

## THE VICTORY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

# electronews



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### FROM THE MANAGER

## Hey, Whats Your Problem?

*Chances are there is a Co-op Solution*

On June 1, 1945, The Victory Electric Cooperative was founded. Back then rural areas had a problem. Rural residents did not have access to electricity, so a group of neighbors and friends set out to form a cooperative solution. At the same time, folks in 1,000 other rural communities throughout the United States were doing the same thing, creating rural electric cooperatives. Interestingly, folks in urban areas were also forming co-ops—not electric or farm co-ops, but credit unions and housing co-ops.

Cooperatives in all forms get started when the “market” fails to offer a good or service or does so at prices few people can afford. So, back in the time of the Great Depression, when banks did not have much interest in extending credit to people of modest means, people did the same thing as the founders of Victory Electric. They got together with their friends and neighbors, collected a \$5 membership fee (and remember in the 1930s, five bucks was real money) and formed more than

“One of the reasons co-ops are popular in so many different industries is that they answer the question, “What’s in it for me?” and provide a solution that also serves we, the community.”



Shane Laws

23,000 credit unions. They solved their problem with a cooperative solution. Today, mostly due to mergers between credit unions, there are about 6,800 credit unions with nearly 100 million members.

Meanwhile, in New York City, folks needed to find safe and affordable housing. So, what was the answer? Form a housing co-op. And they did by the hundreds. Today, there are more than 3,000 housing co-ops nationwide. While most are located in urban areas, they are a growing solution in rural areas, and a number of mobile home parks are being converted to cooperative ownership.

Is reliable child care a concern? There are more than 1,000 pre-school cooperatives operating in the U.S. While some require parents to

*Continued on page 20-B ▶*

## Electricity Remains a Good Value

In today's world, you won't find many items that cost less than \$5. You can purchase a gallon of milk or gas or a Big Mac® meal from McDonald's. But did you know that an average day's worth of electricity costs less than \$5?

Even in our country's shifting energy climate, electricity remains a good value. In fact, electricity has the lowest cost per day of any of the items listed above. And not all of those items are necessary for daily life!

We urge you to think about your daily necessities (electricity and gasoline, to name a couple), and then think about the cost of the special treats we allow ourselves to purchase on a weekly basis (maybe even on a daily basis for some items!). We don't often question the cost of a Big Mac® meal—it costs over \$1 more to buy a Big Mac® meal than it does to purchase a day's worth of power. And

yet, we frequently become upset if our electric rates rise.

It makes sense; we have become increasingly reliant upon electricity. Electricity has, for many of us, gone from a luxury commodity to a necessity and an expectation. We expect the lights to come on when we flip the switch, and we expect our power to stay on during the best and worst conditions. How else would we keep our food fresh, our homes cool in the summer or warm in the winter? It is easy to cut a Big Mac® out of your spending routine here and there to save a few dollars. But we cannot simply cut electricity out of our budgets if times get tough or if we want to scale back our spending in order to save.

Perhaps that is why it is so upsetting to us when our rates increase, even if only in small increments. It is nearly impossible for us to think about what our lives would be like if

we did not have electricity. If at times it doesn't seem that electricity is affordable, remember—even as the demand for electricity grows—annual cost increases still remain low, especially when compared to other consumer goods such as medical care, education, gasoline and, yes, even Big Macs®. Electricity is still a great bargain. And also remember this: as your local electric cooperative, we are committed to making sure that you always have safe, reliable and affordable electric service in your home.

So the next time you crave a Big Mac®, remember your electric bill, and think about what a great deal you're getting for your dollar!

