

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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## THE VICTORY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

# electronews



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### FROM THE MANAGER

## Earl Watkins Retires from Sunflower

A valued member of the electric cooperative family is retiring. On Wednesday August 17, friends and co-workers gathered at Holcomb Station to celebrate retirement of **EARL WATKINS**, CEO and President of Sunflower Electric.

Watkins served at Sunflower for nearly 30 years, and will officially retire in January 2012. The event was attended by employees and members across the system, including representatives from Victory, Pioneer and Wheatland Electric. Congressman Tim Huelskamp was also able to attend and enjoy the fellowship of the day.

A second retirement celebration was held in the Hays office the following Thursday where Lane Scott, Prairieland, and Western Electric representatives attended. U.S. Senator Jerry Moran was able to attend and share in the celebration. Watkins will be succeeded by **STUART LOWRY**, former executive vice president and general counsel of the Kansas Electric Cooperatives.

Victory Electric congratulates Watkins on his retirement, and we wish him the best of luck in the future.

‘Til Next Time, TJ



Terry Janson

“Earl served at Sunflower for nearly 30 years, and will retire in January 2012.”



Monica Lampe (left) and Terry Janson (right) visit with Earl Watkins at his retirement reception.



Rep. Tim Huelskamp (left) chats with Terry Janson at Watkins retirement reception.

## Victory Electric is on



Look out 21st century; Victory Electric now has a page on Facebook!

Just a few years ago the Internet was a place where you sent the occasional email or read an article from some outlandish website stating that the NASA moon landing was a hoax. Now it's a bustling place to buy anything under the sun and grab all the information you'd ever want to know.

But the real phenomenon brewing is how people are speaking to each other on the Web. They're

talking to old friends, making new ones, and even keeping up with family members. Through websites like Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube, we're getting messages across in ways only seen in Stanley Kubrick films more than 40 years ago.

For some "old school" people it's a little strange to have that much access. But it's becoming more common for members to interact with each other online. That's where Victory Electric comes in.

As our members become increasingly younger and new homeowners are surfing the web, it's becoming more clear to Victory Electric that we have to think outside the box.

"We saw another opportunity to expand and diversify our communications and reach a broader spectrum of our membership," said Jerri Imgarten, communications specialist for Victory Electric. "This is a casual, fun way of promoting energy efficiency, interacting with our members through

posted conversation, and even posting updates in the event of an outage."

For Facebook-savvy members, the Victory Electric page can be found through using the search or by accessing Facebook through the link facebook.com/VictoryElectric. Facebook users can become a "fan" of Victory Electric and elect to receive status updates on their news feed.

"Victory Electric is truly member and community oriented, and we want to hear from and interact with our members, whether it is through a traditional phone call, a visit to our office, or through the Internet," Imgarten said.

Whether it is a link to an energy efficiency tool on its home page, or a relevant article of interest, Victory Electric tries to be selective in sending updates.

"Victory Electric wants to be helpful, not an annoyance," Imgarten said. "We are selective in what we post on Facebook but

The screenshot shows the Facebook page for 'The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc.' The page header includes the Facebook logo, a search bar, and the page name. The cover photo shows a powerline tower in a field. The main content area displays three posts:

- Post 1:** A 'Safety Tip Tuesday!' post from 'The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc.' dated 15 hours ago. The text reads: "Safety Tip Tuesday! When buying a new appliance, check the black and yellow EnergyGuide label. This label provides an estimate of the product's energy consumption and efficiency. It also shows the highest and lowest energy efficiency estimates of similar models. Most major appliances—such as refrigerators, dishwashers, and clothes dryers—are required to have these labels." It has 1 like from Bobi Linden.
- Post 2:** A 'Foto Friday!' post from 'The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc.' dated August 19 at 11:58am. The text reads: "It's Foto Friday! A snapshot of a powerline in the Kansas sunset!" It includes a photo of a powerline tower against a sunset sky. It has 3 likes.
- Post 3:** A post from 'The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc.' dated August 19 at 11:58am. The text reads: "Yesterday's storm took down 11 34.5 transmission poles near the Wilroad's Garden area. Currently, all power has been restored and linemen are busy rebuilding the infrastructure. Thanks to all of our members for your patience during the outage." It has 3 likes.

