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Electronews

The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc.

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CEO MESSAGE

Let's Save Together

As a member of Victory Electric, you know how to make smart energy choices that help you save money. But did you know that when you use electricity can be just as important as how much you use?

Throughout the day, energy use fluctuates based on consumer demand. Typically, most households use larger amounts of electricity in the morning when most people are getting ready for their day, and in the evenings when people return from work as they cook dinner, wash clothes, and watch television. These times when people in our community are using more electricity, often referred to “peak” hours, are from 3 to 6 p.m. during the summer. The cost for Victory Electric to provide power is higher during these times because of the additional demand for electricity and the market price for energy.

By shifting some of your energy use to hours when demand is lower, also known

as off-peak hours, you can save money on your energy bills. Here are a few easy ways you can shift energy use to off-peak hours:

- ▶ Adjust your thermostat; during summer months, raise the thermostat a few degrees during peak hours.
- ▶ Use fans. Moving the air with fans will provide a cooling affect when you're indoors.
- ▶ Wash full loads of clothes in cold water during off-peak hours.
- ▶ Run the dishwasher right before you go to bed, or air-dry dishes by opening the dishwasher instead of using the heated dry cycle.



Shane Laws

Continued on page 12D ▶

ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

An easy way to save energy is to seal air leaks and holes where plumbing pipes run through walls in your home. You can also check wall-mounted cabinets for plumbing holes or air gaps in the back. Fill any holes or gaps with spray foam. Wear protective gloves and use a damp rag for cleanup.

SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV



Celebrating Our COMMUNITY

Victory and CoBank award 2022 Sharing Success Grants

The Victory Electric Cooperative, Assn., Inc., is pleased to announce both the **AMERICAN LEGION OF COPELAND** and **FORD COUNTY FAIR ASSOCIATION OF FORD COUNTY** as recipients of the 2022 Victory Electric/CoBank Sharing Success Grant!

The annual Sharing Success grant opportunity, capped at \$20,000, is made possible by Victory Electric's governing board of trustees, in partnership with CoBank — a cooperative bank that provides loans, leases, financing, and other financial services to agribusinesses and rural power, water and communications providers. CoBank's \$4 million Sharing Success fund matches charitable contributions made by its cooperative members to local nonprofits in their individual communities.

The matching grant program is designed to celebrate the vital role cooperatives play in individual communities across the country. CoBank states that collaborating with their customers to support worthy causes they care about is a great way for them to make a positive difference and

fulfill its mission of service to rural America. Since its inception in 2012, the program has generated more than \$66 million in combined donations, primarily in rural areas across the country.

Copeland American Legion

This year's first grant recipient, the Copeland American Legion, is a veteran-based national organization that provides services and resources to veterans, their families and communities. The Copeland American Legion Post No. 369 is the local post, and only post, for Gray County veterans and their families.

"Our mission is to enhance the well-being of American Veterans, their families, our military, and our community by our devotion to mutual helpfulness," said Calvin Koehn, Post No. 369 Commander. "With this grant, we would be able to continue to fulfill our mission and it would allow us to be fully committed to providing services to our local veterans without worrying about our building falling apart and leaving them and us with nowhere to go."

The legion plans to upgrade their building using the granted funds. The legion membership believes repairs will be a huge benefit to the community, which uses the building for family dinners, reunions, graduation and wedding parties, land sales,



Copeland American Legion members accept the 2022 Victory Electric and CoBank Sharing Success grant.



Victory presented the Ford County Fair Association with a Sharing Success grant to help repair and modernize the fair facilities.

business meetings and funeral dinners just to name a few.

One of the most important users of the building is the American Red Cross which conducts blood drives, sponsored by the Copeland United Methodist Church, every 56 days.

The Copeland Public Library also holds their Summer Reading Programs in the building as well since they do not have the space to host all the children who participate.

By updating the building, the legion is restoring a key asset to the Copeland community.

