



Holiday hours

All of us at Vera Water and Power wish you and your family the best for the holidays and the new year. Our office will be closed for Christmas and New Year's.

Christmas: Dec. 24 and 25

New Year's: Jan. 1

If you have trouble with your service or would like to speak with someone about your account, please call us any time at 888-774-8272.

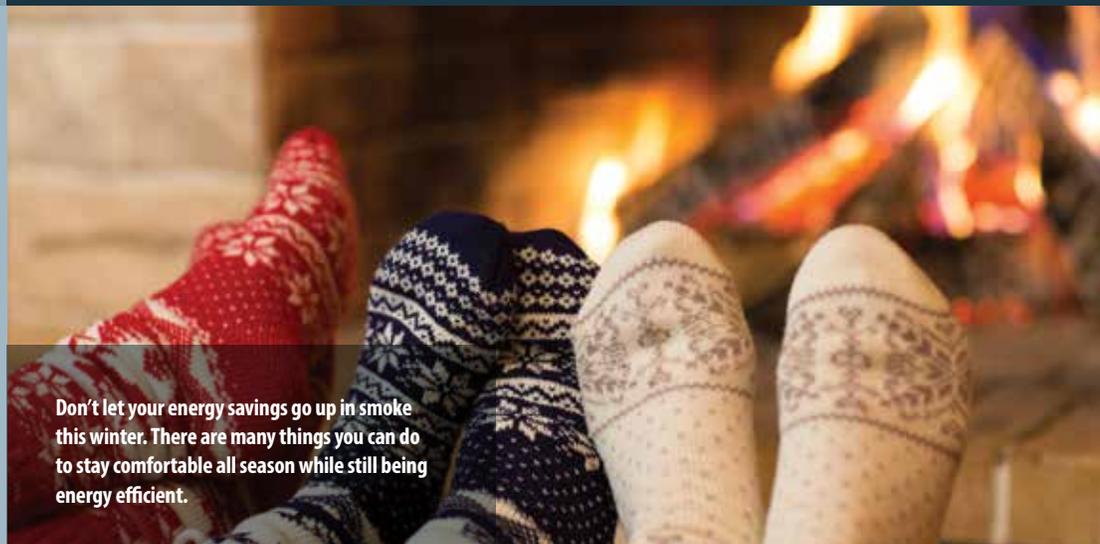
We post all our holiday hours on our webpage, Facebook and Twitter.

Board of Directors meetings

We are a not-for-profit, publicly-owned utility. Our board of directors—made up of Vera Water and Power customers—meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the district office. **Meeting dates and times are posted on our website and our Facebook page.**

The December board meeting has been rescheduled to Wednesday, Dec. 5, 2018, at 6:30 p.m. to accommodate the holidays.

You are always welcome to attend. The meetings are open to the public.



Don't let your energy savings go up in smoke this winter. There are many things you can do to stay comfortable all season while still being energy efficient.

Ready your home for winter weather

5 ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIPS TO SAVE AND STAY COZY THIS WINTER

Home heating makes up a significant portion of your energy bill. Taking energy-efficient steps now could have a substantial payback over time.

1. Make a habit of cleaning your furnace annually especially if you have pets. This can reduce the risk of fire and make your furnace run more efficiently.
2. Replace your furnace filter regularly during the winter. Replacing a dirty filter will increase airflow and make your home more energy efficient.
3. If it's time to replace the furnace, look for one with an Energy Star rating. Energy Star branded furnaces usually exceed federal standards.

4. Check your home for air leaks. On a windy day, hold a lit incense stick or a smoke pen next to where a leak may be. If the smoke stream travels horizontally, you found an air leak. We posted a DIY tutorial on plugging leaks at verawaterandpower.com.
5. When you are away from home or sleeping, turning the thermostat down a few degrees in cold weather months can help reduce your monthly utility bill. For an even more hassle-free option, install a programmable thermostat that can automatically make the adjustments for you.

You can find more ways to save at verawaterandpower.com.

The kindness of neighbors

Whether giving or receiving energy assistance, it is sure to warm your heart

It's that time of year when colder weather means higher utility bills. For some, a bit of help could go a long way.

Spokane Valley Partners provides one-time energy assistance to those who need a little support during times of crisis.