## Chances are there is Co-op Solution

*Continued from page 20-A* ▶

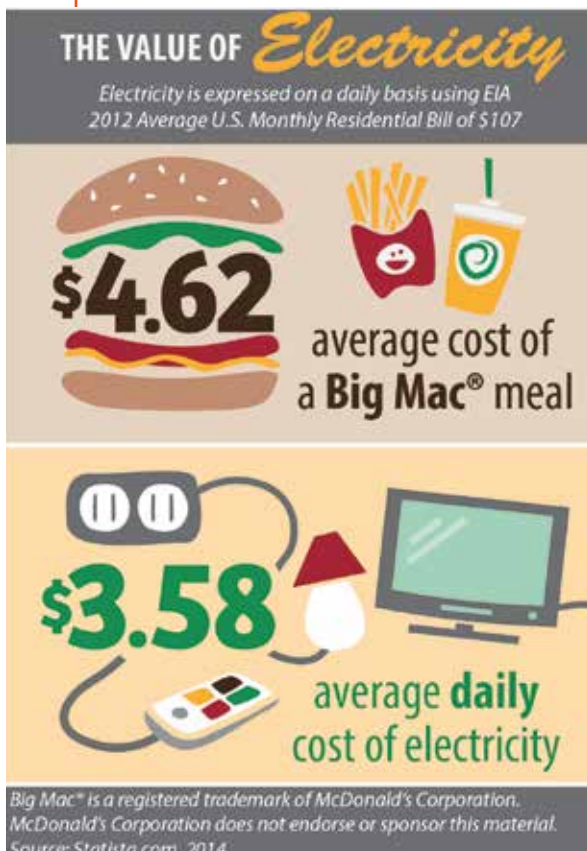
volunteer a certain number of hours per month, these cooperatives have been a great solution for the vast majority of families when both parents need to work outside the home.

On the other end of the spectrum, there are even co-ops covering funeral needs. By joining the co-op, which has pre-negotiated the price of the funeral based on your preferences, members can save up to 40 percent off the average cost of a funeral and burial. From cradle to grave, co-ops have you covered.

Perhaps you own a small business and are looking to lower the cost of the goods you sell, or maybe you are one of 50,000 small business owners who is a member of a purchasing cooperative. Through cooperatives, small locally-owned businesses are able to compete against "big-box" retailers. Dollars that are spent locally stay in the community six times longer than dollars spent at stores owned outside the community, according to the Small Business Administration.

So, what do all these businesses have in common? Local people coming together to solve a problem with a cooperative solution. One of the reasons co-ops are popular in so many different industries is that they answer the question, "What's in it for me?" and provide a solution that also serves us, the community. So the next time your area is facing a problem, think cooperatively and chances are, there will be a cooperative solution.

**Shane Laws**



# Victory Electric and Dodge City Days Parade



1.



2.



3.



4.

1. CEO, Shane Laws and wife, Ali enjoyed the parade.
2. Rae Jean and Amy Grasser proudly displayed their Victory T-shirts.
3. Shalor Laws handed candy during the parade.
4. Jerrri Imgarten and Kennedy St. George sport festive hats.
5. Joslynn Erives got into the parade spirit.
6. Volunteers handed out candy along the parade route.
7. Mercedes Lozano-Ruiz helped distribute candy.
8. Victory saddled up their roller coaster for an "electric ride."
9. Victory employees and families posed for a group photo.



5.



6.



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8.



9.

# Salmans, Ramirez, and Bohannon Atten

Victory Electric sent local students **ASHLEE BOHANNON**, Ingalls; **CAROLINA RAMIREZ**, Dodge City; and **MADISON SALMANS**, Jetmore; to Steamboat Springs, Colo., along with 30 other high school students from across Kansas.

“Victory Electric is proud to participate in the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp and send our youth to develop essential leadership and teamwork skills,” said Shane Laws, Victory Electric CEO. “Through this trip, we hope that local students will gain some awareness of how our electric cooperatives work and how important it is for the youth to be involved in our community.”

The students joined youth from Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming at the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp, July 12-18, 2014.

“I was inspired by the leadership skills they taught us,” Bohannon said. “I hope to be a better leader and

bring home what I learned and put it to use.”

The main objectives of the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp were to help the youth gain a better understanding of how electric cooperatives operate while also building the youths’ leadership skills by running a “candy cooperative.” When the youth arrived at camp they paid membership dues, established a board of trustees, elected a general manager, and formed committees. Salmans was elected general manager of the cooperative and Ramirez was elected to the board of trustees.



From left: Madison Salmans, Ashlee Bohannon, and Carolina Ramirez pose near Elk River at their camp in Colorado.

linemen gave a high voltage safety demonstration, the campers participated in competition to build a model transmission line out of craft supplies, and they toured Trapper Mine and Craig Power Plant.

“What I’ve learned from this experience is of great value to me,” Salmans said. “I didn’t realize the benefits of working for a cooperative are so incredible. The leadership skills I gained are so useful and will not be put to waste.”

