

## THE VICTORY ELECTRIC CO-OP

# electronews



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### FROM THE CEO

## Don't Let Utility Scams Overpower You

Unfortunately, in today's world, scams are inevitable. Scammers can threaten you with everything from legal action involving the IRS to turning off power to your home.

Utility scams often involve an individual or group posing as an employee of your electric cooperative. The scammer may use threatening language in order to frighten you into offering your credit card or bank account information. Don't fall victim to these types of scams. Understand the threats posed and your best course of action.

If someone calls your home or cell phone demanding you pay your electric bill immediately, gather as much information as you can from that individual, hang-up the phone, and contact Victory Electric and the local authorities. Scammers often use threats and urgency to pressure you into giving them your bank account number or loading a pre-paid credit or debit card (such as a Green Dot card). Prepaid debit cards are a popular method of payment for scammers. Wire transfer services have tightened their security, so crooks have turned to these prepaid cards instead. The cards are difficult to trace, you do not need photo identification to collect or spend the money and transactions cannot be reversed.

If a Victory Electric employee contacts you by phone, it is the

policy of Victory Electric to never request confidential, personal financial information – like a credit card number or checking/savings routing and account numbers.

Only give your confidential financial information to the cooperative if you have contacted us directly to make a payment. If you have any doubts about your utility bill, contact us either in person, or over the phone at 620-227-2139. Never hit redial, scammers are known for spoofing our telephone number so the caller ID makes it appear to be a call from Victory Electric.

If someone comes to your home claiming to be an employee of Victory Electric who needs to collect money or inspect parts of your property, call us to verify they are, in fact, an employee. If they are not, call local authorities for assistance and do not let the individual into your home.

Because Victory Electric does occasionally contact members by phone, it can be difficult to tell a scammer from a member representative. If a caller specifically asks you to pay by prepaid debit card or if you feel pressured for immediate payment or personal information,



Shane Laws

Continued on page 16-B ►

## Lowery Retires After More Than 40 Years of Service

**TOM LOWERY**, vice president of special projects for Victory Electric, retired at the end of February.

Lowery started at Victory Electric in April 2007, when Victory Electric acquired a portion of the Aquila electric properties. Previous to Victory Electric, Lowery began his career as an apprentice lineman in 1973 at Western Power, later Aquila.

As an Ohio native, Lowery ended up in western Kansas after helping his uncle custom harvest.

“I came out in high school to help with harvest then a couple of years later I was in Dodge and my brother-in-law told me the power company was hiring,” Lowery said. “That was the first time I considered being a lineman.”

He began as an apprentice lineman and moved to the service department for 23 years until he was promoted



Tom Lowery

to line supervisor. A year later he took on the role as director of operations. In the move from Aquila to Victory Electric, Lowery was named manager of operations and in 2016 moved to vice president of special projects.

“Not in my wildest dreams did I ever think I would be manager of operations,” Lowery said. “My boss at the time moved up and I applied for the job and got it. I was surprised.”

Lowery is looking forward to retirement, “In my career, I have seen many storms and I am ready to do whatever I want,” he said.

Lowery will join his wife, Christine, in retirement. “I have several home projects I am wanting to do and I’m sure Christine has a list for me, too. We look forward to spending more time with our grandchildren.”

All of us at Victory Electric thank Tom for his many years of service to Victory Electric and the members. We wish him a happy and relaxing retirement.

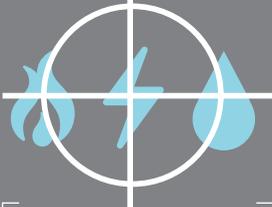
## Don’t Let Utility Scams Overpower You *Continued from page 16-A* ▶

these are both red flags, hang up the phone and call the phone number on your bill. This will ensure you are speaking to a real representative.

Scams continue to make their way around the country on a regular basis. Utility industries are constantly on alert, but as long as scammers continue to make money, it will unfortunately continue to be an issue.

Victory Electric wants to make sure you avoid any and all types of scams that could put you or your financial information in jeopardy. If you have any questions or would like more information about how you can protect yourself from scammers, call us, or visit our website at [victoryelectric.net](http://victoryelectric.net).

**Thanks, Shane**

 <p>Phone scammers are <b>targeting</b> utility customers.</p>	 <p>Don’t fall for scammers <b>pretending</b> to be utilities.</p>	 <p><b>Urgent</b> call asking for personal information? It could be a scam.</p>
 <p>Utility employees will never ask you to pay <b>immediately</b>.</p>	 <p>Utilities will <b>never</b> ask you to buy a prepaid debit card.</p>	 <p>Utilities will <b>never</b> demand payment with a credit card by phone.</p>

## Annual Meeting REMINDER

The 73<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of Victory Electric has been scheduled for April 17, at the Western State Bank Expo Center. A meal will be served and residential members attending will receive a registration gift and have a chance to win door prizes.

