

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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620-227-2139  
www.victoryelectric.net

## THE VICTORY ELECTRIC CO-OP

# electronews



### The Victory Electric Co-op Assn., Inc.

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### FROM THE CEO

## The Power of Policy Impacts Our Members



Shane Laws

It seems you can't turn on a TV, listen to the radio, or pick up a newspaper without hearing about ineffectiveness in government. It

often seems that no matter what we do or who we vote for, we don't feel truly represented in either our state or national governments.

At Victory Electric, we understand how that feels, and we have been there ourselves. That feeling, along with a strong desire to take action, is the reason why we have dedicated staff that works to ensure our members' interests are represented, and heard, by elected officials.

Members of our government relations and policy teams work tirelessly to tackle complicated regulatory and policy issues. They apply these issues to the ever-changing energy market and then evaluate how those issues impact our communities. They have a deep understanding of the needs of the communities we serve, and they use that knowledge to ensure that your needs are represented in major legislative decision-making.

The ability to impact change is a huge part of being a member of Vic-

tory Electric. We don't lobby elected officials on behalf of investors with the aim to increase profit margins. We work with elected officials to make sure that your interests are being considered to ensure that you will always be provided with safe, reliable and affordable electric service. That is the cooperative difference.

But it isn't just our government relations team that helps us affect policy and legislative change. Your voice makes a huge difference in how quickly and effectively we can drive change. Through our grassroots advocacy programs we encourage you to bring your ideas to the table and to make your voice heard. This is how we show state and national officials that we are acting in your best interest. Your collective voice shows that we represent communities and families, not corporate interests.

The next time you are feeling frustrated, the next time you want to be heard or the next time you want to make a change in your community, call us to find out what we are doing to represent your interests, and find out how you can help affect impactful change in our communities. You can also visit [action.coop](http://action.coop) to see the latest updates on legislation affecting electric cooperatives.

*Thanks, Shane*

FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Victory Seeks Board Nominations



Kenny Wehkamp

**Dear Victory Members,**  
It is time once again to start thinking about Victory Electric's annual membership meeting held on April 14, 2015.

We are currently soliciting nominations for Victory Electric's board of trustees. Positions up for election are in District 1, currently held by **DARYL TIEBEN**, Dodge City; District 3, currently held by **KEN SCHULTE**, Spearville; District 8, currently held by **CEDRIC DREWES**, Dodge City; and District 10, currently held by **TERRI LARSON**, Dodge City.

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 within the district which you wish to represent. Also, 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.

Duties of an elected trustee include: attending a monthly six-to-eight hour board meeting, board training opportunities, and some travel will be required.

If you would like to run for a position, or you know someone interested, please send a letter of interest with qualifications to Shane Laws or Kenny Wehkamp at Victory Electric, P.O. Box 1335, Dodge City, KS 67801.

Sincerely,  
**KENNY WEHKAMP, PRESIDENT**

# Mark Your Calendars!

The 69th Annual Meeting of Victory Electric has been scheduled for April 14 at the Western State Bank Expo Center.

A meal will be served and everyone attending will receive a registration gift and have a chance to win some great door prizes. Stay tuned for more details on the upcoming annual meeting.



## FIVE Space Heater Safety Tips

As temperatures drop this winter, many will look for supplemental heating sources for their homes. Space heaters can be a good alternative for those who want to warm one area of their home without turning up the thermostat on the central heating system. However, space heaters are also responsible for 32 percent of house fires, according to the National Fire Protection Association.

If you are planning to use a space heater in your home this winter, review these tips from Victory Electric Cooperative to keep you, your family and your property safe.

**1 Materials**—What are the components of your space heater made of? Parts like metal grating can be hot to the touch and may burn anyone who gets too close. Make sure you purchase a heater that is cool to the touch and has guards over the coils just in case little fingers get too close.

**2 Placement**—While it can be tempting to place a small heater on a shelf so it is not in the way of pets and children, it is safest to leave the heater on a level floor on a nonflammable surface. Keeping the space heater on the floor can keep it from falling over, preventing fire hazards. Also, remember

that space heaters and bathrooms are not a good combination, unless the heater is designed for bathroom use. Moisture can damage the heater.

The most important rule about space heater placement is the three-foot rule. Whether you are using the heater in the bedroom, living room or kitchen, space heaters should always be kept three feet away from flammable materials and out of the way of children and pets.

**3 Special Features**—Does your space heater have an auto shutoff function if tipped over? Auto shutoff can be a lifesaver. If you currently own a space heater without auto shutoff, consider purchasing a heater with this important safety feature.