The left sidebar shows the page's profile picture, a 'Wall' section with 'Hidden Posts', 'Info', 'Photos', and 'EDIT' options. It also indicates that 55 people like this page and lists a 'Like' from 'Kansas Country Living'. At the bottom of the sidebar, there are options to 'Subscribe via SMS', 'Subscribe via RSS', 'Unlike', and 'Share'.

are constantly watching for articles, photos and issues we think might be pertinent to our members, or for tips that might help them lower their utility bills."

#### Just the facts

There are some who really just want the low down of what's happening. If there's a blackout, we want to know it is being fixed. That's where the social networking sites come in handy.

Facebook and other networking sites allow people and organizations to give constant status updates. Some of these updates are casual but others can be important.

"Just think about weather on the level of the Greensburg Tornado," said Terry Janson, general manager for Victory Electric. "In a situation where you might not be next to a TV or radio, the status updates on your smartphone might just be the better way to find out what's happening. Facebook is great for that. It is instant knowledge and a click away."

#### Sticking to the Basics

It's truly becoming a computer world these days. Our members are seeking information in ways that seemed like distant ideas just a few years ago. But, in spite diversifying our communication plan, the traditional ways of speaking with members won't be abandoned. Newspapers, magazines, and radio will still remain important, but Victory Electric felt it was important to embrace the old and the new.

But for the rest of us, we're just happy to keep on reading this magazine. Life just seems easier that way doesn't it?

If you are interested in becoming a "fan" of Victory Electric, visit [facebook.com/VictoryElectric](http://facebook.com/VictoryElectric). If you just have questions, please contact Jerri Imgarten at 620-371-7730.

## Health Fair Scheduled for Oct. 1



**A couple thousand people attended the 2010 health fair. This years event will be on Oct. 1 and is open to the public, free of charge.**

The fourth annual Victory Electric Health Fair is just around the corner.

The Health Fair event will be held on Saturday, October 1 from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Victory Electric headquarters at 3230 N 14th in Dodge City.

This year's health fair will feature many doctors and health care professionals performing a wide variety of services including, flu shots and complete blood screens. There will also be FREE eye exams, blood pressure readings, hearing tests, spinal exams, diabetes testing, and more.

Other educational and helpful resources that will be present include,

free car seat checks, child ID cards, and a drunk driving simulation course.

Victory Electric has joined together Dodge City Public Schools, Western Plains Medical Complex, Dodge City Medical Center, Cargill, Dodge City Community College, Phillips Chiropractic, and Ambucs, among others, for the health fair.

In conjunction with the health fair, we will have a canned food drive. We ask those who are able to bring a few canned food items to support local food banks for the upcoming holiday season. We look forward to seeing you there!



#### CFL Charlie Says

### "Come Get Your Free CFL Bulb!"

And this month's lucky winners are... Bruno Hoffman, Bill Wall, Robert Swonger, Terry Cash, Jorge Barrera, Johanna Arroyo, Rosa Arzaga, Esther Andra, Rafael Beena, and Connie Penick.

Come by Victory Electric Cooperative and get your free compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL). Every month Victory Electric will be giving members free CFL light bulbs. Congratulations winners!

## Facts About Mercury in CFLs

Ads and packaging materials for compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs) proclaim that they use much less energy and last much longer than standard incandescent bulbs. However, if you read the fine print on the packaging or find the notice on the base of each bulb, you'll see that it contains mercury.

While that may raise an alarm in your mind, there's no need to worry. The amount of mercury inside the glass tubes of an average CFL is minuscule—about the equivalent of the tip of a ballpoint pen—and it's especially

small when compared to other items you may have around your home. The amount of mercury in a CFL runs about 4-5 milligrams (mg), while a glass fever thermometer contains 500 mg, and an old-style thermostat could contain up to 3,000 mg.