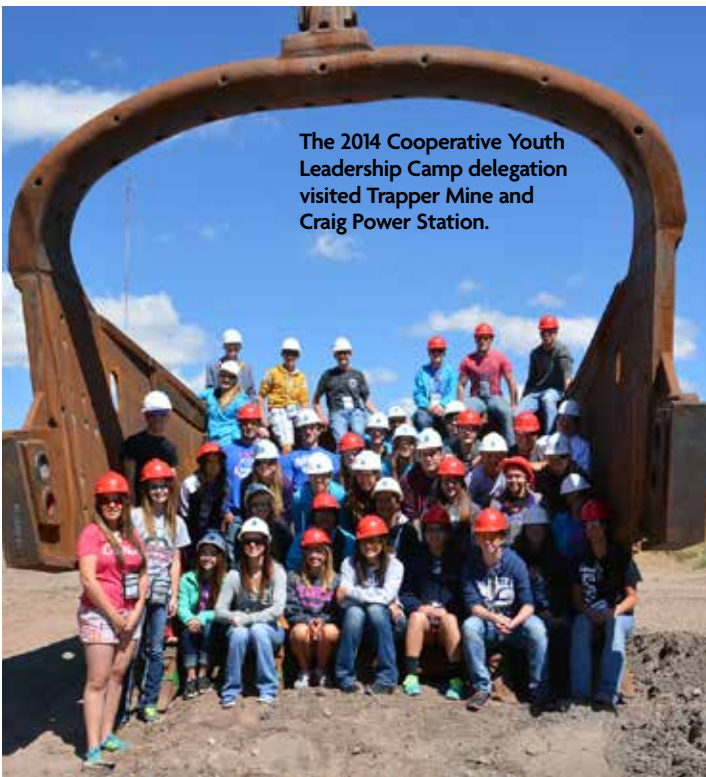
The campers also hiked Fish Creek Falls; visited Steamboat Springs; went river rafting; and enjoyed camp activities such as volleyball, swimming, a dance, and a talent show.

Salmans was selected to return to camp next year as an ambassador. Ambassadors are students who will return to the camp the following year as a junior counselor. As an ambassador she will facilitate the camp leadership activities and act as role model for the incoming campers.

Bohannon, Ramirez, and Salmans were selected from a group of high school applicants by Victory. To win this trip, students were asked to submit a résumé and interview with a panel of judges. For more information, contact Jerri Imgarten at 620-370-7730.

“Being a member of the board had a large impact on my camp experience,” Ramirez said. “It gave me the opportunity to be even more involved and it was a lot of fun. Together, we were able to make some big decisions for the camp.”

The campers learned about electric cooperatives through many of the presentations and activities: Yampa Valley Electric’s



The 2014 Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp delegation visited Trapper Mine and Craig Power Station.

# d Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp

## Madison Salmans

Starting the trip just a bit nervous, I had no idea what to expect. As soon as I jumped on that bus full of incredible kids all of my insecurities about the trip and what it would be like quickly melted away.

Though I've been to many leadership seminars and camps, I can say with absolute confidence that this one is worth trying for. Every moment I spent with the incredible people around me challenged me to think harder, lead more, and encourage. My time at camp was spent learning where energy comes from, how and where it is stored, and about all of the jobs with amazing benefits you can find in the cooperative business world.

I interviewed for the general manager position at camp... and I GOT IT. "Wow," I thought to myself, "How cool is it to be selected by my own peers for such an amazing position?!" I am truly honored to be selected as an ambassador for the coming year and I can't wait to be a part of another amazing camp experience in the beautiful Rocky Mountains. Through the education, rafting, shopping, dancing, talent show, and meeting of new people to call my friends, my life could not have been impacted in a more positive way.



Madison was elected general manager and often led the group in activities.

## Ashlee Bohannon

It all started on July 12, 2014. I had been preparing myself for this trip since the day I got the important phone call. I loaded the bus really nervous because I'm not much of a people person, but I thought why not just open up and just see what is in store and have fun?

I picked my seat on a bus full of strangers and before I knew it, we were headed to Steamboat Springs, CO. I was not only stoked, but also nervous about being able to attend this camp. It was one of the longest bus trips I have ever taken in my life, but it was so worth it! We stopped in Denver for the night and we went to Dave and Buster's, which was a lot of fun!

