

Principles in Action

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the question, "Can't we all just get along?" As it turns out, it's easier to get along when we focus on what our personal or organizational self-interest is - and find others who have a similar self-interest.

This is how Victory Electric got started. Ordinary folks realized they would be better off working together if they wanted to bring electricity to their community. Once the co-op was established, we soon realized that if we work with our sister co-ops, we can gain control of our power supply, so we formed over 60 generation and transmission cooperatives such as Sunflower Electric, your local generation and transmission cooperative.

This pattern kept repeating, and soon electric co-ops cooperated to form new co-ops that offer a variety of services, such as financing, insurance, IT services and more to ensure that they had ownership and control over these core products. This was done to help serve you, our member-owners, by making sure there would be no interruption in these vital services that help us bring electricity to you.

This cooperation among cooperatives continues today, not only with co-ops directly related to the provision of electricity but also in other sectors as well. Electric co-ops partner with credit unions, food co-ops, housing co-ops and others to help bring critical services to rural residents and businesses throughout the country.

So while we take special note of the value of our cooperative in October, we are delighted to be a part of our community delivering vital services to you all year long.

Thanks, Shane

How Renters Can Fight the Winter Chill

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 33 percent of Americans lease their homes. Unfortunately, many lease agreements forbid major alterations to rental properties. But don't worry, renters! Consider using these low-cost, energy-efficient tips from Victory Electric to improve the efficiency of your home this winter.

Hot savings

Heating the home typically makes up about 48 percent of your utility bill. Set your thermostat as low as is comfortable in the winter—Energy.gov recommends 68 degrees Fahrenheit to boost energy efficiency.

During the winter months, take advantage of heat from sunlight. Open draperies and shades during the day to allow natural light to heat your home. Remember to close them in the evenings as the temperature drops and windowpanes become chilly.

Does your home have window air conditioning units? This winter, remember to insulate the units from the outside with a tight-fitting cover, available at your local home improvement center or hardware store. This keeps heated air from escaping outside. If desired, you can remove the window unit during winter months to prevent energy loss.

Another way to save on heating is to make sure your water heater is set

Try replacing a few of your most frequently used light bulbs with ENERGY STAR-qualified lights, and save more than \$65 a year in energy costs.

at the lowest comfortable setting. Have you experienced scalding hot water when taking a shower? If so, it's likely that your water heater is set too high—which is a waste of energy. Older models of water tanks are often not insulated, which can be easily remedied by covering them with an insulating jacket.

Bright ideas

Lighting is one of the easiest places to start saving energy, and savings are not strictly limited to winter months. Try replacing a few of your most frequently used light bulbs with ENERGY STAR-qualified lights, and save more than \$65 a year in energy costs. ENERGY STAR-qualified compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) use 75 percent less energy and last several times longer than incandescent light bulbs, saving money on energy bills and replacement costs. Practicing energy-efficient habits is another great way to reduce energy use. Always turn off your lights when leaving a room.

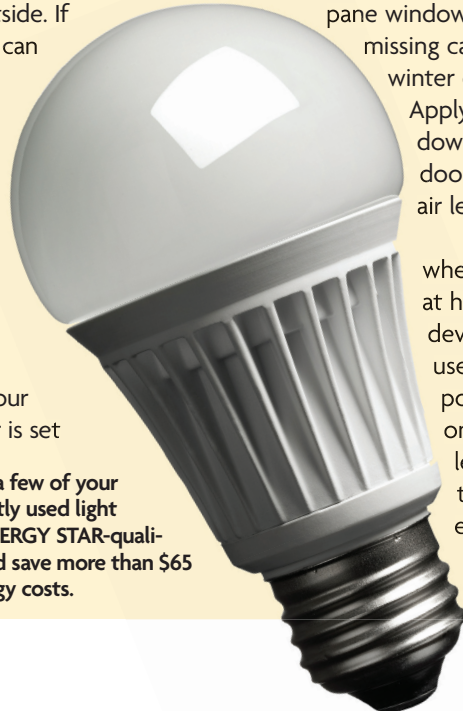
Other ways to save

Leasing an older home or apartment? Odds are you have single-pane windows and old or

missing caulk. Don't let the winter chill seep indoors!

Apply caulk around window frames, sashes and door panels to combat air leaks.

Also, be mindful when using electronics at home. Unplug devices when not in use, and use smart power strips to save on energy use. To learn more ways to be energy efficient around the home, visit www.victoryelectric.net.



