

P.O. Box 1335, 3230 N. 14<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Dodge City, KS 67801  
620-227-2139  
[victoryelectric.net](http://victoryelectric.net)  
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# Electronews

## The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc.

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## FROM THE CEO

## Capital Credits Retirement to Distribute \$1 Million to Members

Capital credits are just one of the many reasons it is great to be a member of an electric co-op. This month, Victory Electric is retiring capital credits and returning more than \$1 million to members. Since 2019, we have retired \$5.5 million in capital credits back to our members.

So, what is a capital credits retirement? Electric cooperatives are not like other utilities. We operate on a not-for-profit basis, which means we operate as close to cost as possible. But even not-for-profit businesses can have money left over after all expenses are paid in a given year. The difference is, at the end of the year, we allocate that money (but not immediately retire) to our members' accounts. We collect only enough revenue to run and expand business without the need to generate profits for distant shareholders. Victory Electric works every day to keep rates as low as possible. But it's sure nice to know when there are extra margins at the end of the year, they go back to members and members receive cash back over time.

As a not-for-profit utility, Victory Electric is limited to two options for raising capital: borrowing or raising capital from its members. By combining capital credits funding obtained from members with borrowed money on which Victory Electric must pay interest, the cooperative is able to lower its cost of capital. Therefore, capital credits help Victory Electric remain in good financial standing and keep rates as low as possible for our members.

The capital is used for improvements, such as substations, power lines and other electrical system facilities that serve our members. It also helps to build and sustain the cooperative in an industry experiencing massive changes and even more technological advances.



**Shane Laws**

*Continued on page 12H ►*



## Ackerman Promoted to Crew Chief



Ross Ackerman

Victory Electric Vice President of Operations Ryan Miller recently announced **ROSS ACKERMAN'S** promotion to line crew chief.

Crew chiefs are responsible for a line crew of three to four linemen. They supervise the crew and the crew's assigned projects.

Ackerman started with Victory as an apprentice electrician in May 2012. He then moved to a tree trimmer position, until November 2013, when a lineman position became available. Ross completed his apprenticeship and became a journeyman lineman in November 2017.

"Ross has been with Victory for 10 years and has become a great lineman," Miller said. "He will be a great crew chief and I'm excited to see him grow as a leader."

"Becoming a crew chief is a new challenge, it is exciting and definitely going to be different," Ackerman said. "I am looking forward to teaching and helping the younger guys learn, as well as continuing to be hands on and improve my skills, I still have a lot to learn and want to continue to grow as a lineman and crew chief."

Ackerman and his wife, Kali, have three children, Quinn, Maci and Owen. He enjoys spending time with family and friends and being outside playing with his children.

Congratulations to Ross on his promotion! Victory Electric looks forward to the leadership he will provide on the line crew.

# Lineworker Safety Gear

Every time you flip on a light switch or turn on the TV, you probably aren't thinking much about how this is made possible. Electricity is a vital part of people's lives, but we often forget that linemen put themselves in harm's way to keep lines in working condition and the power turned on.

There is no doubt that linemen play an essential role in today's world. They are a building block in sustaining life as we know it, but did you know that they face an array of severe and dangerous hazards on a consistent basis? Not only do they face the risks involved with working on high-voltage power lines, but they also work with heavy machinery alongside potentially dangerous roads. Couple these risks with extreme weather conditions such as high wind, slick roads, and extreme temperatures, and you have a recipe for accidents.

The primary risk a lineman faces is electrocution or electric shock. These injuries are extremely harmful and can be fatal, so extreme caution and focus are essential when working near energized equipment.

A lineman must wear certified and tested rubber gloves and sleeves to ensure their safety while working on any high-voltage equipment. The rubber gloves and sleeves a lineman

uses must be sent to be tested every 60 days at a certified facility. Also, before each use, linemen must air test and visually check their personal protective equipment to ensure there are no nicks or scratches on them because any microscopic damage could render them inadequate in the event of an arc flash or electric contact. And that's just part of the protective gear a lineman uses.

Bucket trucks and digger trucks are also tested annually for high voltage contact to ensure the safety of our workers. The bucket trucks and diggers can reach heights up to 65 feet, making falling a severe hazard. Not only do our crews work at extreme heights, but they also do so alongside highly traveled and potentially dangerous roads. If drivers are not paying attention in work zones, it could lead to our workers being struck by oncoming vehicles.

Victory Electric is dedicated to protecting our employees and our members. With the ever-changing safety rules and regulations, our cooperative remains at the forefront with our safety initiatives. We thank all our members for your support and dedication as we keep our employees protected with the proper protective equipment and out of harm's way as they continue to keep your power on.

