is to redesign the Y-shaped intersection, where there is a comparatively high rate of automobile accidents. When work is completed Route 14, coming from the north, will connect with Route 2 at a more-conventional 90-degree angle. This will set the Co-op's building farther back from the road, and necessitate landscaping after the project is finished. People visiting the Co-op to pay their electric bills (or for any other reason) will still find convenient parking by the building. The road-construction project should be finished by late fall.