Before I knew it, we were already at Steamboat Springs. We settled into our cabins and our camp week began. I learned so much; from how a coal plant and the process of electricity works; to learning how co-ops protect birds of prey; to being able to have some fun rafting. I had an amazing experience on this trip and would totally do it again if I could! I made friends with just about everyone by the end of the week. The only part that I didn't like was having to say goodbye, although I will hold on to those memories forever. Thank you Victory Electric for this amazing and memorable experience.



Ashlee Bohannon (right) works with a fellow camper in the build a transmission line competition.

## Carolina Ramirez

Going on this trip was a mind blowing and life changing experience. I'm not trying to sound cliché when describing this trip, but it really does change a person's life! Imagine climbing on a bus full of strangers and not knowing a single person's name. Guess what happens though. After spending only a week with those people, you feel like a close-knit family that you never want to let go. You make friends with everyone you meet.

Camp is an amazing learning experience, and you still have fun and make friends in the process. Camp was set up like a cooperative to help us learn how they function. As members, we elected a board of directors. I was actually elected to be on the board, which helped me understand more about how a cooperative works. Later, as a board, we hired a General Manager. At camp, we also learned about different ways to generate electricity and the process of getting that energy into our homes. Every day was jam-packed with activities. We visited Fish Creek Falls, toured a power plant and coal mine, and went on a river rafting trip, which turned into an all-out water war.

I had a blast on this trip, and I encourage anyone who has the opportunity to apply to go for it!



Carolina performing a skit with her small group members.

Visit our Website & Join us on Facebook



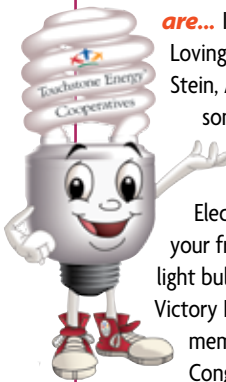
Visit us at [www.victoryelectric.net](http://www.victoryelectric.net). On our website, you will find a calendar of events, frequently asked questions, bill pay, and energy calculators—just to name a few tools!

You can also become a fan of Victory Electric on Facebook at [facebook.com/VictoryElectric](https://www.facebook.com/VictoryElectric) or by searching for The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc. Check our page for updates, outage information, and energy efficiency tips. Facebook is a great way to stay in touch

CFL Charlie Says  
“Come Get Your Free CFL!”

**This month's lucky winners**

**are...** Isaac P. Aberson, Tina L. Loving, Karen B. Piper, Locke M. Stein, Amber Wallis, Haley D. Carson, Wayne S. Herron, Alfred Hidalgo, and Ofelia Mercado. Come by Victory Electric Cooperative to get your free compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL). Every month Victory Electric will be giving members free CFL light bulbs. Congratulations winners!



**Health Fair Scheduled**

The 7th Annual Victory Electric Community Health Fair is scheduled for Saturday, October 4, 2014. It will be held at the Western State Bank Expo center in Dodge City. More info can be found on our website.

The Health Fair will feature flu shots, blood screenings, hearing screenings, and much more. We hope to see you there!

# Working on the LINE

Every year, linemen practice the technique of rescuing a disabled person from atop a pole. This mandatory pole top rescue training simulates methods and precautions to rescue a fellow lineman if an accident were to occur in the field. The lineman must lower a life-like mannequin to the ground, safely and within a set amount of time.

A life-size mannequin is placed on a power pole, and the linemen must climb with only his usual tools and a hand line and safely lower the



Pat Deaver cuts the strap freeing the mannequin from the pole.

200-pound mannequin to the ground.

Safety is a top priority as Victory Electric and while all linemen who practice this training hope they never have to use it, but it is good to know that your fellow workers have to ability to get you down from a pole if something were to happen.



Above: Lineman intern, William Stegman, rescues the dummy from the pole.



Kyndall Penick and Ross Ackerman pull the dummy to safety after being set free by the lineman performing the rescue.



Right: As part of training, Ross Ackerman, rescues a dummy from the line truck buckets. The 200-pound mannequin must be pulled to safety.

