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Electronews

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CEO MESSAGE

Understanding Power Surges and Blinks



Shane Laws

Have you ever noticed your lights blink during a thunderstorm? Or perhaps you noticed a blinking microwave clock when arriving home. When this happens, you

likely experienced a brief disruption to your electric service, which could have resulted from a power surge or blink. While the symptoms of surges and blinks can appear similar, what is happening behind the scenes is quite different.

What is a Power Surge?

Power surges are brief overvoltage spikes or disturbances of a power waveform that can damage, degrade or destroy electronic equipment within your home or business. Most electronics are designed to handle small variations in voltage; however, power surges can reach amplitudes of tens of thousands of volts — this can be extremely damaging to your electronic equipment.

Surges can be caused by internal sources, like HVAC systems with variable

frequency drives, or external sources, like lightning and damage to power lines and transformers.

Victory Electric encourages all members to install surge protective devices (such as surge protector power strips) to safeguard your sensitive electronics. If you are experiencing frequent surges in your home or business and you believe the cause is internal, contact a qualified electrician to inspect your electrical system.

What is a Power Blink?

Power blinks are also brief service interruptions, but they are typically caused by a fault (short circuit) on a power line or a protective device that is working in reaction to the fault. Faults

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CARINA HOFMEISTER

Squirrels may be cute, but they can cause major damage to electrical infrastructure such as substations and power lines.

Amy Retires After 20 Years at Victory

In the Broadway musical "Rent," the final number "Seasons of Love" attempts to determine how to measure a life. In many ways, the song parallels the retirement of longtime Victory Electric administrative assistant, **RAE JEAN AMY**. How do you measure a career?

Since Amy clocked in for the first time on Sept. 1, 2001, she worked the approximate equivalent of: 20.75 years, 249 months, 1,083 weeks, 5,249 days, 41,992 hours, 2,519,520 minutes or 151,171,200 seconds.

During that time, Amy's dedication ensured the cooperative ran without a hitch.

"I remember Rae Jean's first day," said Monica Lampe, accounting clerk. "She walked right through the door and dove into her new job. She was a busy bee who was always willing to help her co-workers, answer questions, and provide us all with a little 'added sugar' from her candy drawer to make it through the days."

Another unit of measurement could be the numerous events, meetings and meals Amy helped coordinate and execute. During her 20 years, she was Victory Electric's de facto "hostess with the mostest." Board meetings, safety meetings, pumpkin festivals, health fairs, conferences, parades, holiday parties, legislative visits and especially the annual meeting, were just a few of the events Amy played a hand in orchestrating.

With many of these events came the challenge of feeding anywhere from 10 to hundreds of people. She was just as good at organizing menus and caterers as she was single-handedly cooking many of the meals.

"Rae Jean was responsible for a majority of



A throwback to Rae Jean's early days at the cooperative. Also pictured is retired CEO Terry Janson.



Above: Victory Electric employees celebrated Rae Jean's retirement with cake.

Below: CEO Shane Laws thanks Rae Jean for her 20 years of dedicated service.

**Rae Jean
was Victory
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"hostess with
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the weight gain for many employees at Victory Electric," said Mikey Goddard, vice president of safety. "On the flip side, she was also the driving force behind many health and wellness initiatives with her creative step challenges that inspired and motivated us to get moving."

Perhaps the best way to measure a career is by the people impacted during her tenure — of which, Amy has no shortage. More than 22 trustees, 247 employees, and 45,000-plus member's lives were made easier by Amy's dedication and diligence.

"Rae Jean has an altruistic nature," said Lineman Kevin Freeman. "I cannot begin to count the ways she selflessly helps others. She was always willing to help me get my uniform repaired or order a new one."

Ultimately, how do you really measure a career like Amy's? The answer — it cannot be quantified, because her impact was immeasurable. Though

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Leadership Dodge Graduate Gains Confidence, Leadership Skills

Leadership: the art of motivating a group of people to act toward achieving a common goal. For Victory Electric Communications Coordinator **ALLISON DOLL**, this couldn't be more true.

Doll completed the Leadership Dodge program in June. Organized by the Dodge City Area Chamber of Commerce, the six-month program is dedicated to bringing people together from various backgrounds to make joint decisions for the common good of the Dodge City community. To help strengthen and transform the Dodge City community, Leadership Dodge strives to inform, challenge and engage participants about the opportunities and community needs in and around Dodge City and Ford County; develop interpersonal relationships and build networking among the participants; and encourage diverse dialogue among the participants, community leaders, businesses and facilitators.