Ford County Fair Association

Our second grant recipient, the Ford County Fair Association, is a not-for-profit organization with the sole purpose of maintaining and supporting the Ford County Fairgrounds. These grounds are available for community use, in addition to providing the facilities for the annual Ford County Fair. The association is managed by 12 volunteer board members who conduct the maintenance, planning and general upkeep of the fairgrounds and buildings throughout the year.

The association has numerous projects planned for the next few years to improve and upgrade the facilities. The purpose of the 2022 grant funds

will be the repair and modernization of the facility floor.

This grant and other community fundraising attempts are vital to continue the operation and improvement of the fairgrounds for everyone in the community to use and enjoy.

“Many times, when the community members think of the fairgrounds, they think of only the Ford County Fair,” said Jeremy Woydziak, Ford County Fairgrounds board member. “While this is indeed a large part of what our organization assists with, we help with much more than that at the fairgrounds. Nearly every weekend, as well as multiple weekdays and evenings, the fairgrounds are utilized for meetings, events, trainings, weddings, auctions, quinceaneras, animal shows, 4-H projects, emergency animal storage and much more.”

“Thanks to our board of trustees and CoBank, the Sharing Success grant has enabled Victory Electric to make an impact to give back to the communities we serve,” said Shane Laws, Victory Electric CEO.

If you or are involved with or know of a nonprofit organization that could benefit from the CoBank Sharing Success grant, please visit victoryelectric.net or contact askcommunications@victoryelectric.net for more information about the 2023 grant application.

In the last decade, Victory Electric has awarded \$145,000 in Sharing Success grants to local non-profits.

2012 – The Bucklin Library received the grant to help fund construction of its new library building.

2013 – Mission of Mercy was awarded grant funding for its free dental clinic in Dodge City.

2014 – The Stauth Memorial Museum in Montezuma applied the grant toward the “Suits in Space” Smithsonian exhibit.

2015 – The Manna House, our local shelter and food bank, was awarded the grant to repair and improve their facilities.

2016 – The Depot Theater upgraded its theater sound system.

2017 – The Ford Country Historical Society made repairs to preserve the history in the Home of Stone — Mueller Schmidt House.

2018 – The Ford County Sheriff’s Office received funding for security upgrades.

2019 – The Ingalls Recreation Commission funded repairs and upgrades to the Ingalls community swimming pool.

2020 – The grant was awarded to New Chance for technological upgrades, and to Salvation Army of Dodge City to aide in purchasing a new headquarters building.

2021 – The Crisis Center used the Sharing Success grant funds to complete the bathroom renovation and purchase 16 waterproof mattress covers, linens and playground equipment.

Imel Receives Service Award

JIM IMEL, District 4 trustee, received a service recognition award from Sunflower Electric Power Corporation in Recognition of Outstanding Dedication and Service as a Sunflower board member for the past nine years.



Victory Board Member Jim Imel with his 9-year-service award.

Let's Save Together *Continued from page 12A* ▶

▶ Turn off lights and electronics when not in use. This is a great daily habit to adopt during peak and off-peak hours.

There are many ways to save energy and money by making a few minor adjustments to your daily routine.

Most of us use electricity, either directly or indirectly, at almost all times. Because electricity is so abundant and available with the simple flip of a switch, it's easy to take it for granted. According to the Energy Information Agency (EIA), the typical U.S. household now uses more air conditioning, appliances, and consumer electronics than ever before. The average home also contains 10 or more internet-connected devices. Considering everything that is powered by electricity, it's no wonder we occasionally wince at our monthly bill. But keep in mind, it's no longer just the "light bill."

Electricity powers our quality of life. From the infrastructure of your home (appliances, water heater, and HVAC system) to charging your smartphones, computers, TV and Wi-Fi router, your

energy bill covers so much more than lighting.