April 2018						
S	M	T	W	U	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

## ROW Creates Path for Reliability

There are many ways that Victory Electric provides you with safe, reliable electric service. One of the most common—and crucial—ways is referred to as right-of-way (ROW) clearing or vegetation management.

A right of way refers to a strip of land underneath or around power lines that your electric cooperative has the right and responsibility to maintain and clear. Trees must grow at a distance far enough from conductors where they will not cause harm to individuals or disruption to electrical service. Specifications can vary, but a general guideline of maintaining a safe ROW is 15-feet of clearance on either side of the primary conductors and 20-feet of overhead clearance above the highest wire on the pole.

Clearing the ROW is critical to keeping our members' lights on. An average of 15 percent of power interruptions occur when trees, shrubs or bushes grow too close to power lines.

If a tree encroaches on the ROW, our vegetation management team will trim back branches and brush using chainsaws, bucket trucks, tree climbers, brush chippers and mowers. Chemical control methods can also be used as a way to support the growth of low-growing plant species while competing tall trees

growing beneath power lines.

ROW clearing also keeps your family safe by ensuring that tree branches do not become energized due to close contact with a downed power line. Power lines can carry up to 34,500 volts, and an energized tree branch is incredibly dangerous—even deadly. Be mindful when around trees close to power lines, and make sure your children know that climbing trees near power lines is extremely dangerous.

ROW clearing is also critical to ensuring that we provide members with affordable electricity. Staying ahead of the game keeps us from having to come out after a storm to restore power due to fallen trees.

Remember to contact Victory Electric if you decide to trim or remove trees near any power service or line. And never trim a tree in the right-of-way zone on your own.



Steve Jimmerson trims limbs away from a power line.

## Nominating Committee Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the nominating committee of The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc., was held on Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2018, beginning at 1 p.m., at the offices of the cooperative on North 14th Avenue in Dodge City.

The following members of the nominating committee were present: Gerald E. Rings, Alan Schneweis, Rex Aistrup, Levi Bengamin, Ray Ridgeway, Jr., Steven Dasenbrock, Dave Harris and Lisa Mazza. Dave Snapp, attorney for Victory Electric; Shane Laws, Victory Electric CEO; John Leis, Victory Electric board president; and Rae Jean Amy, Victory Electric administrative assistant, who recorded the minutes were also present. Snapp called the meeting to order at 1 p.m.

Thereupon, Snapp went over qualifications and eligibility requirements for election as a trustee, as set forth in the bylaws of the cooperative, to determine if each potential nominee was eligible for election based upon the information available and the bylaws of the cooperative.

Thereupon, motions duly made, voted on and carried, Lisa Mazza was elected as chairman of the nominating committee and inspector of elections. Chairman Mazza then took over the meeting and asked for nominations from districts 1, 3, 8 and 10.

Thereupon, motions duly made, seconded and adopted, the following persons were nominated to stand election as candidates for trustee of the cooperative for a three-year term: District 1, **DARYL TIEBEN**; District 3, **KENNY SCHULTE**; District 8, **CEDRIC DREWES**; and District 10, **TERRI LARSON** and **JEFF REINERT**.

There being no further business to come before the meeting of the nomination committee, the meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

## Ledford Earns Journeyman Certification

Another Victory Electric lineman received his journeyman lineman certificate and joins 18 other journeyman at Victory Electric.

Victory Electric congratulates **JACOB LEDFORD** on becoming a journeyman lineman.

A journeyman lineman is the highest classification of linemen certifications. The process is four years of experience and time on the job as well as working through four textbooks. For every textbook, there are 10 exams with a final accumulated exam.

To work on a line crew is a brotherhood and more than half of the linemen at Victory Electric have completed this prestigious certification.

“These guys keep working hard and gaining their certifications,” said Ryan Miller, vice president of operations. “It means a lot for

**“I am ready to keep advancing my knowledge and skill as a lineman.”**

their career and for the cooperative. These guys are more qualified and can manage each part of the crew.”

Ledford joined Victory Electric in 2012 as an apprentice electrician before starting as an apprentice lineman in January 2014.

“I started as a groundsman and I have learned the whole trade here at Victory Electric,” Ledford said. “I have learned a lot from these guys and I’m glad to finally have my certificate.”

