



POWER UP *with* VCE!

## Valley Clean Energy Newsletter, Fall 2022

### Here's what's happening:

More Savings on EVs? Yes, Please!

VCE-OhmConnect Partnership

Another Flex Alert? You Can Make a Difference!

More Local Power Contracts Coming

Yolo County Opts Up to UltraGreen!

Mitch Sears is Officially Named Executive Officer

Confused about Heat Pumps?

Energy Efficiency Tips for Renters



## More Savings on EVs? Yes, Please!

You've positively run out of excuses now—it's time to get serious about getting rid of that polluting combustion engine car and buying the new electric vehicle you've been eyeing. Why now? Because VCE just added another layer of savings on top of the state and federal incentives that are available. Awesome!

Take our advice: first go to our website page to check out the [models available](#)—you might be surprised at how many choices you have these days. Then go to our [VCE EV Rebates](#) page and follow our EV Roadmap to see how you can stack your rebate savings. Applying for the rebate is simple, and you don't have to be income-qualified to apply.

**Ready, set, Zoom!**



## VCE-OhmConnect Partnership

Have you connected with your OhmConnect benefits yet? We're not kidding about this one—it's a great program that's designed to help us all painlessly manage our response to high demand on the electric grid. If you don't like the threat of blackouts, you'll want in on this.

Signing up for the program may get you a sign-on bonus, and alerts will be sent to you when energy is most expensive. If you can save electricity during this time period, you can be rewarded with gift cards or cash, and savings on your electricity bill.

**Millions of California customers are participating now.  
You might want to **check it out**, too.**

# FLEX ALERT



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Prevent a power outage today.



## Another Flex Alert? You Can Make a Difference!

This summer was hot. Really, really hot. And the demand for electricity for cooling homes—in addition to all the other things we need electricity for—reached astronomical levels during the past couple of months. When that happens, the California Independent System Operator (or CAISO) issues a Flex Alert to warn us.

**CAISO oversees the operation of the electricity grid in the state, so when they issue a Flex Alert, they're telling us it's time for us to take action to help ourselves.** When all of us turn the temperature up a couple of degrees on our A/C, and delay using high energy appliances during those high demand times, we're able to avoid blackouts that occur when demand exceeds supply. It's that simple.

We all did beautifully during the weeks in September when Flex Alerts were issued. We avoided the worst, by our willingness to put ourselves out just a little bit. Let's keep up that great work as all of our utilities move ahead to secure additional battery reserves and more renewables to keep the lights on.

## VCE is amping up local renewable energy sources!



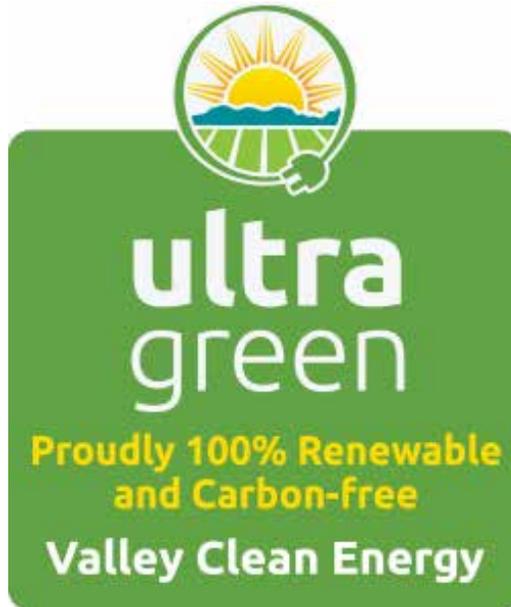
### More Local Power Contracts Coming

Our mission here at VCE is to work hard for a clean energy future. We do that by offering our customers cleaner energy at competitive prices, while also developing beneficial customer programs. (Pssst: our new [EV Rebate Program](#) is one of them!)

We're constantly sourcing clean power contracts that are close to home, ensuring that local jobs are created to produce the power our customers need. Since our launch in 2018, VCE has sourced an impressive 243 megawatts in new renewables. We've also invested in 128 megawatts of Battery Energy Storage Systems (or BESS), and 7 megawatts of Demand Response.

Most of these sources are close to home in Yolo and the surrounding counties; some are down in southern California. We've recently contracted—in a joint resource project with other CCAs—for additional geothermal energy in Nevada, just over the California border. Those projects are scheduled to come online in the summer of 2024.

VCE's renewables will be increasing dramatically when all of these projects come online. Check our website for [updates](#) on these and future commitments to make your electricity even cleaner.



## Yolo County Opts up to UltraGreen!

**It's a fact: Community Choice Energy programs like VCE are doing more than anything else to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across the state.** With clear and dramatic results like that, it's no surprise that Yolo County's Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to opt up to 100% renewable, carbon-free UltraGreen service for all of their municipal electric accounts—all accounts that are not already powered by existing solar or renewable projects.

This decision, funded by the 2023-24 County budget, brings the county even closer to the stated goals of its 2011 Climate Action Plan.

