

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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THE VICTORY ELECTRIC CO-OP

electronews



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FROM THE CEO

What is a Load Forecast?

When we hear the word “forecast,” we typically think of the weather. But electric cooperatives are tasked with managing a different type of forecast—a *load forecast*.

A load forecast is exactly what it sounds like—an estimate or prediction of how much electricity will be needed in the future. We all depend on power to meet our daily needs, but the amount we use varies from season-to-season, day-to-day and even hour-by-hour. This is why Sunflower Electric and Kansas Electric Power Cooperative, KEPCo, Victory Electric’s power suppliers, plan far in advance to make sure there is enough power available to meet electricity demands.

Growth of electricity demand has actually decreased each decade since the 1950s, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Rising demand for electric service is offset by efficiency gains from new appliance standards and investments in energy efficient equipment.

As demand fluctuates, Victory Electric is prepared to maintain electrical loads and keep the system running efficiently. This means extensive planning—even up to 20 years in advance. Victory Electric works with Sunflower and KEPCo to evaluate areas of growth and predict demand patterns for our local communities.

For example, if a new subdivision or residential area is constructed in our service territory, it’s our responsibility to ensure that adequate power supply will be provided to the members of that community. This type of growth may mean running new poles and electrical lines to the site or even building a new substation. Whatever the need—Victory Electric is prepared and will continue to provide members with safe, reliable electric service.

As technology changes, we’re becoming more efficient. We finished deploying a new Advanced Metering Infrastructure, AMI, system in 2014, which provides extremely accurate meter readings. In turn, this technology improves our ability to forecast future electrical loads.

In addition to working with Victory Electric, Sunflower and KEPCo collect data from other electric cooperatives in Kansas to project future demand. Planning ahead improves reliability, and projecting the amount of electricity that will be purchased ensures the best economic price for power.

At Victory Electric, we can’t predict the future, but we can be prepared for what it holds.

Thanks, Shane



Shane Laws

“As technology changes, we’re becoming more efficient.”

Victory Electric Bill Payment Options



Pay your bill online at www.victoryelectric.net, at our office, by mail or at any of our pay stations.

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

In addition to paying in our office or by mail, you may choose online bill pay at www.victoryelectric.net, or drop boxes at Victory Electric and City of Dodge City.

Health Fair Notice

Due to scheduling conflicts with the Expo Center, we are moving the annual Victory Electric Community health fair from the first weekend of October to Sept. 19, 2015. More details will be sent in a few months.

8th Annual
Community Health Fair
Victory Electric

Visit Us Online



Visit our website at 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!

Also like our page on Facebook at facebook.com/VictoryElectric or by searching for The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc.

Co-ops Engage in Political Activism

The November elections have come and gone, and many are relieved they no longer have to hear or watch political campaign ads. For staff at Victory Electric and for staff representing Sunflower Electric Power Corporation and Mid-Kansas Electric Company—utilities that provide you with wholesale generation and transmission (G&T) services—the conclusion of elections brings an even busier schedule for those advocating on your behalf on local, state and national issues.

As a member of Victory Electric our mission is to provide you with reliable service at the lowest possible cost. You may not be aware, however, that as a member, you have cooperative staff advocating for legislation, policies and programs that protect the way of life you value. This political activism is tied directly to the seventh cooperative principle: concern for community.

Staff members stay abreast of legislation and policies that could impact the cost and reliability of your electric service. We are also engaged in other issues that impact rural areas, such as environmental regulations that affect agriculture, housing projects, transportation projects, and business incentives for rural areas.

As with most endeavors, having a strategic approach to advocating for members raises the probability of success.

► **Spreading the Word.** Year round, cooperative staff members provide information to elected officials and agencies leaders about the importance of cooperatives in our community and our nation. The cooperative business model, which is based democratic membership and service to our members, is vital to our nation's economy and the well-being of our members.

► **Building Relationships.** Cooperative

staff members get to know as many elected and appointed leaders as possible. This means we attend events—such as legislative forums, community civic club meetings, legislative committee hearings, and community celebrations—to build relationships with those who will make decisions that impact our members. Developing a relationship with leaders builds trust and mutual respect, which can bring about positive change for our members.

► **Telling our Story.** Cooperatives, which are democratically governed, have always understood the importance of having a voice. Now, however, the voices from rural Kansas are more important than ever. Population centers determine legislative districts, and fewer legislators have ties to rural areas. Cooperative staff members provide information to elected officials and agency leaders—at home, in Topeka, and in Washington, DC—about the impact of proposed policies and regulations on people living in our service territory. They won't know our story unless we tell it.