**4 Cords**—You should never use an extension cord when plugging in a space heater as it can cause overheating. The space heater should be plugged directly into a wall outlet, and should be the only thing plugged in to the wall outlet. Also make sure cords aren't in a high-traffic area so they are not a tripping hazard.

**5 Use**—Never leave a heater unattended while in use. If you are leaving your home or going to bed, make sure to unplug the heater.



# High School Juniors: Win a Free Trip to Washington, D.C., or Steamboat Springs, Colorado

If you are a high school junior and would like to increase your leadership skills, meet new friends and travel, you can apply for the Youth Tour through Victory Electric.

During the Cooperative Youth Tour, June 11-18, 2015, students will join 1,600 youth from across the nation in Washington, D.C. Participants will visit the monuments and other attractions, as well as visit Capitol Hill to learn more about how our government works.

At the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp, July 11-17, 2015, students will join youth from Colorado, Wyoming, Oklahoma and Kansas. Campers form a mock cooperative, participate in leadership activities, and learn about the cooperatives.

Students will be selected based on a resumé, application and an interview. To apply, contact your high school counselor, high school principal, or Jerri Imgarten at Victory Electric Cooperative by calling 620-371-7730 or 800-279-7915 for more information about the contest.

The deadline for applications is **January 31, 2015.**

## Two Winners, All-Expenses-Paid Electric Cooperative Youth Tour June 11-18, 2015, in Washington, D.C.



2014 D.C. winners (from left) MacKenzy Meis, Andrea Sanchez, and Camryn Williamson at the U.S. Capitol before meeting with Senators Jerry Moran and Pat Roberts.

## Two Winners, All-Expenses-Paid Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp July 11-17, 2015, in Steamboat Springs, CO



2014 camp winners (from left) Madison Salmans, Ashlee Bohannon, and Carolina Ramirez pose near Elk River at their camp in Colorado.

## The deadline for applications is January 31, 2015.

### Victory Electric Cooperative Youth Tour Application

*The deadline for applications is January 31, 2015*

Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant Cell Number \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parents or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Home Number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

I agree that all information supplied in this application is accurate and true. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Applicant)

I hereby grant permission for \_\_\_\_\_ to enter the 2015 Youth Tour competition sponsored  
by The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian)

## Statement of Non-Discrimination

The Victory Electric Cooperative Association, Inc., is the recipient of federal financial assistance from the rural utilities Service (RUS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's non-discrimination compliance efforts is Shane Laws, CEO of The Victory Electric Cooperative Association, Inc. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization

has subjected them to discrimination may file a written complaint with this organization; the Director, office of Civil rights, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington D.C. 20250; or the Administrator, rural utilities Services, Washington, D. C., 20250. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discriminatory action, or by such later date to which the Director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of Civil rights or the Administrator of RUS extends the time for filing. Identity of complainants will be kept confidential except to the extent necessary to carry out the purposes of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

## Victory Electric Bill Payment Options

Pay your bill online at [www.victoryelectric.net](http://www.victoryelectric.net), at our office, by mail or at any of our pay stations.

Victory Electric has several convenient options for you, the member, to pay your bill.

In addition to paying in our office or by mail, options include online bill pay at [www.victoryelectric.net](http://www.victoryelectric.net), drop boxes at Vic-



tory Electric and City of Dodge City, and a pay station at Mr. Payroll, 400 E Wyatt Earp.

## Visit Our Website & Join us on Facebook



Visit our website 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](http://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.

## Mapping Our Electric

Driving across Kansas, you may have seen the construction of high-voltage transmission lines, poles, and substations built to accommodate 115 kilovolts of electricity and higher. These projects are part of our nation's high-voltage electric system—comparable to our interstate highways that allow for high volumes of traffic to get from one place to another. This electric grid is essential for the long-distance transmission of electricity.

### Multiple factors drive transmission construction

This construction is driven by multiple factors, including improvements to meet federal reliability standards; improvements to meet the growing load on the system; support for new generation facilities; development of the state's wind resources; and improvements to meet the demands of the new energy market.

Transmission-owning utilities in Kansas—including Sunflower Electric Power Corporation and Mid-Kansas Electric Company, your wholesale generation and transmission (G&T) providers—are all members of the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), the regional transmission organization that governs the supply of power and transmission services to its members in nine states. Through a complex study process, transmission owners, with oversight from the SPP, establish which transmission projects are needed to maintain electric reliability in the region.