CFLs are safe to handle and use in your home, and they release no mercury when in operation. Even if you break a CFL, the amount of mercury that may become airborne poses a very low risk of exposure, says ENERGY STAR. (To prevent breakage, carefully unpack a CFL, and always

screw and unscrew the bulb by its base.) When CFLs burn out or break, the best course of action is to recycle them.

CFLs fall into the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) category of Household Hazardous Waste (HHW), but there's no federal requirement that the bulbs be recycled. Some hardware stores and other retailers may have CFL recycling buckets on hand. And you may be able to dispose of CFLs during your community's annual hazardous waste collection event.

To find out if there's a facility or store near you that accepts CFLs, go to the Earth 911 website at [www.earth911.org](http://www.earth911.org), or call 800-CLEANUP. Be sure to call the facility or store that's listed before you make the trip, to ensure that it allows homeowners or apartment dwellers to drop off CFLs.

If one of these recycling options is not available to you, you may put burned out or broken CFLs with your regular trash—but in no case should you burn or incinerate them. Here's what EPA says about properly disposing of CFLs.

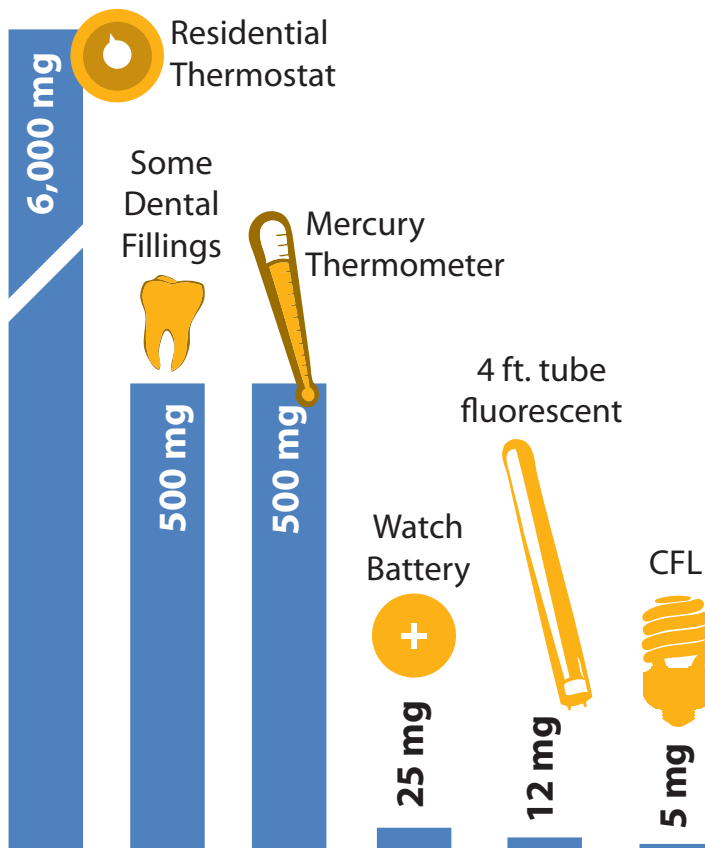
► **Burned-out CFLs:** Put the CFL in a sealed plastic bag, and place it with your regular trash.

► **Broken CFLs:** If you break a CFL in your home, open nearby windows to disperse any vapor that may escape, and carefully sweep up the glass shards. Wipe the area with a damp paper towel to remove glass fragments; don't use a vacuum cleaner. Put the fragments, the base of the bulb, and the paper towel in a sealed plastic bag, and place it with your regular trash.

CFLs are a great idea. They'll help you cut your utility bills, and they'll help reduce the need for electricity production. However, to create the maximum benefit for the environment, recycling burned-out and broken CFLs makes sense.

### Comparing Mercury Content

Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) contain tiny amounts of mercury, and they're not alone. Many common household items also contain mercury. For recycling tips visit [ww.epa.gov/cfl](http://ww.epa.gov/cfl).