► **Expressing Gratitude.** Cooperative staff members use every opportunity to give credit and thanks to elected and agency leaders. When they've done something that will protect the way of life our members value, we acknowledge their good works.

Staff at Victory Electric will continue to advocate for policies that protect the way of life you value in central and western Kansas. While we take our role in political activism very seriously, we know that the most important voice is yours. We encourage you to be active regarding issues that impact you and your community, also. Alone we can do a little, but together we can do more.

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. This institution is an equal opportunity employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complain of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax 202690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Implementing Quality Surge Protection in the Home

There is little, if anything, you can buy today that does not have some electronic component. Even clothing as wearable electronics is starting to take hold. Not to mention a device that allows you to make a keyboard from bananas. So, it's time to take a look at making sure your electronics last as long as possible. I'm not talking about replacement plans or extended warranties. Today we're talking about protecting your products from electrical surges.

The first order of business is to define a surge. Here's one from Computer Hope on the 'Net. "Alternatively known as a line surge, a surge is an unexpected increase in voltage in an electrical current that causes damage to electrical equipment. For example, the standard United States voltage is 120V. If an electrical current above this rating was to come through a power outlet for more than three nanoseconds, this would be considered a surge, anything less is considered a spike. A surge is usually created by lightning and can damage unprotected computers and sometimes even protected computers."

Many people think a blink from Victory's system is a surge, but these are generally caused by something like a tree contacting a line. In such cases, the system's protective devices work, causing an interruption to protect the wires and other components. These are not surges, but more like turning a light on and off.

True surges will enter a home through any number of avenues. The most obvious is through the power lines. Less obvious is through the telephone lines, cable/satellite connections, water lines and any other metallic system that connects to your home. So, to protect against surges, you need to take a three-pronged approach.

Perhaps the most important thing to do is to be sure all the grounds in your home are good and that they are bonded together. Over the years, grounds can

deteriorate; new services can be added with inadequate grounding and so forth. A faulty ground will allow surges into the home rather than bleeding them off into the earth. Get a qualified electrician to test and correct your grounding system.

Next, protect your electrical service entrance with a surge device. The easiest to install are those mounted behind the meter. They can also be mounted at the main electric panel. When a surge travels down the electric lines, these devices will act to "clamp" the surge and reduce its power. These are sacrificial devices that allow themselves to be destroyed rather than allowing the surge to pass through. Noble devices indeed!

The third prong is to protect expensive devices at their point of use. Computers and entertainment equipment are prime examples. Remember that surges can enter the home via avenues other than the power lines. Computers and entertainment equipment are frequently connected to cable and phone lines. Those devices need to have protection at the point of use that covers all possible avenues. These are generally in the form of a power strip or wall device most of us are familiar with. Use a quality product from a manufacturer such as Monster, Belkin, Tripp Lite, or APC, to name a few. Look for one with a joule rating of at least 1,000, a connected equipment warranty and compatibility with digital signals from cable and satellite. While you are at it, look for a "smart" strip that turns off all but one connected device when not in use.

Save money on your electric bill while protecting your equipment. It's a definite win-win.



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. All attendees 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.

April 2015						
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Using Powerful Smartphone Apps Can Help You Save

The smartphone is enabling the world to take advantage of the “Internet of things” and the “connected home” unlike any other device to come before it. In case you are not familiar with these two phrases, they both boil down to this—more products and appliances are being sold ready to connect to the Internet. The goal of this connectivity is many fold, including control, management, troubleshooting, comfort, convenience, security and entertainment.

Where does the smartphone enter this picture? According to several estimates, more than 50 percent of cell phones used in the U.S. qualify as smartphones. Because smartphone users almost never leave home without their device, and most keep it with them while they are home, it has become the catalyst that makes the “Internet of things” and the “connected home” a

reality. Through apps, appliances and products can now be controlled and managed from a single device.

Let’s take a look at a selection of powerful smartphone apps. Since we are an electric cooperative, energy control and efficiency rank high on our list of priorities. Nest cracked the smart thermostat market open a few years back. This connectivity allows access for temperature control and monitoring, plus simplifies software updates to fix bugs and add features. Since then, Nest has introduced a smoke and carbon monoxide detector, as well as a video camera.

