

Utilities

Telephone Service

Reports by Verizon (formerly General Telephone Company of Wisconsin) indicate the number of telephone customers has increased greatly since 1972 and especially during recent years. The number of business customers grew over 50 percent (53%) between 1990 and 1996, while the number of residential customers grew by 23% in the same period.

**Table 8-1
Business & Residential Telephone Customers**

	Dec. 1980			Dec. 1990			Dec. 1995			Dec. 2000			Dec. 2001			Dec. 2002		
	Bus.	Res.	Total	Bus.	Res.	Total	Bus.	Res.	Total	Bus.	Res.	Total	Bus.	Res.	Total	Bus.	Res.	Total
Verizon	761	3775	4536	1269	5122	6391	1732	6156	7888	2461	7150	9611	2512	7146	9658	2586	7143	9729
Eagle River	122	1203	1325	203	1673	1876	339	1979	2318	521	2431	2952	539	2451	2990	594	2480	3074
Lac du Flambeau	123	704	827	178	900	1078	233	1050	1283	288	1244	1532	273	1247	1520	297	1235	1532
Phelps	73	599	672	120	789	909	171	936	1107	157	1097	1254	152	1131	1283	156	1145	1301
Sayner	126	777	903	176	1136	1312	257	1381	1638	285	1695	1980	273	1705	1978	266	1706	1972
Minocqua	882	4075	4957	1583	5428	7011	2267	6380	8647	3108	7590	10698	3156	7694	10850	3189	7750	10939
Three Lakes	156	1153	1309	240	1486	1726	310	1728	2038	346	1937	22	342	1934	2276	345	1935	2280
Verizon Totals	2243	12286	14529	3769	16534	20303	5309	19610	24919	7166	23144	30310	2243	12286	14529	3769	16534	20303
Century Tel																		
Boulder Junction							399	1292	1691				385	1302	1687	399	1330	1729
Manitowish Waters							287	1122	1409				285	1136	1421	270	1127	1397
Presque Isle							109	1358	1467				107	1371	1478	105	1376	1481
Century Tel Totals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	795	3772	4567	777	3809	4586	774	3833	4607
Total Telephone Customers	2243	12286	14529	3769	16534	20303	5309	19610	24919	7961	26916	34877	3020	16095	19115	4543	20367	24910

SOURCE: GTE Telephone, Verizon; Public Service Commission Website data for Verizon & CenturyTel

Gas & Electric Service

According to reports from the Wisconsin Public Service Corporation, growth continues in both electric and gas customers as shown in the following chart. It is interesting to note that while 1977 figures for residential electric customers indicated that 2,508 (48.7%) were year round and 2,638 (51.3%) were seasonal; 1987 figures showed 3,323 customers (56%) were considered year round and 2,626 customers (44%) were seasonal, and 1996 figures indicated that 61% of the customers were year round and 39% were seasonal customers. The figures from 1991 through 1996 show a slow, steady trend toward more year-round service needs.

YEAR	NUMBER OF ELECTRIC CUSTOMERS	NUMBER OF GAS CUSTOMERS	TOTAL CUSTOMERS	PERCENT OF YEAR-ROUND CUSTOMERS	PERCENT OF SEASONAL CUSTOMERS
1/70	4,222	na	na	na	na
12/75	5,202	1,196	6,398	na	na
12/80	6,018	1,345	7,363	na	na
12/85	6,423	1,430	7,853	na	na
12/90	6,988	1,704	8,692	na	na
12/95	7,838	2,808	10,646	60%	40%
12/96	8,037	3,088	11,125	61%	39%
12/97	8,236	3,877	12,113	60%	40%
12/98	8,383	4,304	12,687	60%	40%
12/99	8,530	4,525	13,055	63%	37%
12/00	8,650	4,717	13,367	64%	36%
12/01	8,909	4,956	13,865	64%	36%
12/02	8,969	5,003	13,972	64%	36%

*in addition 72 electric customers were transferred to the Minocqua district in 1979

SOURCE: 1990 Vilas County Economic Indicator Report; Wisconsin Public Service Corporation

The WE Energies Company (formerly Wisconsin Electric Power), with a Headwaters District Office at Land O'Lakes, services portions of Northeastern Vilas County. The following chart also shows their relatively steady growth in electric customers in Vilas County:

Table 8-3	
WE Energies (formerly Wisconsin Electric Power) Company	
Electric Customers	
(As of December of Year Indicated)	
YEAR	NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS
1971	1,535
1975	1,908
1980	2,415
1985	3,106
1990	3,736
1995	4,248
1996	4,337
1997	4,456
1998	4,559
1999	4,644
2000	4,766
2001	4,787 (est)
2002	4,793 (est)

SOURCE: 1990 Vilas County Economic Indicator Report; Wisconsin Electric Power Company

One point of interest noted by WE Energies appears to support the trend of a northward migration of people. Their highest growth activity in the years 1991-1996 was found to be in Gogebic County, Michigan (located in Watersmeet Township which abuts Vilas County separated by state-line/county-line). Gogebic is more rural lake county that is less developed than Vilas County.

Renewable Energy

As with other areas of the country, Vilas County relies heavily on imported fuels. Renewable energy sources such as wood burning, hydroelectric power, biogas (from the state's landfills and wastewater treatment plants), solar systems and wind also employed. While wood burning is the primary renewable energy source used by homes and industry, hydroelectric power currently ranks second. There are about 72 utility and 50 privately owned hydroelectric sites throughout the state.

Table 8-4 Hydroelectric Generation, 2001			
Location	Number of Sites	Generating Capacity (kW)	Generation (MWh)
Vilas	1	800	1,942
Wisconsin	71	452,700	1,897,025

Source: Wisconsin Energy Statistics, 2002

Communications

Vilas County is served by a variety of media systems.

Newspapers

Vilas County News Review (Eagle River) - a weekly publication
 Lakeland Times (Minocqua) - a bi-weekly publication
 Rhinelander Daily News (Rhinelander) - a daily publication
 Ironwood Daily Globe (Ironwood, Michigan) - a daily publication
 For Your Information Northwoods (Presque Isle) -a bi-weekly publication
 Lac du Flambeau News (Lac du Flambeau) - a monthly tribal publication

Television Stations

WJFW-Channel 12 (NBC) - Rhinelander
 WSAW-Channel 7 & 57 (CBS) - Wausau
 WAOW-Channel 9 (ABC) - Wausau
 WYOW-Channel 34 (ABC) - Wausau
 WLEF-Channel 36 (PBS) - Park Falls

Radio Stations

WERL - 950 AM - Eagle River
 WHDG - 97.5 FM - Rhinelander
 WHTD - 93.7 FM - Rhinelander
 WJJQ - 92.5 FM/810 AM - Tomahawk
 WMQA - 96 FM/1570 AM - Minocqua
 WOBT - 1240 AM - Rhinelander
 WRJO - 94.5 FM - Eagle River
 WRHN - 100.1 FM - Rhinelander
 WXPR - 91.7 Public Radio - Rhinelander

Public Libraries. Public libraries are located in the following Vilas County communities:

Boulder Junction
 Eagle River
 Lac du Flambeau
 Land O'Lakes
 Manitowish Waters
 Phelps
 Plum Lake (Sayner)
 Presque Isle
 Winchester