Source: ENERGY STAR, Natural Resources Defense Council

# Factores de Mercurio en CFL

Materiales de anuncios y embalaje para compactos fluorescente bombillas (CFL) proclaman que usan mucho menos energía y duran mucho más que las bombillas incandescentes estándar. Sin embargo, si usted lee la letra pequeña en el envase encontrará el anuncio de cada bulbos, verá que contiene mercurio.

Puede surgir una preocupación en su mente, no hay que preocuparse. La cantidad de mercurio dentro de los tubos de vidrio de un CFL es un promedio minúsculo sobre el equivalente de la punta de un bolígrafo pequeño especialmente cuando se compara a otros artículos que puede tener en su hogar. La cantidad de mercurio en una CFL se ejecuta sobre 4-5 miligramos (mg), mientras que un termómetro de fiebre de vidrio contiene 500 mg, y un antiguo termostato contiene hasta cerca de 3.000 mg.

CFL son seguros para manejar y utilizar en su hogar, no liberan mercurio en operación. Incluso si se rompe un CFL, la cantidad de mercurio puede convertirse en aerotransportado es un riesgo muy bajo de exposición, dice Energy Star. (Para evitar roturas, cuidadosamente desempaquetar un CFL y siempre atornille y desatornille la bombilla de su base.) Cuando los CFL se queman o rompen, el mejor curso de acción es reciclarlos.

Los CFL entran en la categoría de la Agencia de Protección Ambiental (EPA) de Estados Unidos de Residuos Peligrosos Domésticos (HHW), pero no hay obligación federal que los bulbos sean reciclados. Algunas tiendas de ferretería y otros minoristas pueden tener CFL cubos de reciclaje por parte. Y podrá disponer de los CFL durante el evento anual de recogida de residuos peligrosos de su comunidad.

Para averiguar si hay instalaciones o almacén cercano que acepte los CFL visite el sitio Web en [www.earth911.org](http://www.earth911.org), o llame al 800-CLEANUP.

Asegúrese de llamar a la instalación o la tienda que aparece antes de realizar el viaje, para garantizar que permite a los propietarios de viviendas o habitantes del apartamento a dejar los CFL.

Si una de estas opciones de reciclaje no está disponible para usted, puede poner quemado o roto CFL con la basura regular- pero en ningún caso debe quemar o incinerarles. Aquí es lo que dice correctamente la eliminación de las CFL.

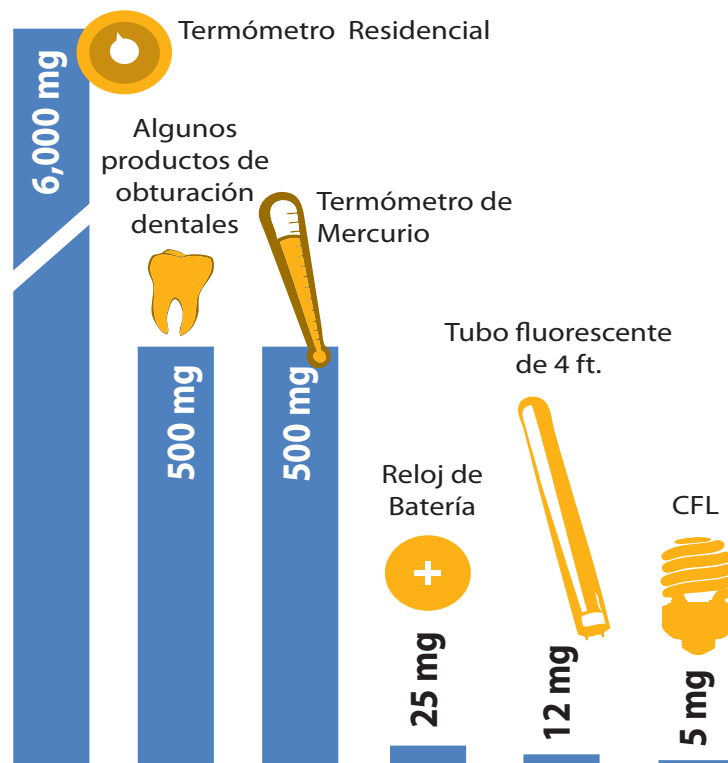
- ▶ **CFL Quemados:** Colóquelo en una bolsa de plástico sellada y colocar en la basura regular.
- ▶ **Rotos CFL:** si se rompe un CFL en su casa, abrir las ventanas más cer-