Companies such as Belkin and Insteon have a wide range of products for home automation that include energy control features. Let’s look at Insteon for a moment. They offer replacement receptacles and switches that can be controlled via their app. They also offer sensors and security devices so you can

create your own home security system. Insteon’s products work with the app to send alerts, allow you to create schedules, monitor the devices and of course, directly control them.

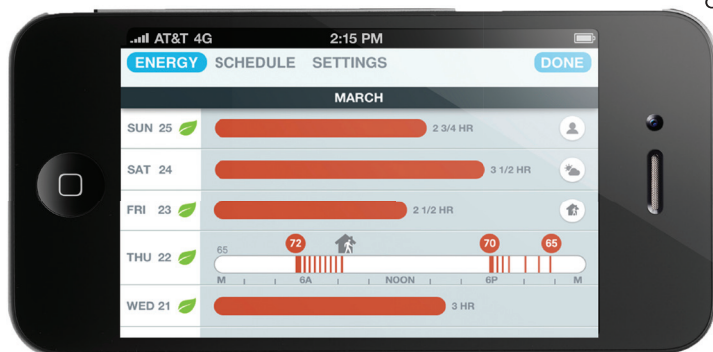
Belkin’s entry falls under the name of WeMo

and offers similar functionality.

Aside from automating your home, there are a lot of additional things your smartphone can do. For those who are Star Trek fans, think of Spock’s tri-corder, that marvelous device that allowed him to perform science magic on alien planets. The smartphone is bringing a tri-corder to everyone who has an interest. With small attachments, you can do amazing things. Camera buffs can use the Lumu Light Meter to calculate light conditions for precise photography. Or you can simply download the LightMeter app from whitegoods to measure foot-candle levels wherever you desire.

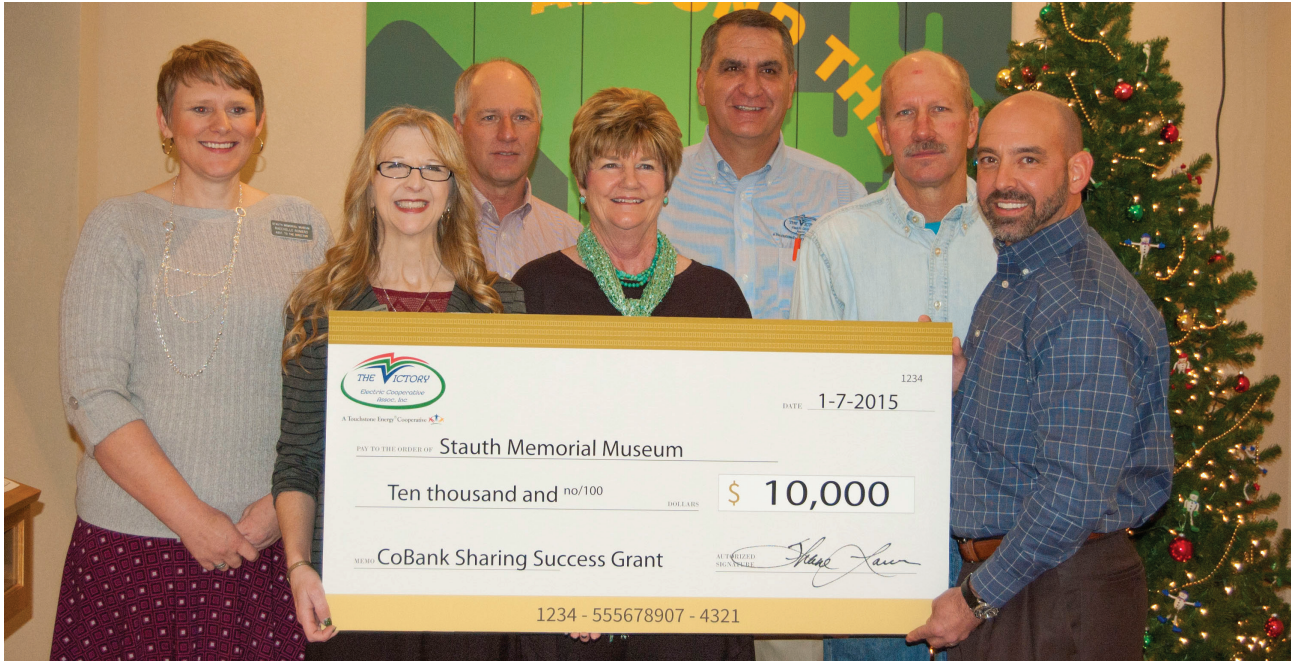
If you want to know how much heat is leaking around your windows or if that manifold on the car is cool enough to touch, you can choose between the Seek and Flir offerings. Of course, these allow you the opportunity to establish your own fledgling paranormal and big foot investigation unit for a fraction of the price of larger Infrared gear.

