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# Electronews

## The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc.

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- Shane Laws**  
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- Chanda Schulte**  
Vice President of Communications

## FROM THE CEO

### We Are Listening!



Shane Laws

we were a locally-owned business — likely because they or someone they knew played a part in helping found the cooperative. Over time, as the novelty of receiving electricity faded, the founders passed on and the next generation of members took their place and their views of the electric co-op evolved. The rich history of our cooperative is no longer as important

Victory Electric is a member-owned, member-governed cooperative. When the co-op was founded back in 1945, members of the community knew

to members as it once was. Members now want to know less about the cooperative business model and more about how we are preparing for the future and what we are doing for members today.

We recognize that young adults are bombarded with vast amounts of information, but due to work and personal constraints — our younger generation rarely has the time to engage fully. We know that young people don't often get exposure to the cooperative business model, and until and unless their lights go out they don't think about their co-op. As such, receiving that attention from our young adult members requires new approaches and strategies.

Recently, our focus has been on

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## ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

Do you have a home office? Set equipment like printers and scanners to automatically switch to sleep or energy-saver mode when not in use. In addition to saving energy, the equipment will stay cooler, which will help extend its life. Another way to save in the home office is to use energy efficient lamps for task lighting. Small lamps use less energy than whole-room lighting.



# Application Available Online for Lightner Community Spirit Scholarships

This spring, Victory Electric will award 10 \$1,000 scholarships to graduating high school seniors and current post-secondary or college students. The Lightner Community Spirit Scholarship program is designed to recognize students who have demonstrated academic success and have showed a commitment to bettering their community.

## Scholarship Requirements and Applicant Eligibility

All applicants for the scholarship shall be considered on the application criteria without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, or existence of a physical handicap.

- ▶ Scholarships are available to graduating high school seniors and current college students.
- ▶ Applicants must be entering or a current student at an accredited college, university, or trade school.
- ▶ Scholarships are for one year. An applicant may apply as often as desired but is only eligible to receive a Victory Electric scholarship once.
- ▶ Must be an active Victory Electric member in good standing for at least 12 consecutive months or a dependent such member.
- ▶ Must have and maintain at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA on a 4.0 scale.

## How to Apply

The Lightner Community Spirit Scholarship program now has an online application process. To apply, applicants should visit [WWW.VICTORYELECTRIC.NET/LIGHTNER-COMMUNITY-SPIRIT-SCHOLARSHIP](http://WWW.VICTORYELECTRIC.NET/LIGHTNER-COMMUNITY-SPIRIT-SCHOLARSHIP), which contains the award information,

applicant eligibility and scholarship requirements, and a link to begin the online application. Applicants should carefully review the application requirements and gather all necessary materials before beginning the application process. Required items include:

- ▶ Applicant and parent contact information.
- ▶ Victory Electric membership information.
- ▶ Résumé.
- ▶ Copy of official transcript mailed to Victory Electric in a sealed envelope with the envelope flap signed by a school official, or a digital transcript emailed to [askcommunications@victoryelectric.net](mailto:askcommunications@victoryelectric.net) from a school official.
- ▶ Biographical statement.
- ▶ A 500–800-word essay.
- ▶ A digital, high-resolution headshot photo of the applicant with the provided photographer's photo release form completed.

The deadline to submit the scholarship application is **NO LATER THAN 11:59 P.M. ON TUESDAY, FEB. 28, 2023.**

Since the program began in 2016, Victory Electric has awarded \$1,000 scholarships to 60 students. The scholarship honors the Lightner family of Plymell. Richard Lightner served on Victory's board of trustees for 36 years, and his father, George, served 31 years previous. Both were strong proponents of Victory's community and youth programs.

For questions or more information on the scholarship application process, please contact the communications department at [askcommunications@victoryelectric.net](mailto:askcommunications@victoryelectric.net).