"I wanted to participate in Leadership Dodge to learn about the opportunities and needs in and around Dodge City and Ford County," Doll said. "I was interested in learning more about tourism and economic development, the Dodge City workforce, law enforcement and faith and social services."

Doll found the program helpful,

and she would recommend it to other individuals interested in getting involved in the local community. Since starting the program, she applied the skills and concepts learned in Leadership Dodge to her role as secretary of the Victory Electric safety committee.

"It helped give me a voice and the confidence to speak up about my ideas and participate more in my workplace," Doll said.

In the program's 34-year tenure, more than 300 alumni completed Leadership Dodge. Doll encourages others to take the initiative to step into leadership roles. "Anyone can lead anytime and anywhere," said Doll. "It means you don't have to wait for a role in management to be a leader. You just need the right mindset, communication, and passion to make a difference. I learned through Leadership Dodge that you have the power to make any situation better through the power of positive influence."

If you are interested in applying for Leadership Dodge, please visit dodgechamber.com/leadership-dodge.



Allison Doll



HAPPY
★
4 TH OF JULY
★ ★ ★
INDEPENDENCE DAY

Our office will be closed on
Monday, July 5, for the holiday.

Electrical Safety Myths

Don't always believe what you hear.



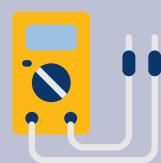
MYTH: Electricity always takes the path of least resistance.

FACT: Although the path of least resistance is easiest to take, an electrical current can take any conductive path.



MYTH: Rubber gloves and shoes will protect me from shock and electrocution.

FACT: That is only true if they are 100% rubber. Most everyday gloves and shoe soles are not, and the other materials they contain can be conductors.



MYTH: Voltage has to be high to kill.

FACT: Although the voltage plays a role in how strong the current flows, exposure to the current itself is what's deadly. Even lower voltages can kill.



MYTH: Heavily insulated tools will always protect against shock and electrocution.

FACT: Don't let a tool give you a false sense of security; take all precautions even if a tool is marketed as safe or insulated.

FREE AND EASY Ways to Save Energy

Here are **10** easy, no-cost ways to save energy this summer.

1 Close or lower window coverings during the heat of the day.



2 Set your thermostat a few degrees higher.



3 Take cooler showers (this is better in the summer anyway!)



4 Use countertop appliances or a microwave instead of an oven.



5 Better yet, grill or smoke food outdoors.



6 Unplug that extra fridge, especially older, inefficient models (they have to work even harder in a hot garage.)



7 Optimize your programmable thermostat's features (around 40% of homeowners never program them.)



8 Check the airflow around windows and doors (add weatherstripping if needed.)



9 Unplug all chargers and electronics before leaving the house.



10 Shut the front door (don't air-condition the outdoors.)



Amy Retires After 20 Years at Victory

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employees and trustees could not adequately measure her impact, the group did their best to honor her contributions to the cooperative by gifting her with a memento that serves as a reminder of her time at Victory Electric. At her retirement party on June 1, Amy, an avid quilter herself, was presented with a quilt pieced together from old Victory Electric T-shirts that represented many of the events in which she played a role.

"The quilt was just a small token of our appreciation for the countless hours and dedication Rae Jean exhibited during her 20 years at Victory Electric," said CEO Shane Laws. "We cannot thank her enough and she will be greatly missed."

Amy's plans for retirement include relocating with her husband, Randy, after doing some traveling in their recently purchased RV. Please join us in wishing her the very best in retirement!



Above: Rae Jean was always willing to help out with Victory Electric events.

Below: We will all miss Rae Jean's friendly smile, but wish her the best in retirement.



Understanding Power Surges and Blinks *Continued from page 16A ▶*

can occur through a variety of instances, like squirrels, birds or other small animals contacting an energized power line; tree branches touching a power line; or lightning and other similar events. In fact, when it comes to power disruptions caused by critters, squirrels reign supreme. In 2019 alone, squirrels were responsible for more than 1,200 outages across the country.

Any of the events noted above can cause your power to blink, but you may also experience a brief interruption when protective devices that act like

circuit breakers are working to detect the fault. Believe it or not, these brief power blinks caused by protective devices are actually good because it means the equipment is working as it should to prevent a prolonged outage.

Regardless of the cause, Victory Electric crews will be on their way to inspect the damage and make necessary repairs after a power outage. And you can help too! Any time you experience repeated disruptions to your electric service, please let us know by calling 620-227-2139.