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# Electronews

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## FROM THE CEO

### What is Demand?

We all take for granted the fact that we can walk into a room, easily flip on a light switch, or causally pull the chain on our family room lamps and immediately, the lights turn on illuminating our homes and offices. In fact, turning on a light switch is something we do subconsciously almost every time we walk into a dark room. Having light in our homes and workplace is something we don't question; it is always there, its constant, and we can count on it. But how that electricity gets to our homes and businesses is not as easy as flipping on the light switch.

To get electricity from the power plant (where it is generated) to our homes and offices, we need a power grid. The power grid is an elaborate network of power plants and electric power lines strategically placed across

the United States that deliver power to our members. High-voltage transmission power lines stretch from the power plant to our local substations where the voltage is lowered. Once the voltage has been lowered, the electricity can be sent to smaller power lines and distributed so that the right amount of electricity is flowing constantly to our homes and offices.

The amount of electricity a home or business requires fluctuates throughout the day and throughout the year. The demand for this electricity is defined



Shane Laws

*Continued on page 12D ►*

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

Is your home heating system ready for the winter chill? One of the easiest ways to keep your system running efficiently is to regularly replace filters. If your central air system has a furnace filter, it should be replaced about every 90 days. If your home is heated through warm-air registers, baseboard heaters or radiators, remember to clean regularly to boost efficiency.

**SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV**



STAY SAFE  
OUT ON THE

## HUNT



Take precautions to stay safe on your next hunting expedition.

Know the signs of a heart attack or other life-threatening condition.



Have a way to get in touch with the outside world.



Always implement firearm safety techniques.

Do not lean a tree stand against a utility pole.

Do not fire at power lines, insulators or conductor cans.



Carry a first-aid kit.

Check the weather in advance and be prepared.

Survey the area for potential electrical hazards.



Check tree stands regularly for stability.



Be visible: Wear blaze orange.

## 4 Tips for Winter Safety

It's no surprise that winter months bring increased potential for fire risks and electrical safety hazards. This makes sense because during the coldest months, consumers are using additional electrical devices and appliances, like space heaters, electric blankets and portable generators.

The National Fire Protection Association estimates that 47,700 home fires occur each year in the U.S. due to electrical failure or malfunction. These fires result in 418 deaths, 1,570 injuries and \$1.4 billion in property damage annually. This winter, safeguard your loved ones and your home with these electrical safety tips from the Electrical Safety Foundation International.

### 1 DON'T OVERLOAD OUTLETS.

Overloaded outlets are a major cause of residential fires. Avoid using extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliance connections — they should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. If you're relying heavily on extension cords in general, you may need additional outlets to address your needs. Contact a qualified electrician to inspect your home and add new outlets.

### 2 NEVER LEAVE SPACE HEATERS UNATTENDED.

If you're using a space heater, turn it off before leaving the room. Make sure heaters are placed at least three feet away from flammable

items. It should also be noted that space heaters take a toll on your energy bills. If you're using them throughout your home, it may be time to upgrade your home heating system.

### 3 INSPECT HEATING PADS AND ELECTRIC BLANKETS.

These items cause nearly 500 fires every year. Electric blankets that are more than 10 years old create additional risks for a fire hazard. Inspect your electric blankets and heating pads — look for dark, charred or frayed spots, and make sure the electrical cord is not damaged. Do not place any items on top of a heating pad or electric blanket, and never fold them when in use.

### 4 USE PORTABLE GENERATORS SAFELY.

Unfortunately, winter storms can cause prolonged power outages, which means many consumers will use portable generators to power their homes. Never connect a standby generator into your home's electrical system. For portable generators, plug appliances directly into the outlet provided on the generator. Start the generator first, before you plug in appliances. Run it in a well-ventilated area outside your home. The carbon monoxide it generates is deadly, so keep it away from your garage, doors, windows and vents.

As you gear up for the colder months ahead join us in keeping safety as the top priority.

# Happy Veterans Day

NOV. 11, 2022

— HONORING ALL WHO SERVED —

# Space Heater Safety Tips

Space heaters are a great way to warm specific rooms in your home without having to crank up the thermostat, but using space heaters doesn't come without risk! Use the tips below to keep your home safe.

**DO:** Plug your space heater directly into the wall outlet.

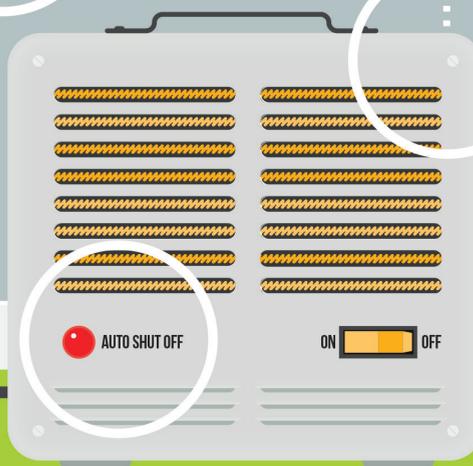


**DO:** Keep your space heater in low-moisture rooms.

**DO:** Keep your space heater at a safe distance (at least 3 feet) from kids, pets and flammable items.



**DO:** Buy a unit with an automatic shutoff in case the unit tips over, or you forget to shut it off.



**DO:** Always follow the directions and take a broken space heater to a qualified appliance service center.



**DON'T:** Leave your space heater unattended. Always unplug it before you leave the house or go to bed.



**DON'T:** Use an extension cord to plug in your space heater. It can cause the heater to overheat, and can be a tripping hazard.