**LIGHTNER COMMUNITY  
SPIRIT SCHOLARSHIP**

Application deadline  
**Feb. 28, 2023**

10 \$1,000 scholarships available!

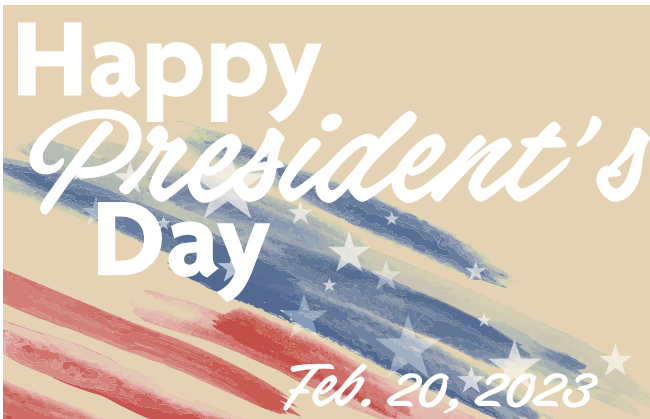
lightner



# Annual Meeting

Save the Date | April 11, 2023





## Stress Less with **BUDGET BILLING**

For members who prefer to pay the same amount each month despite the temperature, electric usage, or time of year, Victory Electric has a budget billing (also referred to as even-pay) option available.

Payments are set at the amount of 12-months average electric use, making it easy to budget. An accurate history of your electric use at your current residence is helpful in determining your true monthly average. Keep in mind, while you ARE paying the same amount each month for convenience, we keep track of your actual electric use. We do not want members paying too much or not enough each month, so budget billing payment amounts are recalculated biannually using your 12-month average bill amount.

To be eligible for budget billing, a member must reside at the address and have no late payments for a full year. Budget billing is only available to residential members. You will still receive a monthly bill indicating the monthly payment amount. If you are interested, please call or stop by Victory Electric's office to see if you qualify. Members on PowerMyWay are not eligible for budget billing since members' accounts are charge daily not monthly.



## **ENERGY BILL ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE**

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is a federally funded program that helps eligible households pay a portion of their home energy costs by providing a one time per year benefit.

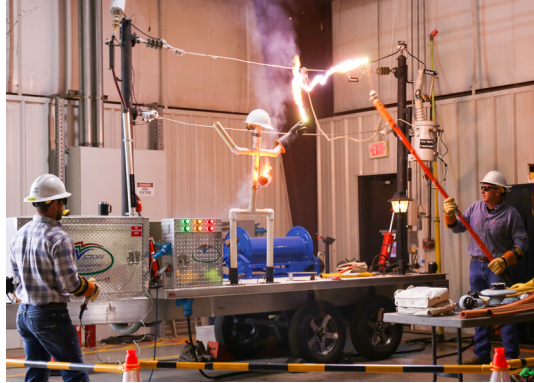


For more information, visit: [www.dcf.ks.gov/services/ees/Pages/EnergyAssistance.aspx](http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/ees/Pages/EnergyAssistance.aspx)

# FREE Safety Demonstrations — Contact Victory Today!

Community education and training is essential to providing excellent service to our communities and members. Victory Electric welcomes the opportunity to visit your school, community or business group to provide an educational presentation that is memorable and tailored to meet your needs.

If you are interested in learning more about Victory Electric, industry trends or electric safety, Victory Electric personnel are always available to give informative presentations to local civic clubs, social clubs, city and county organizations, senior citizen groups, K-12 school groups, and others. Visit [www.victoryelectric.net/community-school-and-electrical-safety-presentations](http://www.victoryelectric.net/community-school-and-electrical-safety-presentations) to learn more.



**Victory Electric welcomes the opportunity to visit your school, community or business group with educational presentations that are memorable and tailored to meet your needs.**

## We Are Listening!

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increasing our online presence to create more avenues of communication with our more technologically-inclined members. We have increased our digital presence — on our website, social media accounts, SMS messaging, and our SmartHub app. Communicating with our members on various digital channels provides an opportunity for us to reach a more diverse demographic of our membership, which includes our younger members.