canas para dispersar cualquier vapor que pueda escapar, y cuidadosamente barrer los fragmentos de vidrio. Limpie el área con una toalla de papel húmeda para eliminar fragmentos de vidrio; no utilice una aspiradora. Poner los fragmentos, la base de los bulbos y la toalla de papel en una bolsa de plástico sellada y colocar en basura regular.

Los CFL son una gran idea. Le ayuda a reducir las facturas de servicios públicos, y ayudara a reducir la necesidad de producciones de electricidad. Sin embargo, para crear el máximo beneficio para el medio ambiente, reciclar CFL rotos y escombros tiene sentido.

## Comparación de Contenido de Mercurio

Lámparas de compactos fluorescentes (CFLs) contiene pequeñas cantidades de mercurio, y no son el único. Muchos artículos comunes para el hogar también contienen mercurio. Para consejos de reciclaje, visite [ww.epa.gov/cfl](http://ww.epa.gov/cfl).



Source: ENERGY STAR, Natural Resources Defense Council

## Local Students Attend Leadership Camp

*Leis and Avalos participate in Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp*

**CLAIRE LEIS**, Minneola, and **NORMA AVALOS**, Dodge City, joined youth from across Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming for the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp, July 9-15 in Steamboat Springs, Colo.

Leis and Avalos were selected from a group of students by Victory Electric. To win this trip, they were asked to create a resume, take a short quiz over cooperatives, and be interviewed by a panel of judges.

During their week-long stay in Colorado, the students created a complete cooperative based on the product of candy. They established a board of trustees and a general manager that held daily membership meetings. When students arrived at camp, they elected the board and manager and paid membership dues to create a candy cooperative. In the evenings, they sold snacks at the canteen. At the end of the week, the group decided how to handle any profit margins.

"The students this year exhibited amazing leadership potential," Shana Read, Kansas Electric Cooperatives director of communications said. "Throughout the week, campers developed their leadership skills and learned about electric cooperatives through camp activities. It is amazing to see how much the students' skills grow in just one week."



Claire Leis, Minneola, and Norma Avalos, Dodge City, traveled to Steamboat Springs, CO.

The campers also participated in legislative presentations, a light and high voltage display, and a competition to build a transmission line from craft supplies. They explored the Old Town Steamboat Springs and toured Craig Power Plant and Trapper Mine.

Victory Electric is proud to support the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp," said Jerry King, director of marketing and communications. "Our

hope is that local students will gain some awareness of how our cooperative system works and how important it is for the youth to be involved in our community."

Victory sponsors the trip of two students to camp each year. In addition, two students are awarded a trip to Washington, D.C. For more information, contact Jerri Imgarten at 620-371-7730.



The students from Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado and Wyoming who participated in Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp.

## Claire Leis

*Minneola High School*



Claire Leis

Getting eaten by a bear or getting lost on a mountain trail were the least of my worries when I stepped onto a bus full of total strangers headed to Colorado for the 2011 Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp. My main concern was how I was going to keep everyone's names straight.

After many hours on the bus, days of group activities and games, I not only knew everyone's names, but amazingly, I knew everyone well enough to hold a conversation.

I enjoyed the many different seminars, hands-on projects, tours, and dances at camp.

My favorite memory was from the day we went white water rafting in the Colorado River. Twenty minutes into our trip, five other girls and myself fell out of our raft after we hit a rapid. It was probably the scariest thing any of us had ever experienced. We all swam back to the boat in the freezing cold water in the Colorado River. One-by-one, our guide had to pull us back into the boat where we were handed warm clothing. For the rest of the trip, our group was known as "The Swim Team."