**DON'T:** Place your space heater near curtains, clothing, furniture or bedding.



**DON'T:** Try to repair a broken space heater yourself.



**DON'T:** Put your space heater in your bathroom. The moisture can damage the unit, which could cause it to malfunction.



## What is Demand? Continued from page 12A ▶

by how much power is being used at any given time. The more electricity that is used, the higher the demand. Keep in mind that electric consumption and demand are different. Consumption is determined by how much electricity we use overall, and demand is determined by when we use it. Demand increases when we operate large or other power-hungry appliances simultaneously.

With a rapidly evolving wireless society, we have created insatiable demands on electricity. Most of us consistently require electronics (and, thus, electricity) to do our jobs and stay in touch with our families and friends. Computers, smartphones and wireless network technologies have pushed us into becoming more accessible and often more efficient. But this fast-paced and accessible life we have created has raised our electricity demands.

One of the most important jobs we have at Victory Electric is to make sure that there is enough electricity to supply to all members, no matter how many appliances, computers, device chargers, air conditioners or lightbulbs our members use at one time. This means that we must have the capacity to generate that power no matter what demand is needed. Often when there is peak demand, the cost to supply that additional power is also increased causing member bills to substantially rise.

At Victory Electric, technology is our ally. With advancements in metering technology, we can more accurately determine how members use power. To assist our members in understanding their energy use, we are now able

## To assist our members in understanding their energy use, we are now able to provide the demand (kW) on each member's monthly bill.

to provide the demand (kilowatt) on each member's monthly bill. This will provide members with more of an insight into their electricity use and hopefully, more ability to control their demand.

Admittedly, the simplest component of electricity is flipping on a switch. The electric grid is complex. And the cost of power can be unpredictable and not always within our budgets. So, let's focus on what we can control — our energy use. We can control how many lights we turn on, how cool or warm we keep our homes on an exceedingly cold or hot afternoon, and whether we choose to run multiple large appliances when electricity demand is the highest across the grid during the day.

If you know your demand, you can control your usage. But, if you're still unsure the best course of action to take, Victory Electric is committed to providing you all the tools available to us to assist you in understanding your energy use and how to curtail it. Pull us up on Facebook, Instagram or visit our website for energy conservation tips and assistance with understanding your bill. We're here to help.

**BEST REGARDS,  
SHANE LAWS**

## Jerry Dick Retires After 37 Years of Service



**Jerry Dick**

Mentor, caring, teacher and father figure, are just a few of the ways co-workers described **JERRY DICK**, who celebrated his retirement from Victory Electric in October after 37 years of service in the cooperative industry.

With an extensive military background and time spent as a teacher, Jerry had an impressive career before moving to the cooperative

utility business in 1985. His fellow co-workers are glad he made the move.

"I can't say enough good things about Jerry," said Craig Renick, Victory substation/transmission technician. "He is like a father figure, he is hardworking, always willing to help and teach you things. He is more worried about us and our families, than himself, but also not afraid to speak his mind when needed."

"Jerry never has a bad day it seemed, he enjoyed coming to

work and was always happy to be here," said Richard Torres, Victory lead substation technician. "He is a great teacher and has a lot of knowledge to share, he wanted you try something first and try to figure it out, then he would give you subtle hints to help you figure it out."

Throughout his career, Jerry spent time in many different facets of the electrical industry, focusing most of his work on metering and substations, he and current Vice President of Engineering Rob Henry, were responsible for starting the substation department at Victory Electric.

Though many would not think it, Jerry is quite the prankster and loved to play jokes on his co-workers. He has a passion for reading and Mexican food, as well spending time at his homes in Colorado and Alabama.

"Jerry will definitely be missed, he is an inspiration for his dedication and service to his work, and how he always cares for others," said both Torres and Renick.

Congratulations Jerry! Enjoy your retirement; you deserve it!

# Know the Signs of a Scam

It's no secret that consumers with water, gas or electricity connections have long been targets for utility scams, but fraudsters have changed their tactics since the COVID-19 pandemic. As members became more reliant on technology for work, school and commerce, scammers noted these shifts and adapted their tactics to this changed environment.

Imposter scams are the number one type of fraud reported to the Federal Trade Commission. While scam artists may come to your door posing as a utility worker who works for the "power company," in today's more connected world, attempts are more likely to come through an electronic device, via email, phone or text.

## Common Types of Scams

A scammer may claim you are overdue on your electric bill and threaten to disconnect your service if you don't pay immediately. Whether this is done in-person, by phone, text or email, the scammers will create a sense of urgency because they want to scare you into immediate payment, so you don't have time to think clearly.