Effective communication is key in any good relationship. We appreciate our members and their willingness to be open and honest about their communication needs. Communicating with members on a format in which they are comfortable is one of our main concerns. Younger members, we are listening! Your communication preferences have been heard and we are making a commitment to accommodate you.

Adapting to technological changes and investing our time in producing quality online services will assist in strengthening our relationship with all members, not just the younger generations. We are here to serve our community and are always willing to listen to the needs of our members. Feel free to reach out anytime — we welcome your input!

**THANKS! SHANE**



## 5 Ways to Save During Winter

Winter weather typically means increased energy use at home. Keep your bills in check with these tips to save energy — and money!

**MIND THE THERMOSTAT.** If you have a traditional heating and cooling system, set the thermostat to 68 degrees or lower. Consider a smart or programmable thermostat for additional savings.

**GET COZY.** Add layers of clothing for additional warmth, and snuggle up under your favorite heavyweight blanket.

**DON'T BLOCK THE HEAT.** If your air vents or heating elements (like radiators) are blocked by furniture or rugs, your home isn't being adequately heated.

**TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SUNLIGHT.** Open window coverings during the day to let natural sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to block the chilly night air.

**BLOCK AIR LEAKS.** Seal windows and exterior doors with caulk and weather stripping to improve indoor comfort and decrease the amount of energy used to heat your home.

# SMARTHUB

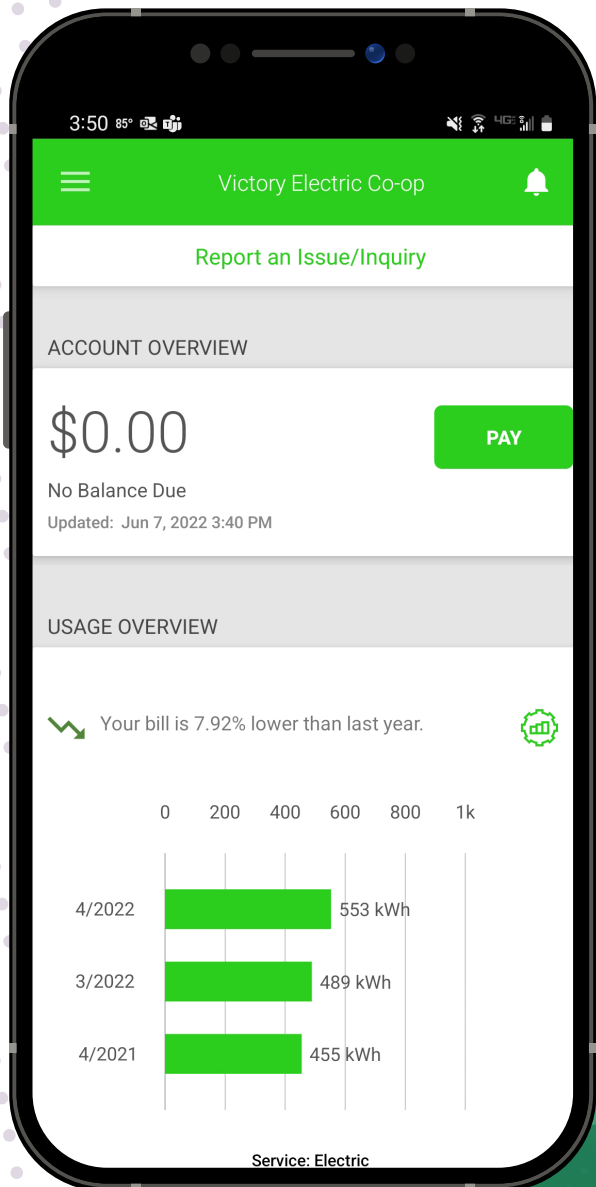
## Voice Assistant

Now you can connect with Victory Electric through SmartHub and your smart home device like your Amazon Echo or Google Home. Pay your bill, get payment history, check your usage and more anytime. Here are some tips on how you can interact with Victory Electric through your smart home device.