# EPA Proposed Guidelines a Potential Hardship

*Regulations have the potential to raise the cost of electricity exponentially*

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued proposed guidelines that seek to limit greenhouse gases (GHG) blamed for global climate change. These regulations will raise the cost of electricity by limiting the use of fossil-fuel resources—not only by Sunflower and Mid-Kansas, your wholesale generation providers—but also by electric utilities across the nation.

The EPA has proposed two separate sets of guidelines, one for existing fossil-fueled power plants and the other for new plants. Regulations for new power plants, which will be finalized this fall, will require carbon capture and storage—commercially unproven technology that is expected to be prohibitively expensive. This technology will likely halt the construction of new coal-based units in the U.S. because bankers will not loan money on unproven technology.

The EPA has also proposed guidance for existing fossil-fueled generation units. The guidelines will require states to achieve their reductions through four building blocks, and Kansas is expected to decrease GHG emissions by 18 percent by 2020 and 23 percent by 2030.

Below are the building blocks that EPA has identified and examples of how they, if applied to your personal vehicle, would impact your driving habits:

► **Increase coal plant efficiency by 5.8 percent.** This will be next to impossible for the Sunflower and Mid-Kansas system since Sunflower's Holcomb Station is already an efficient, well maintained unit. This is akin to the government's telling you to find a way to make your already well-maintained vehicle, which gets 21 mpg, get 22.2 mpg.

► **Decrease coal utilization and increase combined-cycle natural gas plant utilization.** This will be

a problem because there are no combined-cycle natural gas units in the state. This is akin to the government's telling you that you have to drive a hybrid vehicle that you don't own or that is not available for purchase in your area.

► **Decrease coal utilization and increase renewable energy and zero-carbon emitting resources, such as hydropower and nuclear.**

Sunflower and Mid-Kansas already have adequate renewable resources, based on economics and reliability, in their generation portfolios. Adding more renewables will adversely impact Members' electricity rates and/or reliability. This is akin to the government's telling you to quit driving your vehicle and, instead, either walk or ride a bicycle.

► **Decrease utilization of coal and increase residential and business energy efficiency programs.** This building block relies on reduced use of electricity by the end consumer. This is akin to the government's telling you to quit driving your vehicle and stay home.

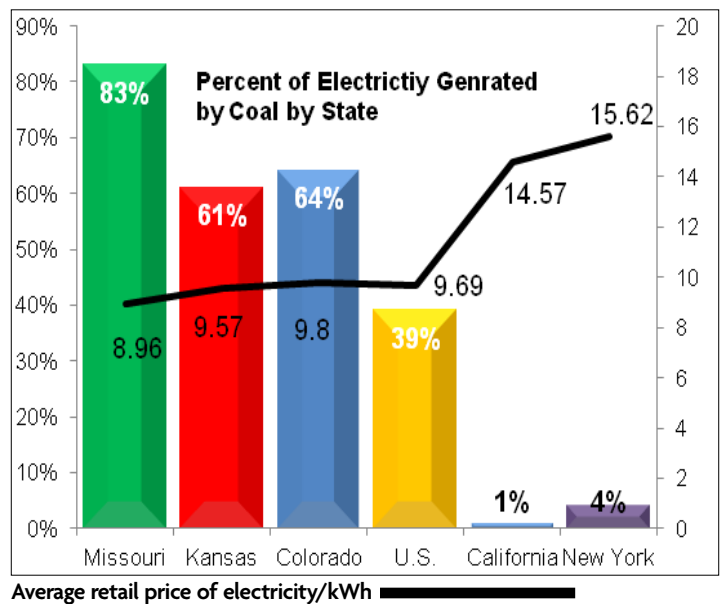
The EPA's building blocks will not only be difficult to employ but will also most certainly raise your electric rates. The resulting increase in electricity prices could endanger efforts to attract new businesses, let alone retain established ones.

What's more, the EPA admits that these regulations will not have a significant global impact on overall GHG

levels. In a Congressional hearing, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy admitted, "It is unlikely that any specific step is going to be seen as having a visible impact on any of those impacts." She testified that the primary objective of the proposed GHG regulations is to influence "the international community," mainly China, India and other developing nations, to follow suit with the U.S.' emissions policies.

The voice of electric cooperative members is needed to stem these harmful EPA regulations. Through letters and emails to our legislators and the EPA, you can demand that these regulations for electricity production take into account consumers' need for reliable, affordable energy through achievable EPA standards.