Members can log into their SmartHub account at victoryelectric.smarthub.coop and click on "My Usage" to view and compare electricity use per day. Members can view usage on a monthly, daily, and even hourly basis, as well as for different billing periods. This is a great way to evaluate the effectiveness of any of the recommended power saving initiatives you've implemented at your home or business. In addition, you can compare your monthly usage to your monthly payments without having to go through files looking for your past monthly statements.

We care about you, the members we serve, and understand that electricity is more than a commodity — it's a necessity. That's why Victory Electric will continue working hard to power your life, reliably and affordably. Contact us if you have questions about your energy bill or for additional energy-saving tips.

THANKS! SHANE

Dodge City Welcomes Bat Masterson Statue

A bit of the old West came alive again on the lawn of the Home of Stone on June 13.

Mendez Construction, Ford County Bridge Department and Victory Electric came together to install Dodge City's newest bronze statue of Bat Masterson.

Masterson's portrait was meticulously created by Charlie and Carson Norton. The statue joins the ranks of Wyatt Earp, Doc Holliday and Marshall Dillon whose statues are placed in downtown Dodge City.

The Ford County Historical Society commissioned the project in 2018. After some delay due to the pandemic, the statue was unveiled on June 19.



Victory Electric, Ford County Bridge Department and Mendez Construction installed a new bronze statue of Bat Masterson in front of the Home of Stone.



The location was chosen because Masterson was included on the guest list for the Mueller's housewarming party in October 1881, when the home's construction was finished. You can elbow up right along the statue on 112 E. Vine Street in Dodge City.

Victory Welcomes Penick

Victory Electric is excited to welcome **COLBIE PENICK** to the substation department! Penick is a Minneola native and graduated from Dodge City High School in 2011. After graduation, Penick began his career as a salesman for Lewis Ford of Dodge City for 10 years, with six of those years as a sales manager.

Penick participated in the lineman program at Pratt Community College to obtain his lineman certification. He has spent the last year as a lineman for CMS Electric Cooperative in Meade and will be making the transition to a substation technician as he begins his career with Victory Electric.

“Victory is a great place to work, it is someplace I can enjoy a good career at and grow with,” said Penick. “I am just glad to be here. I am looking forward to learning and excited to see what I

can bring to the substation team.”

“Colbie is a great addition to our team, has a great attitude and some previous experience that will help get him up to speed quickly,” said Heith Konecny, substation and metering manager. “We have a good group of guys in the substation department and Colbie will fit in well.”

Penick and his wife, Alexis, have two sons, Scotty and Gavin. They enjoy spending time at the lake as much as possible and playing baseball or any other sports they can find interesting. Welcome to Victory, Colbie, we are glad you are here!



Colbie Penick

Correction from July

In the July issue we misidentified our new employee, Ryan Stephenson. We apologize for the error.

Welcome to Victory!

Victory Electric is excited to welcome **RYAN STEPHENSON!**

Stephenson joins Victory as a 20-year lineman from J&J Powerline. Stephenson is a Spearville/Dodge City native, graduating from Spearville High School in 2000, and then attending the lineman program at Pratt Community College.

Stephenson started his career in Wellington and later moved to Sharon where he and his family have spent the last eight years.

“I am excited to be back home and close to family,” Stephenson said. “I look forward to being a part of the Victory team.”

Stephenson is no stranger to Victory Electric; he spent the summer of 2001 as an intern with the line crews. “We are excited to have Ryan join our team, his experience will be a huge asset,” said Ryan Miller, vice president of operations. “We always enjoy having hometown people come back and join our team, but when they have the experience and the desire to be here and stay long term it makes them that much more valuable, and that is what Ryan is bringing to Victory.”

Stephenson and his wife, Briana, have two sons, Levi, 12, and Garrett, 4. In their free time, they enjoy riding four-wheelers, side by sides, and trail riding. They also enjoy the occasional fishing adventure. Welcome to Victory, Ryan, we are glad you are here!