### Routing a line involves many steps

Receiving notification from the SPP to construct a transmission line is only the beginning. When designing and routing a line, your G&T staff members first consider existing opportunities that are compatible with the new project and that may help to reduce impacts to people and the environment, such as property lines, roads, railroads, pipelines, section lines, and

# Our Electric Transmission System

other transmission infrastructure. In addition, staff must weigh technical requirements, such as cost, access to the line for maintenance, length, and redundancy (adequacy of existing service).

Staff must also consider constraints that may limit transmission line development due to local, state, and federal regulations or impacts that are difficult to mitigate. For example, sensitive locations such as cemeteries, churches, center-pivot irrigation, terraced cropland, sensitive wildlife areas, historical landmarks, airports, and residential areas affect decisions made in the design and line route. Ultimately, the goal is to build the most cost-effective, reliable line while also considering impacts to the environment and landowners.

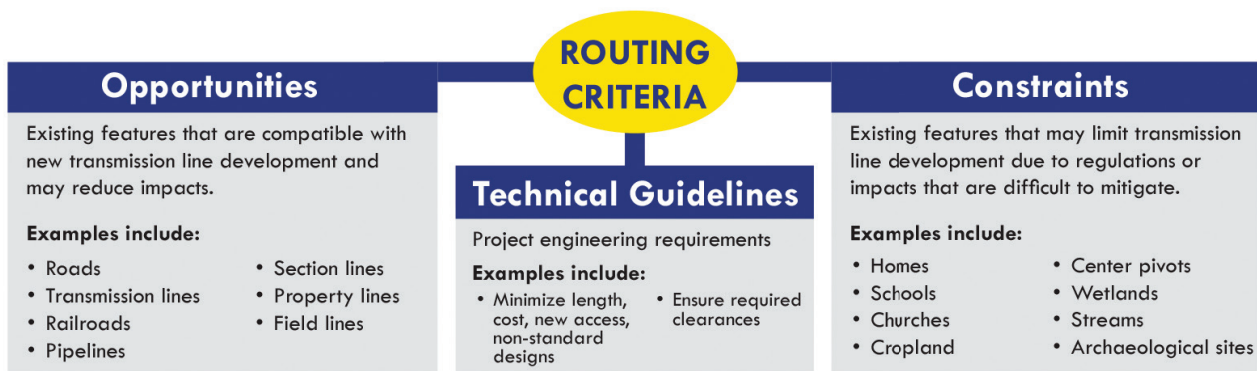
## Public input is highly valuable

Routing a line requires input from a variety of sources, including local, state and federal agencies, such as the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism and the Kansas Department of Transportation. Input and feedback from landowners is also vital because these stakeholders are able to provide insight regarding special circumstances or the farming and ranching activities that need to be considered. Public meetings—along with other forms of communication—explain the need for the project and give landowners opportunities to give feedback about how the project may impact them. Landowners are also provided with the names, phone numbers, and email addresses of contact persons so they can discuss their concerns.

Once a route is established as the best option, the electric utility must obtain permission (called an easement) from impacted landowners to enter their properties and to build, operate, and maintain the transmission line. Easements are purchased at fair market value, but the landowners still own and use their property subject to the right-of-way.

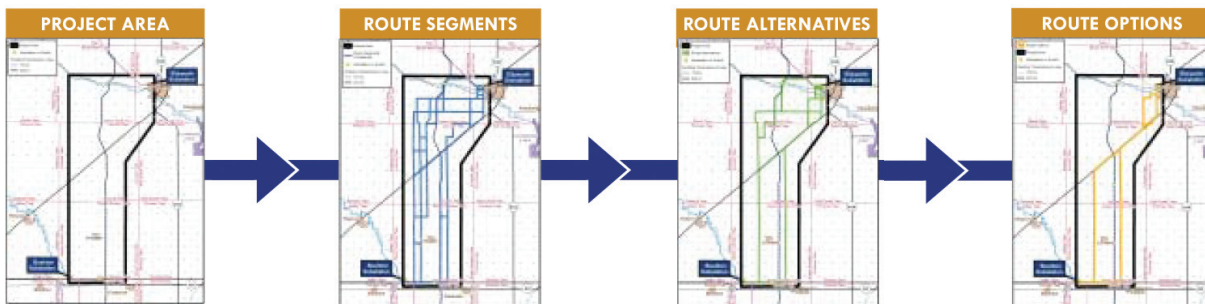
Sunflower and MKEC take pride in being good stewards of the land and strive to limit the impact to property. At the same time, new high-voltage transmission projects are often needed for the continued delivery of wholesale electricity in a reliable way. Be assured that Sunflower and MKEC will continue to approach these projects with the best interest of Victory Electric and you our members in mind.