**With the ever-changing safety rules and regulations, our cooperative remains at the forefront with our safety initiatives.**

# A Look at the Evolution of Line Equipment

## 1875-1900

### Electrification begins

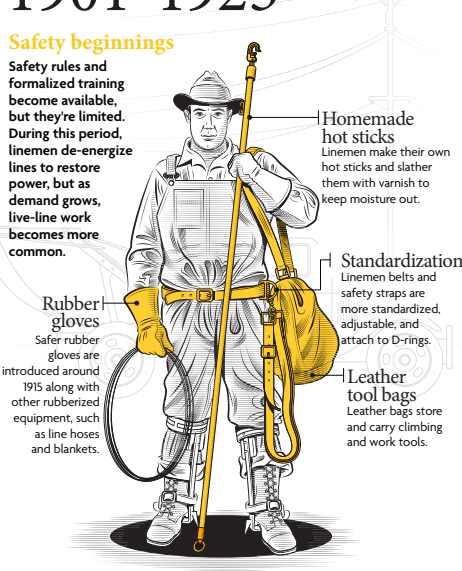
In the early years, linemen learn basic principles and hazards in realtime. Safety standards are non-existent, and most line equipment is handmade.



## 1901-1925

### Safety beginnings

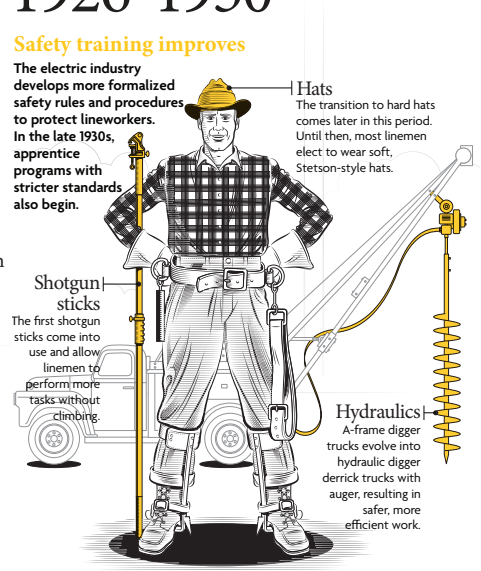
Safety rules and formalized training become available, but they're limited. During this period, linemen de-energize lines to restore power, but as demand grows, live-line work becomes more common.



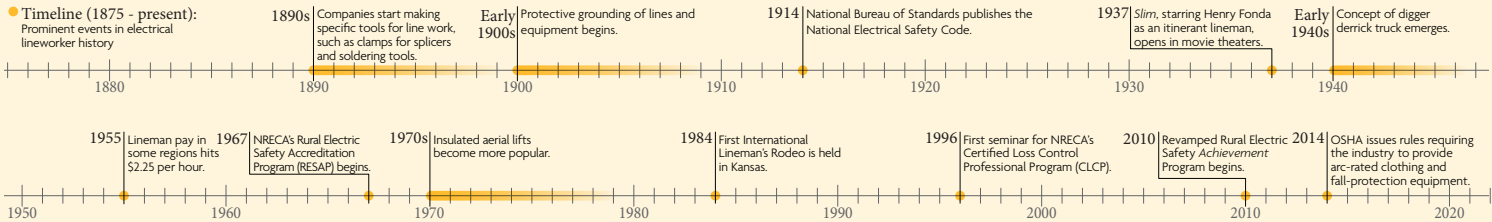
## 1926-1950

### Safety training improves

The electric industry develops more formalized safety rules and procedures to protect lineworkers. In the late 1930s, apprentice programs with stricter standards also begin.



● Timeline (1875 - present):  
Prominent events in electrical lineworker history



## 1951-1970

### New heights and faster communication

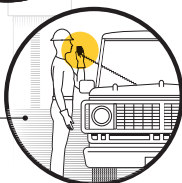
Fiberglass sticks evolve to "rubber gloving" with more formalized rules and training. The advent of the bucket truck, utility undergrounding, and improved communications are major steps.

**Rubber glove protectors**  
Linemen wear two pairs of gloves—leather on top of rubber—for more protection.



**Bucket trucks**  
Insulated buckets on trucks with fall protection come into use.

**Two-way radios**  
New applications of radio technologies improve communications during emergencies and storm restoration.



## 1971-1990

### New law of the land

President Nixon signs the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) law. Underground line installation gains widespread use. Material-handling bucket trucks and hydraulic and mechanical compression tools also improve work conditions.

**Hard hats**  
Head protection made from thermoplastics gains widespread use.



**Telescoping or extendo stick**  
Made of fiberglass, the extendo stick lets workers perform tasks like opening and closing switches or removing tree limbs while staying on or near the ground.

**Rubber sleeve improvements**  
New sleeves extend to the shoulders for extra protection.

## 1991-present

### Watching out for workers

OSHA begins requiring utilities to provide lineworker clothing to protect from arc flashes and "fall protection" devices like body harnesses and fall-arrest lanyards.

