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 Dodge City, KS 67801
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victoryelectric.net
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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Electronews

The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc.

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FROM THE CEO

Capital Credits: It Pays to Be a Victory Member

At Victory Electric, you are not just a customer — you are a member and owner of the cooperative. Because you are a member, you share in the ownership, maintenance, construction and prosperity of the business. One of the most rewarding benefits of your membership is the assignment of capital credits. This month, Victory Electric is retiring more than \$1 million in capital credits and returning that money to members.

Victory Electric is a not-for-profit rural electric cooperative. That means we set rates to generate enough money to pay operating costs, make debt payments and maintain emergency reserves — not to make a profit

for outside shareholders. When the revenue collected during the year exceeds operating expenses, the balance between them is known as margins. In a member-owned cooperative, members receive a share of the co-op's margins in the form of capital credits.

Capital credits allocations are based on members' rate class and the amount of electricity they purchased during the previous year. Victory Electric retains



Shane Laws

Continued on page 12B ▶



Happy Holidays

From our co-op family to yours, wishing you
a joyous holiday season and a peaceful new year!

OUR OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON DEC. 25, DEC. 26, AND JAN. 1.

Capital Credits: It Pays to Be a Victory Member Continued from page 12A ▶

margins to use as operating capital to help us provide reliable power, maintain equipment and facilities, and make long-term improvements so we can support business growth and provide the best electric service possible to our members. Capital credits allocations also help us build and sustain the cooperative in an industry experiencing massive changes and technological advances.

What is the difference between an allocation and a retirement? Allocated capital credits reflect your equity, or ownership, in Victory Electric. Once you start your membership with the cooperative by establishing electric service in your name, you become eligible to begin earning capital credit allocations. When the board of trustees retires capital credits for a time period in which you received an allocation, you receive a refund as a bill credit or check, and your equity in the cooperative is reduced.

The Victory Electric Board of Trustees recently reviewed the cooperative's financial health for the year. Based on that analysis, the trustees authorized the retirement of \$1,082,224.81 worth of capital credits. For current members who had an allocation in the years being retired, the retired capital credits will appear on their December bill as a bill credit. A check will be mailed to members who no longer receive electric service from Victory Electric and received an allocation in those years.

Your allocated capital credits remain in Victory Electric's records even if you move out of our service territory and no longer have electric service with us. That's why it's important to keep

Did You Know?

Electric cooperatives have retired \$20 billion to members since 1988 — \$1.4 billion in 2021 alone.

Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues (called margins) are allocated and retired to members in the form of capital credits.



your address up to date if you move. When capital credits are retired for the years you had service with Victory Electric and earned a capital credit allocation, having a current address on file will enable a check to reach you.

Our members continue to share in the success of our cooperative. Since 2019, Victory Electric has retired \$6.6 million in capital credits. Capital credits help us keep the rates as low as possible for members while ensuring we can provide reliable, secure electric service and maintain a strong financial standing.

Part of our financial responsibility is ensuring that the cooperative's rates adequately and equitably cover the costs of providing electric service. Victory Electric is currently undergoing a cost-of-service study through an independent contractor to further examine the rates in each member rate class and the revenue needed to meet the co-op's operating expenses and debt obligations.

This is another way Victory Electric looks out for the best interests of the cooperative and our members.

THANKS, SHANE

Victory Electric
COMMUNITY
SOLAR



**FOR MORE
INFORMATION
AND TO SIGN UP,
SCAN
HERE!**



Merry Christmas

from all of us at Victory Electric





VICTORY ELECTRIC

Hosts Annual *Pumpkin Festival*



Over 300 people braved chilly temperatures the morning of Oct. 28 to join Victory Electric for our annual Pumpkin Painting Festival. Costumed kids and their families painted pumpkins, played games, snapped pictures at the fall photo booth, and snacked on popcorn and candy. Volunteers added to the kids' dress-up fun by applying temporary tattoos and colorful hair extensions.



Children also took home books and other prizes from USD 443's Bright Beginnings Literacy Bus. We enjoyed seeing the cute costumes and the creativity displayed on the painted pumpkins.

Thank you to all of the wonderful volunteers from the Ladies Community Outreach, Boy Scout Troop 162, USD 443's Bright Beginnings Literacy Bus and Spearville High School basketball team! We appreciate your help so much, and we couldn't hold this annual community event without the support of all of our volunteers. We're thankful for everyone who participated in the festival and hope to see you again next year!





How to Report an OUTAGE

This winter, or at any time of year, reporting power outages to Victory Electric is as simple as calling our office or using SmartHub.

1 Call Victory Electric at 620-227-2139 to report the outage to one of our representatives.

2 Log in to your SmartHub account in a browser or on the mobile app. Click “Report an Issue/ Inquiry” then click “Power Outage” and “Send.” You may also include a comment if you have additional information to report (e.g., damaged pole, downed power line).

To register for a SmartHub account, visit <https://victoryelectric.smarthub.coop>

and enter the Victory Electric account number listed on your bill, your last name and an email address. Open the verification email and follow the prompts to complete your SmartHub account setup.

SmartHub also offers other secure, convenient options for managing your account:

- ▶ Add your payment information to pay your electric bill on your computer, phone or tablet.
- ▶ Sign up for email or text notifications to receive power outage alerts and other important information from Victory Electric, including our new energy advisor videos and alerts that provide personalized energy analysis.
- ▶ Monitor your electric usage using SmartHub's usage explorer tools.
- ▶ Switch to paperless billing to receive your bill by email instead of by mail.