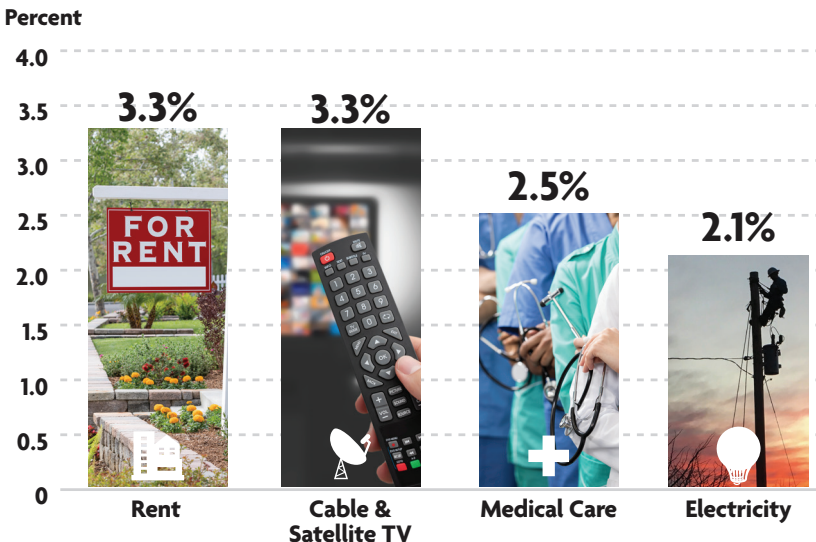


Ryan Stephenson

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

The cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common expenses. Looking at price increases over the last five years, it's easy to see electricity remains a good value.

Average Annual Price Increase 2016-2021



SOURCES: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS & CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

YOU ASKED

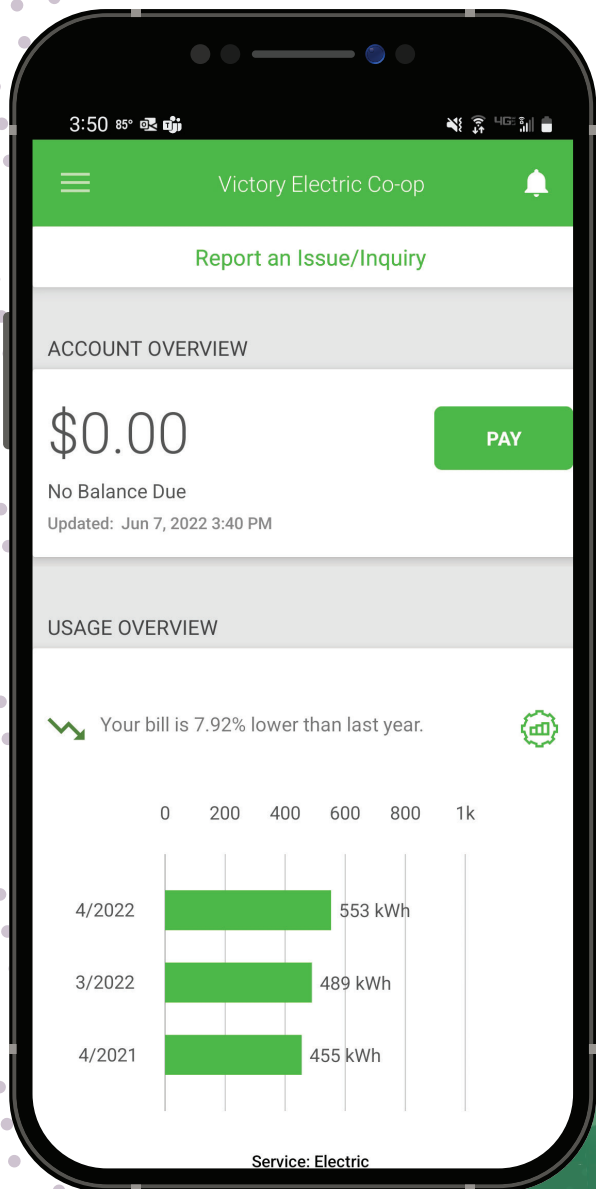
We Listened

Smart notifications help you take control of your account

Having a rapid and reliable means of communication with our members is of utmost importance to Victory Electric. In the case of an emergency, we do not want you to be left in the dark.