"Moving toward 100% renewable, 100% carbon-free electricity for County facilities is a powerful step we can take to fight climate change," said Yolo County Board of Supervisors Chair, Angel Barajas.

**With this move, the County has become VCE's largest UltraGreen customer.**



## **Mitch Sears is Officially Named Executive Officer**

Mitch Sears is a familiar face around Valley Clean Energy. He's been the agency's Interim General Manager since its launch in 2018, while he was on loan from the City of Davis. We're thrilled to announce that the VCE Board of Directors recently voted to appoint Sears to the position of Executive Officer on a full-time, official basis.

After 26 years working with the City of Davis in roles that dealt with sustainability issues and climate action, Sears has proven himself the ideal leader for VCE.

*"His leadership and vision have carried the agency through many complexities, and have positioned VCE well as we step into the future,"* said VCE Board Chair Jesse Loren of City of Winters.

**We couldn't agree more. Welcome home, Mitch.**

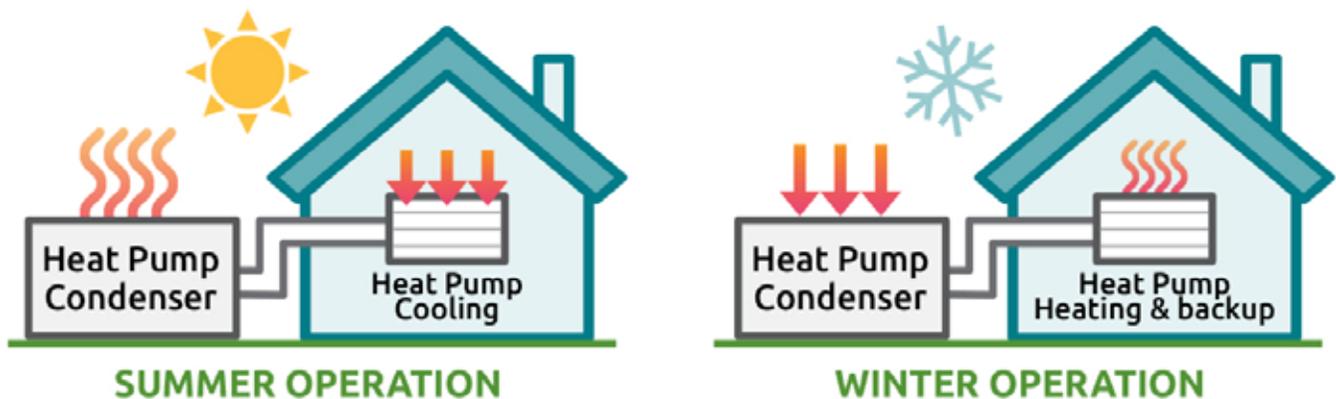
## Confused About Heat Pumps?

Lots of people have questions about heat pumps. They seem to be part old-fashioned good sense, and part straightforward engineering—with a sprinkling of magic. In reality, a heat pump is a relatively simple electric device that contains a refrigerant that changes from a liquid to a gaseous state in order to work.

In cooler months, a heat pump pulls heat from the cold outdoor air and transfers it indoors, and in warmer months, it pulls heat out of the indoor air to cool your home. Maybe that seems a little magical, but it works—and it doesn't have to burn an ounce of fossil fuel. Heat pumps work to heat and cool your home effectively, efficiently, and in an environmentally friendly way. And there's never been a better time to invest in one, with the Home Efficiency Rebates that are available.

Brush up on the [Home Comfort Upgrades](#) you might be ready for on our website. And while you're at it, look into the additional rebates that may be available through the recently passed [Inflation Reduction Act](#). Those can put some real cash back in your pocket.

### HOW HEAT PUMPS WORK





## Energy Efficiency Tips for Renters

We're always talking about energy efficiency measures, and about how to decide where you can get the biggest bang for your buck on home efficiency upgrades. But what if you don't own your home?

Renters can do plenty to maximize energy efficiency in their rental homes and apartments, too. Let's look at some of the more reasonably priced options, as cooler months are coming. You'll make up for the investment in lower utility bills before you know it.

1. If you have control of your thermostat, **turn it down** while you sleep.
2. **Weatherstrip** your windows to minimize heat loss and drafts.
3. Use **cold water** to wash your clothes.
4. If you feel cool air coming through electrical outlets, **plug them** with inexpensive plastic gaskets.
5. **Replace** light bulbs with LEDs to use 85% less energy than incandescent bulbs.
6. **Beware of Phantom Power**—that's the energy your devices consume when they're plugged in but not being used. Phone chargers, power strips and toasters all suck up energy when not in use!
7. Long, hot showers use a lot of water, and a lot of energy to heat that water. A **low flow showerhead** can cut your hot water use in half.
8. **Don't block air registers and vents**—that makes your heater work harder than it needs to.
9. **Add an area rug** to that cold tile or wood floor to warm the place up quickly.
10. **Stop double-washing your dishes**. Scrape off the scraps and let your dishwasher do what it does best.