As you may have already guessed, the proliferation of apps means a couple of things for smartphone users. One, they are going to need more memory and two, at some point, there will be a need to consolidate their apps to provide convenient control and monitoring. In the meantime, grab your smartphone, an app or two and see how you can shape your world.



Smartphone apps like this one from Nest provide a history report of your electricity usage.

Stauth Memorial Museum Named Grant Recipient



Rachelle Romero, assistant to director; Kim Legleiter, museum director; Kenny Wehkamp, Victory board president; Deb Wall, museum board member; Gary Gillespie, Victory trustee; Kevin Redger, museum board members; and Shane Laws, Victory CEO hold the grant presented to Stauth Memorial Museum on behalf of Victory Electric and CoBank.

Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc., is pleased to announce Stauth Memorial Museum in Montezuma as the recipient of this year's Victory/CoBank "Sharing Success" Grant.

The Stauth Museum has been awarded two checks totaling \$10,000—\$5,000 from Victory Electric and \$5,000 from CoBank—to help fund a "Suits in Space" exhibit from the Smithsonian.

"The grant is amazing help for us," said Kim Legleiter, Stauth Museum Director. "As the cost of exhibits go up, it's so helpful to have support and be able to bring exhibits in for others to enjoy. This is the last place the 'Suits in Space' exhibit will be before all of the pieces go back to their original museums—with the help of the grant, we were able to get it here."

The Stauth Memorial Museum opened in February 1996 and features the travel adventures of Claude and Donald Stauth, long-time residents of southwest Kansas, as well as traveling exhibits throughout the year. The "Suited for Space" exhibit

will be featured until July 19, 2015, and will feature pictures and suits from astronauts. There will even be a suit for visitors to try on.

"People come to the museum for all sorts of reasons, we really are a diamond in southwest Kansas, and keeping exhibits that are interesting for the public and a place for surrounding communities to come and learn is the mission of the exhibits we bring in," Legleiter said.

"I'm pleased, on behalf of Victory Electric, to award this grant to the Stauth Museum," said Shane Laws, Victory CEO. "The museum provides great educational opportunities to the citizens and youth of the surrounding communities and we are proud to support their efforts."

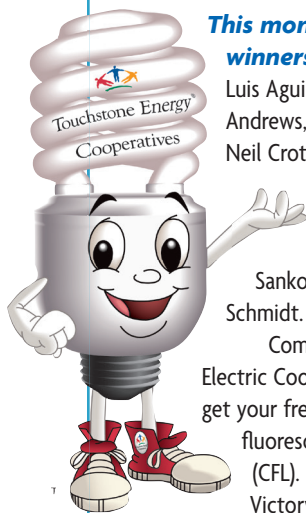
The annual "Sharing Success" grant opportunity, capped at \$10,000, is made possible by Victory's governing board of trustees, in partnership with CoBank, a national nonprofit cooperative bank owned by the rural American cooperatives it services,

including Victory. This year, CoBank established a \$3 million fund to match charitable contributions made by its cooperative members. The matching grant program is designed to celebrate the vital role that cooperatives play in individual communities across the country. CoBank states that partnering with their customers to support worthy causes they care about is a great way for them to make a positive difference and fulfill its mission of service to rural America.

"Thanks to our board of trustees and CoBank, the 'Sharing Success' Grant has enabled Victory to give back to the communities we serve," Laws said.

This is the third year Victory has awarded "Sharing Success" grants to local non-profits. Applicants must be federally recognized as 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. The Bucklin Library received a \$10,000 grant in 2012 to help fund the construction of their new library building. And in 2013, the Mission of Mercy dental clinic in Dodge City was awarded \$10,000.

CFL Charlie Says "Come Get Your Free CFL!"



This month's lucky winners are...

Luis Aguilar, Don Andrews, Lorne Benish, Neil Crotts, Yassel

Espindola, Vera Fox, David Pigg, Mary Sanko, and Willie Schmidt.

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. 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.