Prior to joining the Victory Electric team, Ledford was trucking.

“I liked trucking but I wanted to have a better retirement for my family.”

Ledford said. “Sometimes I am gone just as much because I am on call but it’s a thrill. We hold so much power in our hands—literally.”

Ledford creates the third lineman on his crew to earn his journeyman certificate.

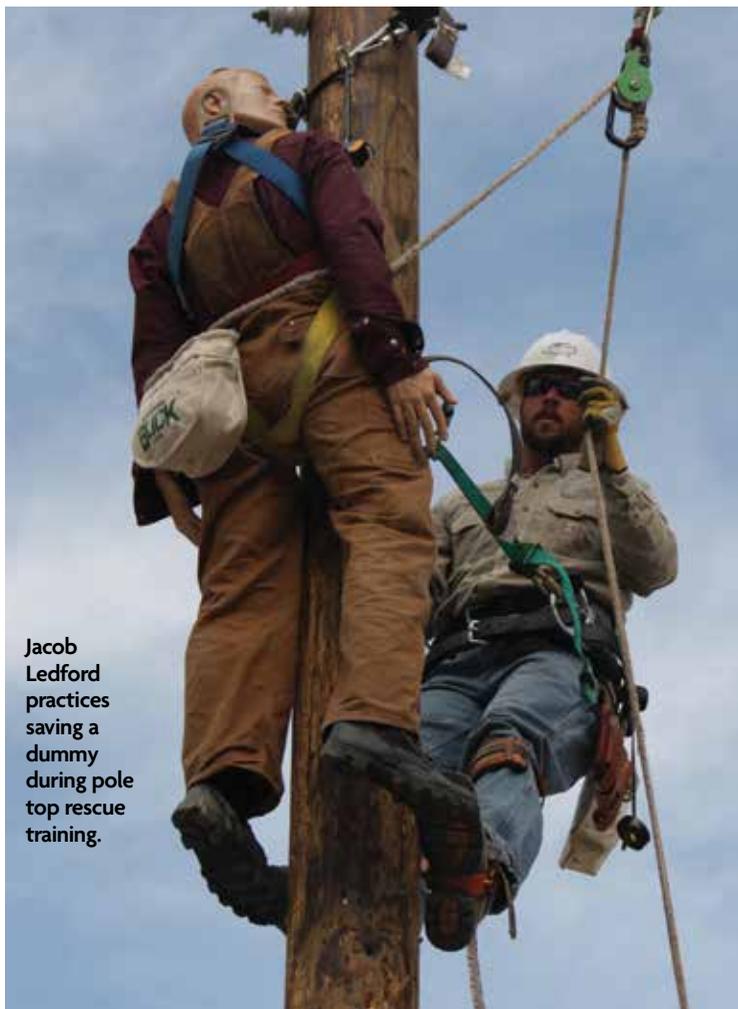
“On a four-man crew, when someone becomes a journeyman that’s another responsible person with that much more knowledge and time on the job,” said Kade Henry, journeyman lineman and crew member. “Soon all four of our crewmembers will have their journeyman and it’s an accomplishment Jacob should be proud of.”

“I have worked on Jacob’s crew for nearly four years and he is meticulous and a great worker. He does a great job and proved he was ready for his journeyman certification,” Henry said.

Earning the certification requires a lot of time on the job and study time.

“I am relieved it is done,” Ledford said. “I am ready to keep advancing my knowledge and skill as a lineman.”

Victory Electric is proud of the leadership journeyman lineman provide and congratulate Jacob on his accomplishment.



Jacob Ledford practices saving a dummy during pole top rescue training.

## COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

# CHAD Program Builds Homes



The newest home on Mulberry Circle in Dodge City is about half complete.

**THE COMMUNITY HOUSING ASSOCIATION OF DODGE CITY (CHAD)** brings hope and new homes to neighborhoods in Dodge City.

CHAD joined forces with the Dodge City Community College Building Trades Program to build their newest home in Dodge City.

“Building a new home in an existing neighborhood encourages the neighboring owners to improve their homes and yards,” said Mollea Wainscott, special projects coordinator of CHAD. “I have seen this first-hand during our first new build. The neighbor replaced broken windows and spruced up the visual appeal of the yard.”

CHAD is a non-profit organization that values community growth and development.

“Giving back to the community and adding or improving homes for the housing stock is important for us,” Wainscott said.

The newest build for CHAD is funded by a Moderate Income Housing grant by the Kansas Housing Resource Corporation. The students started building the house in

September and will finish by the end of the school year.