If this happens over the phone, simply hang up. If you're concerned about your bill, call us at 620-227-2139. Our phone number can also be found on your monthly bill and on our website, [www.victoryelectric.net](http://www.victoryelectric.net). If the scam is by email or text, take a screenshot for future reference then delete it before taking any action. If you're unsure, you can always contact us or use SmartHub to check the status of your account. **REMEMBER, VICTORY ELECTRIC WILL NEVER ATTEMPT TO DEMAND IMMEDIATE PAYMENT AFTER JUST ONE NOTICE.**

Some scammers may falsely claim you have been overcharged on your bill and say they want to give a refund. It sounds easy. All you must do is click or press a button to initiate the process. If you proceed, you will be prompted to provide banking or other personal information. Instead of money going into your bank account, the scammers can drain your account and use personal information such as a social security number for identity theft.

If this "refund" scam happens over the phone, just hang up and block the phone number to prevent future robocalls. If this scam attempt occurs via email (known as a "phishing" attempt) or by text ("smishing"), do not click any links. Instead, delete it, and if possible, block the sender. If you do overpay on your energy bill, Victory Electric will automatically

apply the credit to your next billing cycle. When in doubt, contact us.

## Defend Yourself Against Scams

Be wary of call or texts from unknown numbers. Be suspicious of an unknown person claiming to be a utility worker who requests banking or other personal information.

Never let anyone into your home that you don't know unless you have a scheduled appointment or reported a problem. When Victory Electric performs work on our members' property or come into your home, our employees are professionals and will always identify themselves.

Here are some tips on how to protect yourself:

- ▶ Do not assume the name and number on your caller ID are legitimate. Caller IDs can be spoofed.
- ▶ Never share your personal information, including date of birth, Social Security number or banking account information.
- ▶ Never wire money to someone you don't know.
- ▶ Do not click links or call numbers in unexpected emails or texts — especially those asking for your account information.
- ▶ Most utilities will NOT require their customers to purchase prepaid debit cards or money orders to avoid an immediate disconnection.
- ▶ If you receive a call that sounds like it may be a scam, or if you believe the call is a scam, hang up, call the police, and report the incident to your local utility.

Here at Victory, we want to help protect our community against utility scams, and you can help create the first line of defense. Please report any potential scams to us so we can spread the word to prevent others in the community from falling victim.



# Hilmar Cheese Company Breaks Ground in Dodge City

On Sept. 30, 2022, **HILMAR CHEESE COMPANY INC.**, broke ground on the site of its future state-of-the-art cheese and whey protein processing plant in Dodge City.

Hilmar is one of the world's largest producers of high-quality American-style cheese and whey products with international customers in 50 different nations.

The new facility will create 250 new jobs offering competitive wages and the company has a heart for community involvement. In its other two locations — Dalhart, Texas, and Central Valley, California — the company supports local events, education and health care. Along with the community, Victory Electric is excited to welcome Hilmar Cheese Company to the area!



Victory Electric CEO Shane Laws takes part in the Hilmar Cheese Company groundbreaking ceremony on Sept. 30, 2022.

Victory Electric crews place pad-mounted transformers for the new Hilmar Cheese Company factory.





Above: Victory's line crews completed pole top rescue training in September, which helps prepare linemen to rescue co-workers who may have had an emergency while working atop a pole. Kolbie Penick (left) rushes to unhook the safety dummy's clothing that got caught on gear as Clayton Stein observes.



Left: Clayton Stein, crew chief, works quickly to complete a pole top rescue. Center: Marlon Hernandez, journeyman lineman, properly secures the safety dummy. Right: Kyndell Penick, vice president of safety and key accounts, prepares to cut the line to complete a pole top rescue.



Kyndell Penick, vice president of safety and key accounts, and Justin Straight, manager of safety, hold a safety demonstration to teach kids to be careful around electrical poles and wires.



# *Annual* *Parade of Lights* **& Chili Cook-off**

Pull out grandma's top-secret chili recipe, dust off your apron, polish your ladle, and warm up the roaster! While you're at it, grab some lights and decorate a trailer for the annual Parade of Lights and Chili Cook-off, on Monday, Nov. 28.

Festivities will begin at the Boot Hill Museum at 4 p.m. with the chili cook-off public sampling. The chili contest awards for judge's choice will begin at 4:30 p.m. Then at 5:30 p.m., join us at the visitor information center for the Mayor's Tree Ceremony events.

The evening will conclude with the Parade of Lights beginning at 6 p.m.

For more information or questions about the Parade of Lights or other Christmas activities in Dodge City, visit the Christmas in Dodge City Facebook page, email [askcommunications@victoryelectric.net](mailto:askcommunications@victoryelectric.net), or reach out to the Dodge City Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The planning committee for the 2022 Dodge City Christmas Parade of Lights event and other Christmas activities comprises representatives from Victory Electric Cooperative, City of Dodge City, Dodge City Daily Globe, Southwind Broadcasting, Main Street Dodge City, Dodge City Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Dodge City Area Chamber of Commerce.

Save  
the  
Date