## Transmission Line Route Development



### What is the process for identifying route options?

The project area is analyzed using the routing criteria, and the potential routes are progressively refined.



## CFL Charlie Says "Come Get Your Free CFL!"



### This month's lucky winners are...

Isaac P Aberson, Margie Dixon, Edward P Lara, Jose J Orozco, Lana Ross, Daniel M Strecker, Margaret Sumaya, Lucinda Tarango, Joy D Dvorak, and Yolanda Hernandez.

Come by Victory Electric Cooperative to get your free compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL). Every month, Victory Electric gives members free CFL light bulbs. Congratulations winners!

## 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 Cooperative 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.

# Cinco consejos de seguridad para el calentón de espacio

Como las temperaturas bajan este invierno, muchos buscan fuentes suplementarios de calefacción para sus hogares. Los calentadores pueden ser una buena alternativa para aquellos que quieren calentar un área de su hogar sin subir el termostato de la calefacción central. Sin embargo, los calentadores son también responsables de 32 por ciento de los incendios de casas, según la National Fire Protection Association. Si usted planea usar un calentador en su casa este invierno, revise estos consejos de Victory Electric para mantener a usted, su familia y su propiedad a salvo.

**1 Materiales**—De que están hechos los componentes de su calentador? Piezas como rejilla de metal pueden estar calientes al tacto y pueden quemar a cualquiera que se acerque demasiado. Asegúrese de que usted compra un calentador que sea frío al tacto y tenga guardias sobre las bobinas por si acaso dedos acercarse demasiado.

**2 Colocación**—Al mismo tiempo aunque puede ser tentador para colocar un pequeño calentador en un estante, para que no esté en el camino de las mascotas y los niños, lo más seguro es dejar el calentador sobre un piso nivelado sobre una superficie no inflamable. Manteniendo el calentador en el piso puede evitar caerse, prevención de riesgos de incendio. Además, recuerde que los calentadores y los baños no son una buena combinación, a menos que el calentador está diseñado para el uso del baño. Humedad puede dañar el calentador.

La regla más importante sobre colocación de calentador de espacio es la regla de tres pies. Si usted está



Space heaters are a great alternative for warming one area of your home, but they can be dangerous when used incorrectly.

utilizando el calentador en el dormitorio, sala de estar o cocina, calentadores siempre debe mantenerse alejado de materiales inflamables y alejados de los niños y las mascotas de tres pies.

**3 Características especiales**—Su calentador tiene una función de auto apagado si vuelca? Apagado automático puede ser un salvavidas. Si usted posee actualmente un calentador sin apagado automático, considerar la compra de un calentador con esta característica de seguridad importante.

**4 Cables**—Nunca utilice un cable de extensión al enchufar un calentador que puede causar un sobrecalentamiento. El calentador debe ser enchufado directamente en un tomacorriente de pared, y debe ser lo único enchufado en el tomacorriente de pared. También asegúrese de que los cables no son en una zona de alto tráfico y no son un riesgo de tropiezo.

**5 Use**—nunca deje desatendida un calentador mientras está en uso. Si vas a tu casa o ir a la cama, asegúrese de desenchufar el calentador.

Siguiendo estos consejos y asegurándose de seguir las instrucciones del fabricante pueden mantenerse a salvo este invierno.

# Dodge City Parade of Lights and Chili Contest

The 13th Annual Christmas Parade of Lights and Chili Contest was held on December 1 in Dodge City.

Sponsored by the Dodge City Daily Globe, Victory Electric, the City of Dodge City, Main Street, and True Value, the events attracted hundreds of visitors to Dodge City.

The chili contest had an impressive 26 entries. The lucky winners in the Judges Choice category were **WESTERN BEVERAGE**, first place; **UNITED WIRELESS ARENA**, second; and **DEAN SMITH**, third. Those who impressed the crowd won the People's Choice category. Winners were **ARROWHEAD WEST**, first place; **DODGE CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT**, second; and **HEADCASES SALON**, third. All winners received a plaque sponsored by Victory Electric.

The parade sported more than 20 entries, ranging from an old fire truck, to flying reindeer, to floats decked out in lights. Thanks to all who attended, and we hope to see you next year!



1. Maupins delighted the kids with their Santa Sleigh and reindeer.
2. Victory Electric decked out a tree trimming truck with lights.
3. The Main Street organization served popcorn and Santa was available for all the kids.
4. Arrowhead West won the People's Choice Award at the Chili Contest.
5. Western Beverage accepted the award for their first place chili in the Judges Choice category.