The partnership allows students to learn energy efficiency, code compliance and working conditions.

“Having students who are learning a trade and learning about energy efficiency is great for the community and great for us at Victory Electric,” said Josh Schmidt, supervisor of key accounts and business development. “More members are becoming aware of energy use and when this house is complete it will be one more home we are able to serve.”

This is the second home built in partnership between Dodge City Community College Building Trades Program and CHAD partnership and the progress is great.

“We are right at or ahead of schedule,” Wainscott said. “Once the home is complete it will be sold to moderate-income citizens.”

The proceeds from the sale are then reinvested in another build or rehab through the CHAD program.

For additional information about CHAD and their efforts, visit [dodgecityhousing.com](http://dodgecityhousing.com).

## Third Graders Receive Free Dictionaries



Mrs. Luther's third grade class of Montezuma receive dictionaries from Kurt Werth, Cimarron Rotary, and Kennedy St. George, Victory Electric

The Cimarron Rotary Club, along with Victory Electric partners together each year to purchase and donate dictionaries to third grade students in Gray County.

Each student is provided with a personal dictionary for home and school use for years to come.

## “Come Get Your Free CFL!”

*This month's lucky winners*

**are... KATIE DARROUGH, HUGO GARCIA, FRED NYSTROM, DANIEL ROSA and MICHAEL TRUJULLO.**

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



## Efficiency Tip of the Month

In spring and summer months, set your ceiling fans to turn in the counterclockwise direction. This will create a cool breeze. Remember, ceiling fans cool people, not rooms. Turn ceiling fans off when you leave the room.



## Spring Forward with Time Change

Don't forget to turn your clocks forward one hour on March 11, when daylight saving time begins.



## VICTORY ELECTRIC'S SAFETY SHARE

# Electrical Safety During and After Spring Storms

Nice spring weather often brings spring storms. To protect you from storm-related electrical hazards, Victory Electric is providing some safety tips about lightning, power lines and portable generators.

### Lightning

Lightning sometimes strikes without warning. If you are outside during a lightning storm follow these tips:

- ▶ Move to a low point. Lightning hits the tallest available object, so get down low in a crouched position if you are in an exposed area.
- ▶ Stay away from trees.
- ▶ Avoid metal. Don't hold onto metal items like bats, golf clubs, fishing rods, tennis rackets, or tools. Stay away from metal sheds, clotheslines, poles, and fences.
- ▶ Stay away from water, including pools, lakes, puddles, and anything damp—like grass.

If you are stuck in a lightning storm while driving your car, use caution. Do not leave your vehicle during a thunderstorm. A vehicle is considered safe during a thunderstorm if it is fully enclosed with a metal top. While inside a safe vehicle does not use electronic devices, such as radio communications.

Safety inside during a storm is just as important. To avoid lightning strikes, stay away from windows and doors and avoid contact with electrical equipment and cords during storms.

### Power Lines

If you see a downed power line, move at least 10 feet away from the line and anything touching it.

The proper way to move away from the line is to shuffle away with small steps, keeping your feet together and on the ground at all times. This will minimize the potential for a strong electric shock. The human body is a ready conductor for electricity making safety during downed lines crucial.

Once to safety, call Victory Electric at 620-227-2139 and report the line. Never attempt to move a downed line or anything in contact with the line by using another object. Even non-conductive materials if slightly wet can conduct electricity and electrocute you.

Do not drive over downed lines. If you are in your car and it is in contact with a downed line, stay in your car. Tell others to stay away from your vehicle.

If you must leave your car because it is on fire, jump out of the vehicle with both feet together and avoid contact with the car and the ground at the same time. This way you avoid being the path of electricity from the car to the earth. Shuffle away from the car.

Once a Victory Electric lineman arrives, they will instruct you when it is safe to exit your vehicle.

### Portable Generators

Mother nature can cause power outages when it storms and a portable generator can help you prepare for the spring storms.

The Electrical Safety Foundation International strongly recommends a licensed electrician install your home generator to ensure they meet all local electrical codes. Make sure your generator is properly grounded in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Do not connect generators directly to the household wiring unless an appropriate transfer switch has been installed by a licensed electrician.

Never operate a generator inside your home or in any other enclosed area. Instead, place the generator on a dry surface under an open, canopy-like structure.

Following these safety tips during and after a storm can keep you and your family safe.

Spring storms can create dangers and power outages. While Victory Electric does our best to restore power safely and quickly, extended outages can happen. To be prepared, stock your pantry with a variety of non-perishable items.