Later, we laughed about how worried we were about losing one another, a person we had met just three days before. But the truth is, we'd become great friends and we were worried about each other's safety.

When the camp ended on Friday, I wanted to cry. I had made so many friends and even more memories. The leadership and teamwork skills I learned at camp will stay with me throughout my life.

I'd like to thank Terry Janson and the Victory Electric Board of Trustees for allowing me the opportunity to experience camp. I'd also like to thank all the camp counselors and ambassadors for making my experience at camp an amazing one.

*Claire*

**The leadership and teamwork skills I learned at camp will stay with me throughout my life.**

## Norma Avalos

*Dodge City High School*



Norma Avalos

I am honored to have earned the chance to attend Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp in Steamboat Springs, Colo., that Victory Electric Cooperative sponsored for local area high school students.

I did not think it could get any better than having an all-expense-paid trip, but it turns out the other campers and staff were wonderful. Every single individual not only had a strong quality to offer toward the camp, but also to me as well. Everybody in the camp gave me something that I am going to carry on as the successful person I want to be.

A few examples of what I gained from different people is simply being able to understand different personalities, being able to be a humble person rather than a prideful person, and being able to set my opinion to the side to make better decisions that will benefit everybody rather than me.

It is phenomenal that people who were once strangers were able to make such an impact on my life. The many people who impacted my life were not just my fellow campers, but throughout camp they became my friends. It was remarkable how everyone in the camp got along so well and we meshed together so well as friends!

I am so thankful to Victory Electric and every single individual that made this trip happen. I truly hope this trip continues in the future because it is our local electric cooperatives that are growing tomorrow's leaders.

*Norma*

**I truly hope this trip continues in the future because it is our local electric cooperatives that are growing tomorrow's leaders.**

## Shop Local

Why buy local? There are numerous benefits to buying local. First, when those coveted big businesses look to building or locating in a city or town, they look at the statistics of how many people buy local. Ford County has total retail sales of \$484.7 million, and compared to other towns and counties approximately the same size, we don't do as well. In Finney County (Garden City), they have total retail sales of \$680.7 million, almost \$200 million more in sales than in Dodge City. Great Bend and Liberal do approximately the same in total retail sales, but they have approximately 2,000 less households than Dodge City.

Therefore, towns like Garden City, which is approximately the same size as Dodge City, will attract more businesses because they draw in more local buyers.

Another important fact that many forget when they travel is the cost to travel to those places. Using Wichita and Garden City as examples, Victory did some figuring and using the calculation (IRS mileage rate x the miles) + (average Ford County hourly wage x time to drive), the average person is spending almost \$17 going to Garden City and \$57 going to Wichita, and that is without even opening your wallet at a store.

In an article in the Chamber Executive Convention 2009, Dennis Lauver, president and CEO of the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce, listed five key benefits to buying local, those include:

- ▶ Save money and time when you shop near home
- ▶ Keep money in our own economy
- ▶ Build our schools and cities (assuming a local option sales tax)
- ▶ Provide property tax relief (assuming a local option sales tax)
- ▶ Keep family and friends employed in your community.

We hope these five benefits will help you see the benefit to supporting and buying at local businesses.

In an effort to encourage our members and local citizens to spend locally, we are going to feature local business in this newsletter on a quarterly basis. This will allow us to let you know what your options are here in Dodge City and Ford County. The ultimate goal is to encourage more to buy local and in the future be more competitive to receive new businesses in town.

## Victory and Dodge City Days

1. Employee, Jami Stecklein teamed up for the Wacky Trike Race. 2. Lineman, Mikey Goddard helps out at the Touch-A-Truck event. 3. Victory's parade float represented the "harvest" theme. 4. Electrician Juan Ceja helps grill 1,000 burgers for media night. 5. The Victory Electric group the morning of the parade.



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.