# The Evolution of Your Electric Meter

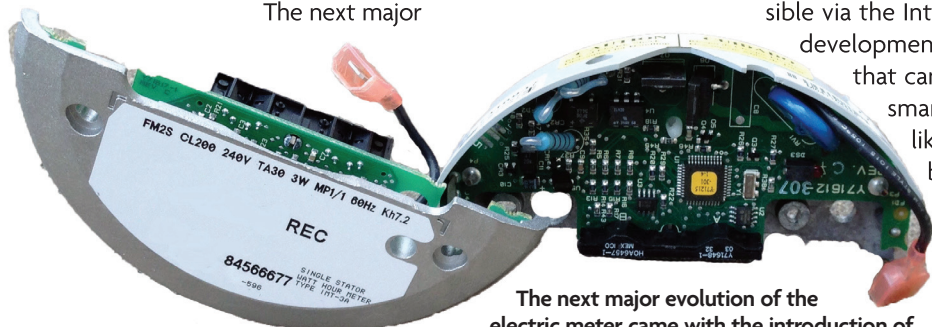
Aside from the poles and wires, the electric meter is probably the most recognized part of your cooperative's delivery system. This device is an integral part of the objective Victory Electric Co-operative has in providing the highest possible quality electric service at the lowest possible cost. Without the meter, we would be forced to rely on less reliable and less equitable methods of calculating the cost of each member's electric service.

Like all technology, the electric meter has evolved over the years. The original style of meter would make a watchmaker proud. It relies upon an intricate set of gears to accurately measure the amount of electricity used in the same way a mechanical watch relies on its gears to tell time. Many members will recognize the flat spinning dial, its black mark rotating under the glass cover and the set of dial hands moving. So, how does this type of meter function?

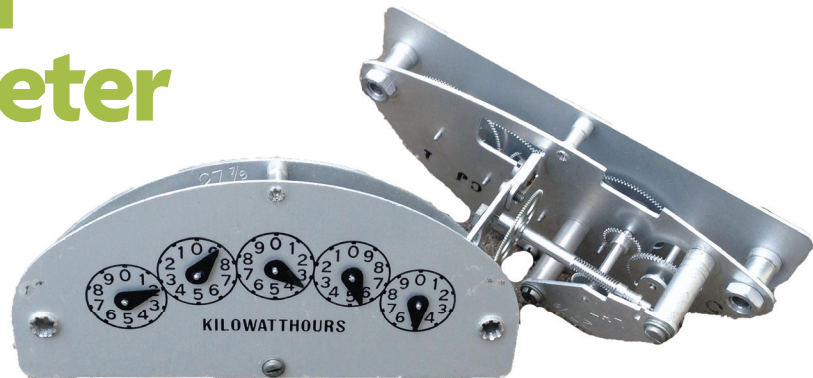
The rotating disk is mounted to a geared vertical shaft set between a pair of electro-magnets. The flow of electricity through the meter causes the magnets to power up, and their interaction makes the disk rotate. The speed of rotation depends on the amount of electricity used at the time. The shaft meshes with the gear train that turns the dial hands. The first dial registers in increments of single kilowatt-hours (kWh), the next dial registers 10 kWh, then 100 and so forth up to 10,000 kWh.

Though highly accurate and reliable, the drawback to the mechanical meter is that a human must read the consumption and input it into a billing system, a process both time intensive and susceptible to human error.

The next major



The next major evolution of the electric meter came with the introduction of an electronic module. This module is an addition to the mechanical meter.



The electro-mechanical meter relies upon an intricate set of gears to accurately measure the amount of electricity used.

evolution of the meter came with the introduction of an electronic module. This module is added to the mechanical meter just described. It reads the rotations of the meter's flat dial and captures that data in memory. At regular intervals, this module reports consumption via the power lines or radio signals to the electric co-op's offices where it is automatically entered into the billing system. This advancement eliminates human error and greatly reduces costs for the cooperative.

The all-digital meter reflects the current stage of meter evolution. As the name suggests, there are no longer any gears and rotating disks. Using electronics, the meter measures the use of electricity, stores the data and reports that data in the same manner as the electronic module. In a little homage to the original spinning disk, many digital meters replicate that feature with a series of horizontal bars that march across the face of the display. Depending upon the meter make, the member can use a button to cycle through the display to get basic service data.

So where will meters go from here? It seems that the next step in meter evolution will depend largely upon how far the smart home develops. As more appliances and devices become accessible via the Internet, members may drive the development of a new generation of meters that can also communicate with their smart phone, tablet or PC. Seems like we'll have to wait and see, but it should be interesting. Rest assured, Victory Electric will make the best use of available technology to control costs, render accurate bills and keep your service quality high.