NOTE: Although Victory Electric posts and updates members about larger outages on our Facebook page, it is not an official outage reporting outlet for members. Please **DO NOT SEND A FACEBOOK MESSAGE OR LEAVE A FACEBOOK COMMENT TO NOTIFY VICTORY ELECTRIC OF AN OUTAGE**, as that platform is not connected to our outage tracking system.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact our office at 620-227-2139. For more information, visit www.victoryelectric.net/my-power-out-now-what.



Victory Seeks Board Nominations

Members, elected trustees and employees — that is who powers a cooperative. The overall management and business oversight of a cooperative is tasked to those elected to serve on the cooperative board of trustees. Like you, they are cooperative members but with a special perspective. They live throughout the Victory Electric service area, and they are local citizens with the best interests of members, the community and the cooperative always in mind.

The board of trustees' primary function is planning and policy oversight, establishing the long-term objectives of the cooperative, and providing resources to meet those objectives. Board members work closely with the CEO and senior staff to review progress, ensure accountability, make strategic decisions and stay current on an increasingly complex business.

The cooperative territory is divided into districts, all of which are represented by a trustee. Trustees are elected at the annual meeting for three-year terms of office. A commitment to the cooperative board is a commitment to the community. Each trustee holds the responsibility of representing their cooperative in the public eye. They attend outreach events, serve on additional committees, attend training and listen to those in their district. They are the liaisons between the greater membership and cooperative management and employees.

2024 POSITIONS UP FOR ELECTION ARE:

- ▶ **DISTRICT 1**
Currently held by **DARYL TIEBEN**
- ▶ **DISTRICT 3**
Currently held by **KEN SCHULTE**
- ▶ **DISTRICT 8**
Currently held by **CEDRIC DREWES**
- ▶ **DISTRICT 10**
Currently held by **TERRI LARSON**

Election and Service

Victory Electric's annual membership meeting is scheduled for April 9, 2024, and we are currently soliciting nominations for Victory Electric's board of trustees.

To qualify, you must be a natural person (not a corporation, partnership or any other business entity); and your principal residence must be served by Victory Electric and located within our territory and the district you wish to represent. If a close relative of yours — within the third degree — is an employee or a trustee of Victory Electric, you are not eligible to run for a trustee position.

If you would like to run for a trustee position or know someone who may be interested, please send a letter of interest with qualifications to Shane Laws at Victory Electric, P.O. Box 1335, Dodge City, KS 67801 **BY DEC. 31, 2023.**

ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

Get smart with a better way to heat and cool your home! Smart thermostats are Wi-Fi enabled and automatically adjust heating and cooling temperature settings in your home for optimal performance. Smart thermostats learn your temperature preferences and establish a schedule that adjusts to energy-saving settings when you're asleep or away. For maximum energy savings, look for smart thermostat models with the Energy Star® label.

SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV



2024 APPLICATIONS ARE NOW OPEN!

Attention all high school juniors who want to travel!
You could score an **all-expenses-paid trip of a lifetime**
plus receive a **\$500 scholarship** upon graduation!



IT'S TIME TO
APPLY FOR A
**TRIP OF A
LIFETIME!**



At Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, June 14-20, watch history come alive as you explore world-class museums and monuments and take a cruise on the Potomac River. You'll meet with elected officials, learn about the cooperative business model and make new friends from all over Kansas and 43 other states.

At Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp, July 12-18, go rafting on the Colorado River, tour a power plant and enjoy the beautiful Rocky Mountain scenery. You'll also develop your leadership skills and connect with 100 other high school students from Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming and Oklahoma.



Smart Tips to Help Make Your Holidays Bright

Is Clark Griswold your Christmas decorating role model, or do you deck the halls in a less flashy way? Regardless of your style preferences for holiday decor, Victory Electric has a new online tool that can help you save energy — and money — on your holiday lighting.

Victory Electric's new holiday lighting calculator lets you move the easy-to-use sliders to compare how much money you could save by upgrading to LED lights. They consume up to 80% less energy than traditional Christmas lights, have a longer lifespan (up to 50,000 hours), generate very little heat and don't burn out like regular bulbs.

Solar-powered outdoor spotlights, smart plugs and timers for your holiday lighting can also help you save on energy costs.

Visit www.victoryelectric.net/energy-resources to access our new holiday lighting calculator, where you can also find our smart-thermostat heating calculator and energy advisor tool.

Christmas lights can help make your seasonal celebrations merry and bright, but they can also increase your risk

of a house fire. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, holiday lights and decorations cause nearly 400 house fires each year. The following tips from Touchstone Energy can help keep your family bright, happy and safe this holiday season.

- ▶ Use lights that are approved by a nationally recognized testing organization, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL).
- ▶ Before hanging your lights, inspect them for frayed wires, broken sockets or other signs of wear and tear.
- ▶ Avoid connecting more than three strings of lights together, unless the directions indicate otherwise.
- ▶ When using extension cords, avoid routing them under rugs or near walkways.
- ▶ If you decorate a real tree, water it daily and prevent the lights from coming into contact with tree branches.
- ▶ If you choose an artificial tree, make sure it's certified as fire resistant. Look for the UL label.
- ▶ For outdoor decorating, only use lights and power strips that have been approved for outdoor use.
- ▶ Keep electrical connections off the ground and make sure wiring is clear of downspouts, railings and aluminum siding.
- ▶ Be careful when using metal staples or nails as fasteners. They can damage the protective insulation covering the wires.



The holidays are a joyous time of year, bringing a frenzy of decorating, cooking and family gatherings. If the extra hustle and bustle leaves you with higher energy bills, Victory Electric can help you find ways to save.

LIGHTNER
COMMUNITY
SPIRIT
SCHOLARSHIP

BE ON THE
LOOKOUT

10

\$1,000

Scholarships Available!

Applications open

Jan. 15, 2024