We have listened to your experiences and concerns regarding communication notifications in emergency and outage situations. And we have the answer! SmartHub provides you the opportunity to receive the notifications you requested and need during difficult times.

As a member, through SmartHub you are in control of how and when to be notified. SmartHub is the quickest way for Victory Electric



Scan to download the app!



smart hub

Sign up online by
visiting the website at
<https://www.victoryelectric.net/pay-online-smarthub>.

to reach you in an emergency, like Winter Storm Uri in February 2021. Being able to reach as many members as possible using a single source is critical for adequate emergency communication.

With SmartHub we have the ability to send notifications to you, to alert you of anticipated and ongoing outages affecting your area. These notifications can include guidance on what steps members can take to prepare for upcoming situations and to keep you apprised of the status of any ongoing incidents in your area.

Smart Notifications

SmartHub gives you the ability to take control of your notifications! You can report outages and send us account inquiries while you are on the go. Be in the know with online notifications for service work, news promotions, weather events and planned outages.

SmartHub lets you decide how you want to be informed about your bill, be notified either by email or text message on your smartphone. You can sign up to receive:

- ▶ Notifications when your bill is available.
- ▶ Notifications when your bill is past due.
- ▶ Outage alerts for all your meters.
- ▶ Alerts for daily, monthly or even hourly usage.
- ▶ Notifications for major weather events.
- ▶ Specific electricity news bulletins.



Manage Your
Account



Monitor Usage
24-7



View and Pay
Your Bill



Report Service
Issues



Receive Important
Updates



By now, we've (hopefully) begun to accept that summer is nearly over. Kids are heading back to school, days are growing shorter and the leaves on trees will soon be turning shades of yellow and orange. This can be a great time to make some changes in your life and routines.

At Victory Electric, energy efficiency and sustainability are never far from our thoughts. We love finding easy ways to improve energy efficiency for our members.

Here are six ideas for adding sustainability into your family's life as school resumes.

1 Be energy smart when using your fridge.

If you are preparing lunches for the littles, take out all the food you will need and make sure to close the fridge door. Constantly opening and closing forces your fridge to work overtime to keep a consistent temperature, which results in high energy use.

2 Wash clothes at night.

Recess, football practice, volleyball, and other back-to-school activities mean more laundry. You can help keep your washer and dryer efficient and reduce your energy usage by doing your laundry at night. It will be cooler so your AC unit is not working harder, and you can save even more if you wash your clothes with cold water.

3 Unplug unused devices and chords.

Many devices still consume power when plugged in, even when they're not in use, such as laptops, toasters, phone chargers, and especially video game consoles. Make it a habit to unplug unused items, and you will see a significant decrease in your energy bill.

4 Choose energy efficient cooking tools.

Save energy with a slow cooker, which requires much less energy than an oven. A modern slow cooker uses as little as

150 watts per hour if set on low. Plus, slow cookers are super convenient. Just chop up all the ingredients, throw them into the slow cooker, and head out the door.

5 Change thermostat settings.

Did you know you can save as much as 10% annually on energy bills simply by setting your thermostat back 7 to 10 degrees during the daytime? Move the temperature up to 78 degrees in summer and down to 68 degrees in winter. Bump it further up or down when you're away from home for extended periods of time. You won't even notice, and you'll be saving money.

6 Look for Energy Star products.

If you're shopping for back to school technology — like computers and dorm fridges — look for options with an Energy Star label. This label means the product will use up to 65% less energy than its competitors, which means lower energy bills.



Victory Designs and Donates 4-H T-shirts

Each year, Victory looks forward to the annual county fairs across our service territory. We enjoy designing and donating the T-shirts for the 4-Hers to wear throughout the fair week!