Cómo Inquilinos Pueden Combatir el Frío del Invierno

Según la Oficina del Censo de Estados Unidos, el 33 por ciento de los estadounidenses arrendar sus hogares. Por desgracia, muchos contratos de arrendamiento prohíben las transformaciones más importantes a propiedades de alquiler. Pero no te preocupes, los inquilinos! Considere el uso de estos consejos de eficiencia energética de bajo costo, de Victory Electric para mejorar la eficiencia de su casa este invierno.

Ahorro calientes

El calentamiento de la casa típicamente constituye alrededor del 48 por ciento de su factura de servicios públicos. Ponga el termostato tan bajo como sea cómodo en el invierno - Energy.gov recomienda 68 grados Fahrenheit para impulsar la eficiencia energética.

Durante los meses de invierno, aprovechar el calor de la luz solar. Cortinas y las persianas abiertas durante el día para permitir que la luz natural caliente su hogar. Recuerde cerrar en las noches, ya que baja la temperatura y se convierten en cristales fríos.

Tiene en su casa unidad de aire acondicionado en la ventana? Este invierno, recuerde que debe aislar las unidades desde el exterior con una tapa bien ajustada, disponible en su centro de mejoras para el hogar o ferretería local. Esto evita que el aire caliente se escape fuera. Si lo desea, puede quitar la unidad de ventana durante los meses de invierno para evitar la pérdida de energía.

Otra forma de ahorrar en calefacción es asegurarse de que el calentador de agua se fija en su ajuste más bajo. ¿Ha experimentado agua hirviendo al tomar una ducha? Si es así, lo más probable es que el calentador de agua es demasiado alto - que es un desperdicio de energía. Los modelos más antiguos de los tanques de agua a menudo no son aislados, que pueden ser fácilmente remediados cubriéndolos con una camisa aislante

Ideas brillantes

Iluminación es uno de los lugares más fáciles para comenzar a ahorrar energía, y el ahorro no se limita estrictamente a los meses de invierno. Trate

de reemplazar algunos de sus bombillas usadas con más frecuencia con las luces con calificación ENERGY STAR, y ahorrar más de \$ 65 al año en costos de energía. Bombillas ENERGY-STAR calificado compactas fluorescentes (CFLs) utilizan 75 por ciento menos de energía y duran varias veces más que las bombillas incandescentes, ahorrando dinero en las facturas de energía y los costos de reemplazo. Practicar hábitos de eficiencia energética es otra gran manera de reducir el uso de energía. Apague siempre las luces al salir de una habitación.


Otras formas de ahorrar

Arrendamiento de una casa vieja o apartamento? Las probabilidades son que usted tiene ventanas de cristal sencillo y masilla vieja o desaparecida. No dejes que el frío invierno se filtre en el interior! Aplicar masilla alrededor de los marcos de las ventanas, marcos y paneles de las puertas para combatir las fugas de aire. Además, ser conscientes cuando se utiliza los electrónicos en el hogar. Desenchufe los aparatos cuando no estén en uso, y el uso de regletas de enchufes inteligentes para ahorrar en el consumo de energía. Para aprender más maneras de ahorrar energía en el hogar, visite www.victoryelectric.net.

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Working on the LINE

Victory Electric's crews have been busy working in downtown Dodge City making way for the new Ford County Health Complex. Here lineman KIRK KONRADE is hooking up a cutout, which protects the equipment from overload.

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FROM THE CEO

Principles in Action

Seven Cooperative Principles Give Co-ops Guidance



Shane Laws

Last month was national co-op month, the time of year when the 29,000-plus co-ops in the U.S. take a few moments to

ensure their employees, members and the general public truly understand the value of the cooperative business they own. While I applaud any effort that brings more attention to co-ops, my feelings are best represented by a t-shirt slogan, "October is Co-op Month—But I Cooperate All Year Long!"

Cooperatives around the world operate according to the same core principles and values, adopted by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA). Cooperatives trace the roots of these principles to the first modern cooperative founded in Rochdale,

England in 1844.

All cooperative businesses have at their foundation these seven cooperative principles to follow:

1. Voluntary and Open Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Members' Economic Participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training and Information
6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives
7. Concern for Community

One of the ways co-ops demonstrate that they are different from investor-owned businesses is by actually living the principles. Principle 6: Cooperation Among Cooperatives, is our focus this month, and there are many examples that demonstrate how co-ops do this every day. In theory this sounds so simple, answering

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Happy Thanksgiving!