**Harnesses**  
Linemen aren't climbing as much, so body harnesses and lanyards are valuable backup support.



**Battery-operated crimper**  
Lightweight mechanical crimpers mean no more squeezing connectors by hand.

**Insulated hard hats**  
Linemen now wear hard hats insulated with a special polyethylene that protects against blows to the head.

**Clothing**  
Arc-rated clothing is written into OSHA-required Personal Protective Equipment.

**Tablets**  
Mobile devices help lineworkers troubleshoot problems using SCADA and meter data instead of climbing a pole or going up in a bucket.



# YOU ASKED

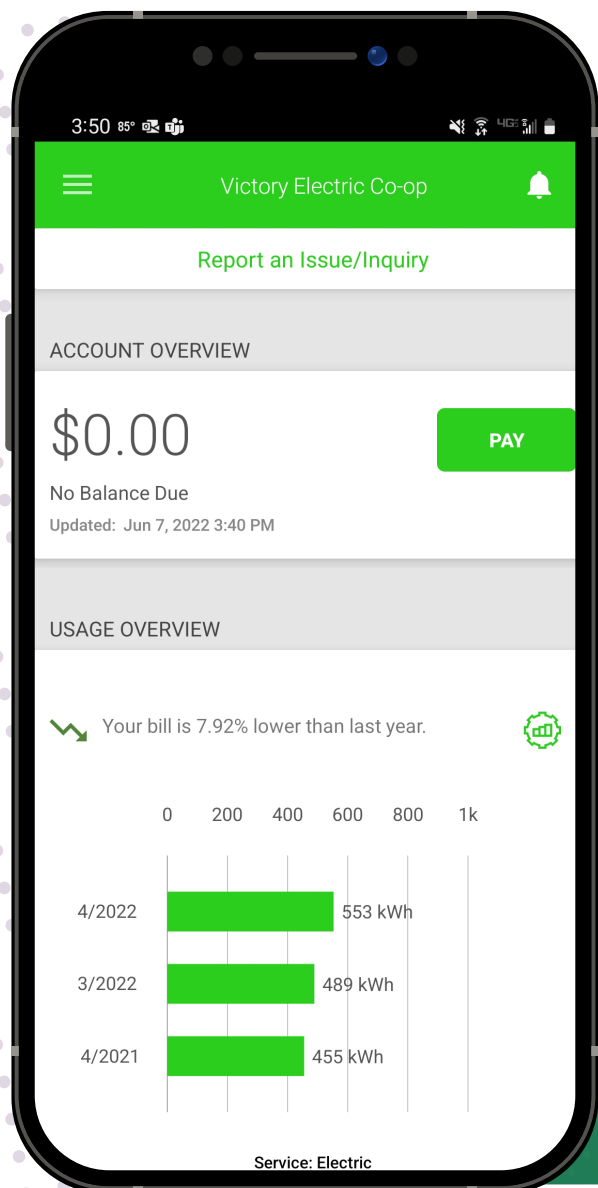
## *We Listened*

### Smart notifications help you take control of your account

Having a rapid and reliable means of communication with our members is of utmost importance to Victory Electric. In the case of an emergency, we do not want you to be left in the dark.

We have listened to your experiences and concerns regarding communication notifications in emergency and outage situations. And we have the answer! SmartHub provides you the opportunity to receive the notifications you requested and need during difficult times.

As a member, through SmartHub you are in control of how and when to be notified. SmartHub is the quickest way for Victory Electric



iOS



Android



Scan to download the app!





# smart hub

Sign up online by  
visiting the website at  
<https://www.victoryelectric.net/pay-online-smarthub>.

to reach you in an emergency, like Winter Storm Uri in February 2021. Being able to reach as many members as possible using a single source is critical for adequate emergency communication.

With SmartHub we have the ability to send notifications to you, to alert you of anticipated and ongoing outages affecting your area. These notifications can include guidance on what steps members can take to prepare for upcoming situations and to keep you apprised of the status of any ongoing incidents in your area.

## Smart Notifications

SmartHub gives you the ability to take control of your notifications! You can report outages and send us account inquiries while you are on the go. Be in the know with online notifications for service work, news promotions, weather events and planned outages.

SmartHub lets you decide how you want to be informed about your bill, be notified either by email or text message on your smartphone. You can sign up to receive:

- Notifications when your bill is available.
- Notifications when your bill is past due.
- Outage alerts for all your meters.
- Alerts for daily, monthly or even hourly usage.
- Notifications for major weather events.
- Specific electricity news bulletins.



Manage Your  
Account



Monitor Usage  
24-7



View and Pay  
Your Bill



Report Service  
Issues



Receive Important  
Updates



# YOUTH TOUR BUILDS

JUNE 15-22, 2023  
WASHINGTON, D. C.