Aplicación de protección contra sobretensiones de calidad

Hay muy poco, o si acaso en todo, hoy en día que pueda comprar que no tenga algún componente electrónico. Incluso ropa usable electrónica está empezando a tomar las riendas. Sin mencionar un dispositivo (<http://www.makeymakey.com>) que le permite hacer un teclado de plátanos. Entonces, es hora de echar un vistazo a asegurándose de que sus electrónicos duren tanto como sea posible. No estoy hablando de planes de recambio o garantías extendidas. Ahora estamos hablando de proteger sus productos de sobrecargas eléctricas.

El primer asunto es definir una oleada. Aquí está uno de Computer Hope (<http://www.computerhope.com/jargon/s/surge.htm>) en el 'Net. "También conocido como una oleada de línea, una oleada es un inesperado aumento de tensión en una corriente eléctrica que provoca daños al equipo eléctrico. Por ejemplo, el voltaje estándar de Estados Unidos es 120V. Si una corriente eléctrica por encima de esta clasificación viniera través de una toma de corriente por más de tres nanosegundos, esto sería considerado una oleada, nada menos se considera un pico. Una oleada generalmente es creada por un rayo y puede dañar los equipos desprotegidos y equipos a veces incluso protegidos"

Muchas personas piensan que un parpadeo del sistema de Victory es un aumento, pero éstos generalmente son causados por algo como un árbol al ponerse en contacto con una línea. En tales casos, los dispositivos de protección del sistema trabajan, causando una interrupción proteger los cables y otros componentes. Estos no son subidos de tensión, sino más bien como una luz encender y apagar.

Verdaderas oleadas entrará en una vivienda a través de cualquier número de avenidas. Lo más obvio es a través de las líneas eléctricas. Menos obvio

es a través de las líneas telefónicas, conexiones de cable/satélite, líneas de agua y cualquier otro sistema metálico que conecta a su casa. Así que, para proteger contra sobretensiones, necesitas tomar un enfoque triple.

A continuación, proteger la entrada del servicio eléctrico con un dispositivo de aumento. El más fácil de instalar es montado detrás del medidor. También pueden montarse en el panel eléctrico principal. Cuando una oleada viaja por las líneas eléctricas, estos dispositivos actuarán para "sujetar" la oleada y reducir su poder. Estos son dispositivos sacrificiales que permiten a destruirse en lugar de permitir que la oleada pasar a través. De hecho los dispositivos nobles!

El tercer diente es proteger dispositivos costosos en su punto de uso. Computadoras y equipos de entretenimiento son los principales ejemplos. Recuerde que las oleadas pueden entrar el hogar mediante vías que no sean las líneas eléctricas. Computadoras y equipos de entretenimiento con frecuencia están conectadas a las líneas de cable y teléfono. Esos dispositivos necesitan protección en el punto de uso que cubre todas las vías posibles. Estas son generalmente bajo la forma de un dispositivo de tira o pared de energía está familiarizada con la mayoría de nosotros. Utilice un producto de calidad de un fabricante como monstruo, Belkin, Tripp Lite o APC, para nombrar unos pocos. Busque uno con un puntaje de joule de por lo menos 1.000, una garantía de equipo conectado y la compatibilidad con señales digitales de cable y satélite. Mientras estás en ello, busca una tira "inteligente" que apaga todo pero un dispositivo conectado cuando no esté en uso.

Calculating the Benefits of Electricity vs. Propane

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, heating and cooling account for nearly half of the energy use in a typical U.S. home, making it the largest energy expense for most households. While few people enjoy spending money on home heating fuels, consumers are willing to pay for comfort in the form of heat.

In these colder months when the temperatures dip and the need to heat your home rises, it makes sense when trying to determine the most economical heating method to evaluate the cost per unit of heat. This is referred to as a British thermal unit (Btu).

Evaluating cost per unit of heat for propane and electricity

The Btu content per gallon of propane is 91,500 Btu. The Btu content for electricity is 3,413 Btu per kilowatt-hour (kWh). It takes 26.8 kWh to equal the Btu content of one gallon of propane.

Using the U.S. Energy Information Administration's table on residential propane and electricity rates for November 2014, \$2.40 per gallon, excluding taxes, and 13.01 cents per kWh, we arrive at the following calculation:

$$26.8 \text{ kWh} \times 13.01\text{c} = \$3.49$$

If we used only Btu content to determine the best energy source for home heating, it would appear that propane is less costly than electricity if the price for propane is below \$3.49 per gallon.