### What Devices Are Supported?

All Amazon Echo and Google Home devices are supported. This includes:

- ▶ Amazon Echo
- ▶ Amazon Echo Show
- ▶ Google Home Hub
- ▶ Amazon Echo Dot
- ▶ Amazon Echo Spot
- ▶ Google Home Max
- ▶ Amazon Echo Plus
- ▶ Google Home
- ▶ Google Home Mini



Scan to download the app!



# smart hub

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

## What Functionality Is Available?

Below is a list of the current functionality included in SmartHub voice assistant:

- ▶ **ACCOUNT BALANCE (IF PREPAID, DEVICE WILL GIVE DAYS REMAINING)**
  - ▶ What is my balance?
  - ▶ What's my payment amount?
  - ▶ When's my due date?
  - ▶ How much do I owe?
  - ▶ What's my electric bill?
- ▶ **MOST RECENT BILLING AND PAYMENT HISTORY**
  - ▶ What was my last payment amount?
  - ▶ What was my prior billing?
  - ▶ What is my payment history?
  - ▶ What is my last bill?
- ▶ **PAYMENTS**
  - ▶ You can make a one-time payment with a previously-stored payment option.
- ▶ **CURRENT OUTAGE INFORMATION**
  - ▶ Is there an outage?
  - ▶ Do I have any outages on my account?
  - ▶ Is my power out?
- ▶ **ACCOUNT NUMBER**
  - ▶ What's my account number?
- ▶ **CUSTOM ALERTS**
  - ▶ Any news?
  - ▶ Any alerts?
  - ▶ Is there any information available?
- ▶ **HELP**
  - ▶ You can request your current balance, get information about your last payment, check for outages on your accounts, read your account number, and get information or alerts.



Manage Your Account



Monitor Usage 24-7



View and Pay Your Bill



Report Service Issues



Receive Important Updates

# THINK SAFETY FIRST *When Using a Generator*

Keep these tips with your portable generator or emergency kit.

- ▶ Use a properly rated extension cord to plug appliances into a generator.
- ▶ Never plug a generator into your home's electrical system.
- ▶ Place the generator at least 20 feet away from all areas of the home (windows, doors, garage, porch).
- ▶ Set up and run your generator in a well-ventilated, dry area.
- ▶ If it is raining, place the generator under a stand-alone, canopy-like structure.
- ▶ Always direct exhaust away from the home or any other structure.
- ▶ Do not use a generator in a garage (even if the garage door is up) or carport.
- ▶ Read and follow all instructions provided by the manufacturer.
- ▶ Keep your generator well-maintained and in proper working order.



Ensure that working **CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) DETECTORS** are located on every level of your home, and test them monthly.

**CO POISONING CAN HAPPEN QUICKLY**, and individuals exposed to the odorless, invisible gas may become unconscious before realizing they are experiencing symptoms such as nausea, dizziness or weakness. Or, they might not associate a symptom with CO exposure before becoming unconscious.

A large, colorful, abstract graphic resembling a lightbulb filament or a stylized 'S' shape, set against a light background. The graphic is composed of multiple overlapping, curved lines in shades of red, orange, and yellow, creating a sense of motion and energy.

## COBANK SHARING SUCCESS GRANT

LOCAL **NONPROFITS** MAY APPLY TO RECEIVE UP TO **\$20,000!**

- ▶ APPLICATIONS OPEN **MARCH 16**
- ▶ APPLY AT **VICTORYELECTRIC.NET**

The Victory Electric Cooperative logo, featuring a stylized 'V' and the text 'THE VICTORY Electric Cooperative'.