You never know when it might hit—a job loss, a sudden illness, an unexpected hardship.



Give to Spokane Valley Partners with your Vera payment.

It's times like this when we can count on our neighbors. Consider giving what you can to create a neighborhood safety net. On your monthly Vera statement, fill in the blank for the total of your donation and add that amount with your payment.

HOLIDAY LIGHTING SAFETY

Use only holiday lights that have been safety tested and have the **UL label**.

Before using, **check each strand** for broken sockets, frayed cords, or faulty plugs.

Don't string together more than three standard-sized incandescent sets of lights or you could **overload the circuit**.

Don't throw lights over tree branches that are **near power lines** and service connections.

Always unplug lights before leaving your home or going to bed: a timer can help with this.

Protect your water meter from freezing this winter

You can help keep your water service from freezing by covering your meter with a foam insulation blanket. The blankets—which are simple to install—are free and available at our office. Please don't use home insulation because those products soak up water, freeze, and defeat the insulating purpose.

Now is an excellent time to inspect your meter vault cover. You must keep your meter vault covered. If the cover is missing, broken or cracked, call us for help. We have replacements. With the proper installation of the blanket you will trap warmer air from the ground and minimize exposure to cold air.



The proper installation of a foam insulation blanket is on top of the meter.

This traps warmer air from the ground and minimizes exposure to cold air.

Pick up your free insulation blanket at the office Mondays through Fridays from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

A cord is not a chew toy

The most common type of electrical injury for pets is electrocution from chewing on an electrical cord.



Pet-proof your home by covering or enclosing electrical cords and taking steps to prevent other electrical hazards.

Although any pet can chew on a cord, puppies are the most likely culprit. Pups are busy, and they may gnaw on an electrical cord without anyone realizing it. **If you see burns in or around your pet's mouth, singed hair or whiskers around the mouth, or notice shortness of breath or other respiratory issues, seek immediate medical attention for your pet.**

Why is my bill higher than usual?

There are a number of reasons your bill could be higher than usual. **December and August are typically the months with the highest bills because of the extreme weather.** Those are months when furnaces and air conditioning are most heavily used. This increases energy use substantially and that can come as a surprise since the bill arrives after the energy has been used.

If you are a water customer, excess water is only billed once a year. The excess water charge shows up on your fall or winter bill usually in September, October or November. This can make your bill higher than usual.

Another thing that can affect your total bill includes the number of days between the times your meter is read. Our goal is to read the meter every 30 days, but this can vary depending on weekends and holidays. If the number of days is longer than usual, your bill could reflect this.

If you have questions about your bill, please give us a call or contact us at billing@verawaterandpower.com.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT



I wanted to thank everyone who helped with our sprinkler-irrigation system peak demand issue. Enough of you were able to shift your start times to 2 a.m. that we made it through the

pumping season without the need for any curtailments.

Water system capacity for 2020

We've started the design and acquisition process to add capacity to our water system. We expect to have that completed for the 2020 irrigation season. This means we will still need you to continue to shift your irrigation start times to 2 a.m. next summer. If we have the same level of participation as we had this year, we are confident we can make it through the next irrigation season together. We appreciate everyone working to make that happen.

Energy assistance

With cooler nights and shorter days, power bills will rise. Even if you don't use electric heat, increased lighting drives up power bills this time of year. If a larger bill is going to be difficult to pay, please call us before the account becomes past due. There may be several options available to you including energy assistance. Our staff members are experts at helping you access these resources.

Working around the district

Our fourth substation, located at Valleyway and Sullivan, is currently offline for extensive improvements. This will complete the upgrade of all of our substations to modern and reliable protection systems that protect the millions of dollars we have invested in substation transformers and their support equipment. These upgrades included the installation of our next generation metering system. While this system still uses the power lines to communicate, it is significantly more reliable, faster and provides for two-way communication. This metering system will provide flexibility for customer billing and meter reading dates. Plus, it will give you more data about your energy use. Please watch for future information. We will need volunteers to test the new metering system. If you would like to participate, please email us at info@verawaterandpower.com.

Again, thank you for allowing us to provide your service. We are proud to do so.

Kevin Wells
General Manager