Our office will be closed on November 27-28 for Thanksgiving. We hope you have a safe and happy holiday.

Victory Electric Health Fair a Success, Hundreds Attend for Free Services



More than 70 doctors, health care professionals and vendors from the area graciously donated their time and expertise to offer free services to hundreds of attendees.

Screenings at the Victory Electric Community Health Fair found a few cases of cancer among the many free exams performed on October 4.

Victory Electric and our partners hosted the 7th Annual Victory Electric Community Health Fair. More than 70 doctors, health care professionals and vendors from the area graciously donated their time and expertise to offer free services to hundreds of attendees.

Services offered at this year's fair included free eye auto-refraction screenings, hearing tests, blood pressure checks, skin cancer screenings, pap smears and breast exams, dental exams and oral cancer screenings, spinal screenings, car seat safety inspections, massages, hearing tests, \$20 flu shots, and \$10 complete blood screens.

To put everything in perspective, 296 flu shots were completed, 233 complete blood screens, 101 skin cancer screenings, 88 blood



A nurse from the medical center draws blood for the complete blood screens.

pressure checks, 75 fluoride treatments, 179 dental exams/oral cancer screenings, 78 bone density scans, 70 visual acuity screenings, 125 pap smears, 76 breast exams, and 36 hearing tests.

We would like to thank all those who assisted in the planning and organization of the event; you were an invaluable resource. Also, thank you to the 73 volunteers



Medical professionals gave 296 flu shots at the Health Fair.

from the community who came out to help us keep everything running smoothly. We could not have hosted the health fair without you.

Thanks to all of our partners and sponsors: Dodge City Medical Center, Western Plains Medical Complex, Phillips Chiropractic and Physical Therapy, Dodge City Public Schools, Western State Bank

Expo, Dodge City Daily Globe, Peterson Labs, Landmark Bank, Western Beverage, Service Master, The Inn Pancake House, Tacos Jalisco's, Kriz-Davis, Tianguis Carniseria, Mi Ranchito, and many more. We would also like to give a special thanks to Melissa McCoy, Kelly Stecklein,

Deb Goodwin, Kelly Slatery, Melyssa White, and Dodge City High School FCCLA for all their hard work and dedication. Victory Electric is already looking forward to the 8th Annual Community Health Fair, and we hope to see everyone there.



Maps were available to help attendees find providers throughout the building.



Nurses from several local offices and nursing students from DCCC helped draw blood.



Free dental exams were administered by local dentists.



Victory employees volunteered their time to help at the health fair.



Epic Vision, a new vision provider in Dodge City, performed visual acuity screenings.

“Playing Chicken” with Kansas Energy Prices

As a member of Victory Electric Cooperative you are also a member-owner of Sunflower Electric Power Corporation and Mid-Kansas Electric Company. Sunflower and Mid-Kansas not only provide wholesale generation and transmission (G&T) services to Victory and their other members, but your G&T staff also stays abreast of federal and state regulations that impact the electric industry and ultimately those we serve at the end of the line.

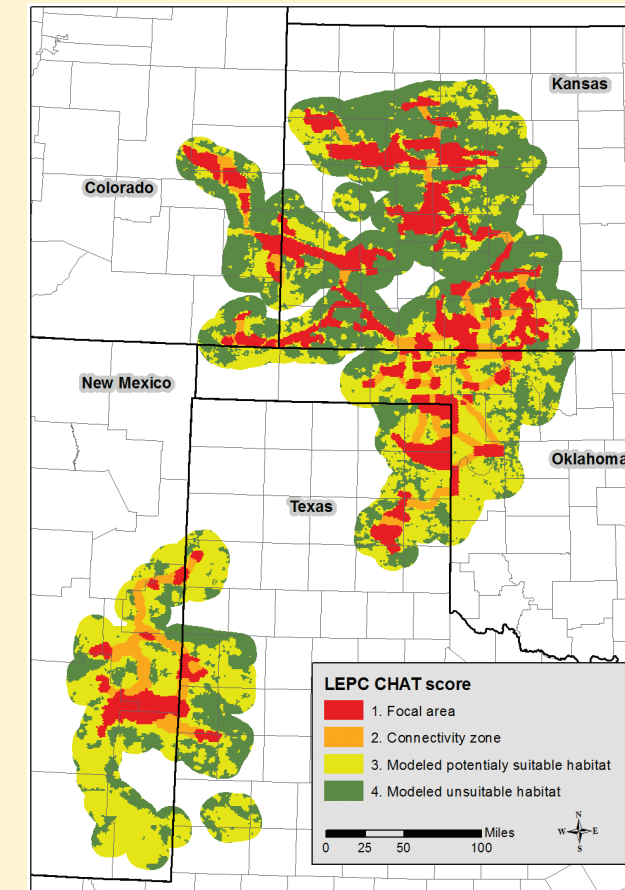
For 16 years, your G&T staff members have advocated on behalf of their members as the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) contemplated listing the lesser prairie chicken (LPC) as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Last spring, the USFWS announced its decision to list the bird as threatened, a decision that is expected to cost Kansans millions of dollars as local governments and businesses comply with regulations associated with the listing.