**LEADERSHIP**

FDR | SMITHSONIAN | MLK  
NEWSEUM | BALTIMORE  
JEFFERSON | PENTAGON | KOREAN  
NATIONALS STADIUM | ART  
CAPITOL HILL | WHITE HOUSE  
MT VERNON | THEATRE  
LINCOLN | ARLINGTON CEMETERY

**MEMORIES**



**2023**

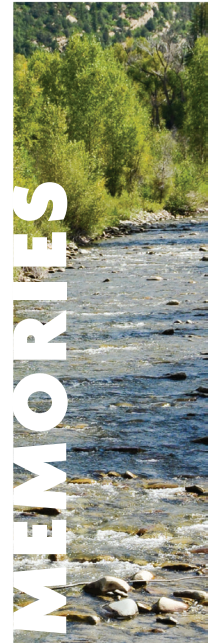


**COMMUNITY**





FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT  
CHANDA SCHULTE OR ADRIANA TIPTON AT  
[ASKCOMMUNICATIONS@VICTORYELECTRIC.NET](mailto:ASKCOMMUNICATIONS@VICTORYELECTRIC.NET)





## Capital Credits ...

*Continued from page T2A ►*

After each fiscal year, and once the determination has been made that the financial condition of the cooperative is stable and adequate to meet operating costs and debt covenants, the board of trustees may elect to return excess capital by retiring capital credits to Victory Electric members.

After evaluating the health of the cooperative in 2022, Victory Electric's board of trustees voted to retire \$1 million. The capital credits will be applied as a bill credit on members' December electric bill. Checks are expected to be mailed to inactive members in early to mid-December. Victory Electric members who may be leaving or have already left the cooperative service area are encouraged to provide Victory Electric with a current mailing address so that capital credits can be returned as they are retired. If you think you may be an inactive member without a current address on file, please contact our office to arrange for your capital credit payment to be issued.

Only your local electric cooperative makes every customer an owner of the business. It is just another way we are looking out for our members.

**THANKS, SHANE**

## 2022 Annual Pumpkin Festival



Four hundred pumpkins were painted at the annual Pumpkin Festival this year.

The annual Pumpkin Festival was held Oct. 29, 2022, at the Victory Electric office. Thank you to everyone who participated. We enjoyed seeing everyone's smiles and costumes. Over 400 pumpkins were painted, numerous train rides taken, games played, temporary tattoos placed, and roughly 400 bags of popcorn eaten!

It was a great day and we enjoyed seeing everyone back for the festival. Thank you to the Ladies Community Outreach, the Junior ROTC group, Boys Scouts, USD 443 Literacy Bus, and Comanche Middle School girls basketball team. We could not have held the event without all of our wonderful volunteers. We look forward to seeing everyone next year!



Get your popcorn! Vice President of Corporate Services Amy Grasser and Member Services Representative Alexa Molina prepared popcorn for all to enjoy.

## Victory Electric Seeks Board Nominations

Members, elected trustees and employees — that is who powers a cooperative. The overall management and business oversight of a cooperative is tasked to those elected to serve on the cooperative board of trustees. Like you, they are cooperative members but with a special perspective. They live throughout the Victory Electric service area, and have the best interests of members, the community and the cooperative always in mind.

The board of trustees' primary function is planning and policy oversight, establishing the long-term objectives of the cooperative, and providing resources to meet those objectives. Board members work closely with the CEO and senior staff to review progress, ensure accountability, make strategic decisions, and stay current on an increasingly complex business.

The cooperative territory is divided into districts, all of which are represented by a trustee. Trustees are elected at the annual meeting for three-year terms of office. A commitment to the cooperative board is also one to the community. Each trustee holds the responsibility of representing their cooperative in the public eye. They attend outreach events, serve on additional committees, attend training, and listen to members in their district. They are the liaisons between

the greater membership and cooperative management and employees.

### Election and Service

Victory Electric's annual membership meeting is scheduled for April 11, 2023, and we are currently soliciting nominations for Victory Electric's Board of Trustees. Positions up for election are:

- District 2, currently held by **JOHN LEIS**
- District 4, currently held by **JIM IMEL**
- District 6, currently held by **KENNY WEHKAMP**
- District 10, currently held by **RANDY QUINT**

To qualify, you must be a natural person (not a corporation, partnership, or any other business entity); and your principal residence must be served by Victory Electric and located within our territory and within the district you wish to represent. If a close relative of yours — within the third degree — is an employee or a trustee of Victory Electric, you are not eligible to run for a trustee position. If you would like to run for a trustee position, or you know someone interested, please send a letter of interest with qualifications to Shane Laws at Victory Electric, P.O. Box 1335, Dodge City, KS 67801 **BY DEC. 31, 2022.**