Electric heat is 100 percent efficient

What may surprise most consumers is that the least efficient electric heating system delivers 100 percent efficient heat. Yes, electric resistance heat (i.e., space heaters, baseboard heating) is 100 percent energy efficient. Every single Btu in a kilowatt-hour is delivered as usable

heat. So if you are paying more than \$3.12 per gallon of propane for a 90 percent efficient propane furnace, it would be cheaper to use electric resistance heat.

Are we recommending that you use electric resistance heat as your sole heating source? No. While we are proud to offer a reliable source of electricity, we don't want to empty your wallet.

Pumping up efficiency

There are even more efficient electric heating systems called heat pumps. An air-source heat pump is at least 250 percent energy efficient. How is it so efficient?

In the heating mode, heat pumps do not use electric energy to create heat; they use it to pump heat into your home through a reversal of the refrigeration process. If you have central air conditioning, you have already experienced this process in reverse when your unit pumps heat out of your home in the summer. If you have ever stood next to the

outdoor components you know the air conditioning system is exhausting very hot air. In winter, it simply does the opposite, moving heat into your home. Air source heat pumps are equipped with some type of auxiliary heat for those

times when temperatures are near freezing or dip below. The typical back-up is in the form of electric resistance heat strips, but there is also a dual fuel propane option.

The price of propane would need to drop to \$1.25 per gallon to break even with the cost of home heating using an air source heat pump. Efficiency increases even more sharply when looking at the 350+ percent efficiencies of a geothermal (water source) heat pump. An additional advantage of geothermal systems is that they can be equipped to provide free water heating most of the year.

At Victory Electric, we believe it is our responsibility to provide members with reliable energy facts regardless of fuel type so you can get the most from your energy dollars. We are committed to helping you find the best energy solution for your budget and lifestyle and hope you will consult with your local co-op before making any big home-heating decisions.

IN COMPARISON TO OIL OR GAS FURNACES, ELECTRIC HEATING HAS MANY ADVANTAGES

Electric resistance heat

(i.e., energy-efficient space heaters, baseboard heating):



...is 100% efficient – every single Btu in a kilowatt-hour is delivered as usable heat.



...is quick to respond and can be very quiet.



...takes up less space in the house than other conventional systems (assuming space heaters are used).



...can warm select rooms, allowing you to keep your main thermostat down while ensuring continued comfort.

Electric heating systems are:



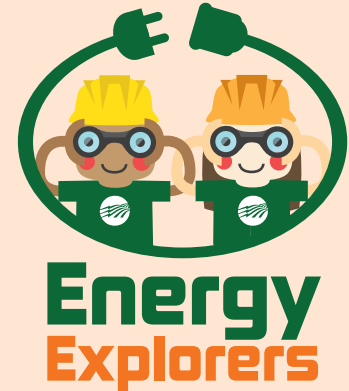
...generally less expensive to purchase and install.



...safe because there is no combustion process. There is no chance of flames starting a fire or having combustion products contaminate the air.

Kid's Corner

ENERGY EFFICIENCY WORD SCRAMBLE



Are you energy efficient? Test yourself by completing the word scramble below – and share these tips with your family and friends!

1. Tell an adult about a leaky _ _ _ _ _ . You don't want the water bill to rise from it. **(efacut)**
2. Wash your full loads of clothes in _ _ _ _ water when possible. **(oldc)**
3. Make sure that _ _ _ is not escaping through cracks in your windows. **(ira)**
4. Set your _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ to 68° or lower, and put on a sweater if you begin to feel cold. **(tasmroteht)**
5. Use _ _ _ _ _ fans to cool down instead of pumping up your air conditioner. **(gclinei)**
6. Use a _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ oven instead of the regular oven whenever you can. **(vacimorew)**
7. Turn on the oven _ _ _ _ _ to check on a dish rather than opening the oven door. **(ltihg)**
8. Replace incandescent bulbs with _ _ _ lights. They last much longer! **(DLE)**
9. When you _ _ _ _ _ your homework, do it the efficient way and use both sides of the paper. **(intrp)**
10. When possible, take the bus or ride your _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ instead of using a car. **(bccleyi)**

ANSWERS: 1. faucet 2. cold 3. air 4. thermostat 5. ceiling 6. microwave 7. light 8. LED 9. print 10. bicycle