Since the ESA does not require the USFWS to consider economic impacts when listing a species, costs now associated with compliance of the new regulations will impact economic growth within and beyond the five-state region where the bird is protected. The listing will certainly impact land use by farmers and ranchers—according to the USFWS, 90 percent of the species' habitat occurs on private lands—and will also impose costs on developers of home sites, new roadways, electric and communication infrastructure and other utilities.

When costs of production rise, it means that purchases—everything from a tank of gas to hamburger to a gallon of milk—will cost more money as a result of the listing of the LPC. For electric ratepayers, these increased costs will be reflected in monthly electric bills.

Since its enactment, the ESA has been among the most contentious environmental laws because its substantive provisions can affect the use of both government and private lands and



resources. Furthermore, once a species is listed, it is a difficult decision to reverse, even if protection of a species is no longer needed.

Many believe the push to list the bird as threatened was overstated. While the drought contributed to the overall decline in numbers, expansion of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) has increased LPC numbers in western Kansas. Landowners have also voluntarily taken measures to improve habitat with grassland establishment/restoration, brush management, and adoption of recommended grazing and burning techniques.

“This was a very disappointing decision. We had been working hard to urge an outcome that balanced

the interests of the rural Kansas economy with goals to encourage the LPC population,” said Bruce Graham, CEO of Kansas Electric Cooperatives, the statewide service organization for electric cooperatives to which Sunflower belongs.

“The decision preempts voluntary conservation efforts in favor of a plan that will extract millions of dollars from a struggling rural economy.”

Electric cooperative members, in particular, will feel the impact of the listing since electric cooperatives often serve in rural areas where there are fewer customers to share the cost of utility operations. Victory Electric and the other distribution cooperatives that own Sunflower and Mid-Kansas will be especially hard hit since, according to the USFWS, of the five states in the native range of the LPC, more than half of the LPC population is located in western Kansas. In fact, more than seven million acres are included in the Kansas LPC range.

Hoping to forestall the listing of the LPC, the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA)—made up of fish and wildlife officials in the five states where the LPC is most often found—developed a Rangewide Conservation Plan (RCP). The mission of the RCP is to protect the species and give regulatory sureness to landowners and industry. Even though the plan was endorsed by the USFWS, the agency still listed the LPC as a threatened species.

As a result of the listing, mitigation is ex-

pected to be costly. WAFWA's RCP essentially serves as a potential mitigation strategy, but the admission price is costly. It is likely that Sunflower and Mid-Kansas will enroll in WAFWA's RCP plan, which will act as a shield from fines in the event that a prairie chicken(s) or habitat is disturbed or harmed as defined in the ESA. However, protection from all penalties and fines is not clearly defined or guaranteed, so the total cost of living in rural America with the now threatened LPC is yet to be determined. What is certain is that WAFWA's plan will increase costs to complete transmission and distribution line projects, thereby increasing the cost of electricity.

Soon after the listing, Gov. Brownback announced that Kansas, along with North Dakota, has joined an Oklahoma lawsuit to contest the listing of the LPC.

“When government regulations make it more difficult to reside and make a living in rural America, electric cooperatives take notice,” said Shane Laws CEO of Victory Electric Cooperative. “Be assured that Victory staff, along with staff representing Sunflower and Mid-Kansas,

will continue to follow the progress of this decision and will actively engage in appropriate measures to ensure that our members continue to receive reliable electricity at a competitive price.”