## YOUR POWER OUTAGE PANTRY

We do our best to avoid power outages, but unfortunately, Mother Nature occasionally has different plans. Stay ahead of the storm by stocking your pantry with a variety of non-perishable items.

*Set these items aside for extended outages only, and your storm prep will be a breeze!*

*Don't forget to stock up on disposable goods, like paper plates, napkins, plastic cutlery and cups.*

- BEANS
- CANNED FRUIT
- CANNED TUNA
- CANNED VEGETABLES
- CEREAL
- DRIED FRUITS
- DRIED MEATS/JERKY
- GRAHAM CRACKERS
- PASTA
- RICE
- SPAM
- OATMEAL



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

# Robar la electricidad: No Vale la Pena el Riesgo

Cada año, las cooperativas eléctricas en todo el país enfrentan a quienes deliberadamente manipulan su medidor eléctrico para robar energía. Este hecho no solo es extremadamente peligroso, es un delito grave que podría resultar en grandes multas y en tiempo de cárcel.

En muchos casos de robo, los miembros interferían con el funcionamiento de un medidor o bajaban la energía directa para reducir o evitar el pago de facturas de electricidad.

"Hemos visto a personas hacer cosas muy peligrosas — utilizando cuchillos, tenedores, imanes, cables y cualquier número de objetos

para evitar pagar por la energía que utilizan," Heith Konecny, manejador de la tecnología de medición explica. "Sin embargo, estas personas no sólo están robando a sus compañeros de las cooperativas también están arriesgando sus vidas y las de nuestros trabajadores."

Según la red de investigación de cooperativas, una división de la Asociación Nacional de Cooperativas Rurales, la energía creciente a través de un medidor que asido manipulado puede causar una catástrofe eléctrica. Un corto circuito podría producir un destello lo suficientemente brillante

**“Cada vez que entra en la base de un medidor, corre un riesgo. En un flash, alguien puede morir o ser seriamente herido.”**

**HEITH KONECNY MANEJADOR DE LA  
TECNOLOGÍA DE MEDICIÓN EXPLICA**

como para causar ceguera y lo suficientemente poderoso como para lanzar fragmentos de escombros como de metralla, al rojo vivo. Lesiones graves o la muerte por electrocución, una explosión o incendio a menudo resulta por causa de la manipulación del medidor. Sólo personal entrenado apropiadamente de Victory Electric con equipo de protección deben trabajar en los medidores.

"Cada vez que entra en la base de un medidor, corre un riesgo", dijo Konecny. "En un flash, alguien puede morir o ser seriamente herido."

El robo de electricidad no es un crimen sin víctimas. Victory Electric pierde ingresos y gasta recursos para investigar las manipulaciones. Estos costos se pasan a todos los miembros. Los calculos nacionales varían, pero El Washington Post cito a oficiales de protección de ingresos que afirman cifras entre \$1 billón y \$10 billones es robado en utilidades anuales.

Puesto que todos pagan por la energía perdida, por favor háganoslo saber si sospecha de alteración del medidor. Llame al Victoria Electric al 620.227.2139 para reportar posible robo de servicio. La información se puede reportar en forma anónima.



La energía creciente a través de un medidor que asido manipulado puede causar una catástrofe eléctrica.

## 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.



# ARE YOU ENERGY EFFICIENT?

*Complete the crossword puzzle and find out!*  
**Always remember to practice energy efficiency at home, and tell your friends and family about the tips you've learned below.**



**DOWN**

1. Turn off the \_\_\_\_\_ when no one is in the room.
2. On sunny days open the \_\_\_\_\_ for natural sunlight instead of turning on the lights in your home.
3. Avoid leaving the \_\_\_\_\_ door open for long periods of time. This prevents cold air from escaping while you are looking for food.
4. Keep all \_\_\_\_\_ and doors closed while the heat or air is running.
5. Make sure none of the \_\_\_\_\_ in your home are blocked. Blockages will prevent your heat or air from circulating properly.
6. Try to develop \_\_\_\_\_ efficient habits now. This will help you save energy and money for the future.

**ACROSS**

7. Don't leave the \_\_\_\_\_ running when you brush your teeth.
8. Turn off and unplug all household \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e. chargers, computers, toasters) when you aren't using them.
9. Take \_\_\_\_\_ more frequently than baths to help save money on water bills.
10. Don't leave your \_\_\_\_\_ on when you leave the room. If no one is watching it, turn it off.

**WORD KEY**

WINDOWS	ENERGY
REFRIGERATOR	SHOWERS
VENTS	TELEVISION
WATER	ELECTRONICS
CURTAINS	LIGHTS