Please consider contacting the EPA by October 16 through the Co-operative Action Network at [www.action.coop](http://www.action.coop). Even if you contacted EPA earlier this year about the regulations for new units, please do so again since the current grassroots campaign addresses EPA's latest proposed regulations for existing units. Your voice needs to be heard.



## Cambios de Ciclos de Facturación

*Miembros deben prepararse para tener un plazo de pago diferente*

Utilidades generan facturas basadas en lo que se llama "ciclos de facturación". Ciclos de facturación se determinan mensuales, se realiza por los lectores de medidores que andan de casa en casa, documentando los datos de uso eléctrico. Medidores se agrupan en grupos llamados rutas. Estas rutas generalmente son determinadas por la ubicación y son importantes porque un lector de medidor sólo puede recoger tantas lecturas en un día; por lo tanto, las rutas crean una programación colección factible para los lectores de metro. La colección de rutas para un periodo específico se denomina un ciclo, que determina su ciclo de facturación.

Debido a cómo los ciclos fueron creados y medidores se leen, cada ciclo de facturación puede tener un diverso número de días cada vez. Por ejemplo, ciclos de facturación pueden variar desde 27 a 35 días de duración. Esto significa que sus cuentas no se emiten siempre para el mismo periodo de tiempo, que puede conducir a una fluctuación de las cantidades para cada ciclo.

Incluso con la introducción de sistemas automáticos de medición, hemos mantenido el enfoque de ciclo de facturación porque nuestros sistemas fueron construidos alrededor de él. Ahora que nuestros sistemas han evolucionado, continuamente estamos encontrando maneras de hacer



**Miembros deben prepararse para tener un plazo de pago diferente.**

el ciclo de facturación reflejar mejor nuestras capacidades, así como intentar reducir el costo de producir la factura cada mes y reducir la pérdida de la línea. En este esfuerzo, esperamos mantener bajos costos para que sigúan disfrutando de algunas de las tarifas más bajas en Kansas.

Actualmente, tenemos cuatro ciclos de facturación extendido a lo largo de un mes, y el plan es reducir el número de ciclos de facturación en un intento por mantener la lectura, facturación y pago debida fecha todo dentro de un periodo de un mes. En la actualidad, algunos pago se extiende en el mes siguiente cuando los medidores ya fueron leídos. Los miembros aún tienen 20 completos

días para pagar, pero el plazo del pago ocurre temprano en el mes. Nos damos cuenta que esto puede ser un inconveniente para algunos miembros, entonces en un esfuerzo por reducir el efecto en los miembros, se trasladará los plazos sobre una base gradual, por un par de días al mes. Esperamos que esto le permitirá a los miembros de tiempo para ajustar sus presupuestos. Los miembros pueden esperar su pago de vencimientos a una o dos semanas antes por el final del año.

Los miembros que están teniendo dificultades para pagar sus facturas pueden contactar nuestra oficina al 620-227-2139 para un arreglo de pago o la asistencia de organizaciones sociales establecidos para este propósito. Como una cooperativa, intentamos ser simpático cuando un miembro está experimentando tiempos difíciles, pero que debe ser atenuado por nuestra responsabilidad para proteger a los demás miembros de gastos no cobrados.

Electricidad no es un derecho, sino una responsabilidad. Puede asegurarse de que su luz se queda prendida si trabajar con nosotros, mediante la reducción de otros gastos y mediante el uso de la electricidad sabiamente. Nuestro sitio web ofrece una amplia variedad de ideas para formas de ahorrar energía y ahorrar dinero en [www.victoryelectric.net](http://www.victoryelectric.net).

### Visite Sitio Web y Únase a Nosotros en Facebook

Visite nuestro sitio web [www.victoryelectric.net](http://www.victoryelectric.net). En nuestro sitio Web, usted encontrará un calendario de eventos, con frecuencia pregunta, pago de factura y energía calculadora sólo por nombrar algunas herramientas!

También puede ser una fan de Victory Electric en Facebook buscando Victory Electric Cooperativa Assn, Inc. Consulte nuestra página en Facebook para actualizaciones, información de interrupción y consejos de eficiencia de energía. Facebook es una excelente forma de mantenerse en contacto con nuestros miembros.

