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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Electronews

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FROM THE CEO

Victory Electric Community Solar Program: A Bright Opportunity

Solar cell technology harnesses energy from the sun to power homes and businesses. Solar generation continues to increase as technology improves and systems become more affordable. Concerns about climate change have also led to a growing interest in reducing reliance on non-renewable energy sources. But installing a rooftop solar system may be out of reach if you lack financing, your home receives inadequate sunlight, or you live in an apartment, condominium or rental house.

Victory Electric wants to make it easier for our members to support renewable energy — without the high cost or long-term commitment of buying, installing and maintaining rooftop solar panels. Our new **COMMUNITY SOLAR** program is an alternative to rooftop solar that lets you join other residential users who are investing in more sustainable energy

and helping the environment.

Sunflower Electric Power Corporation — Victory Electric's generation and transmission (G&T) provider — generates solar energy at its 20-megawatt Johnson Corner solar farm in Stanton County, Kansas. Sunflower transmits wholesale energy from Johnson Corner to Victory Electric through the electric grid. Victory then delivers that power to cooperative members through its electric distribution system.

Victory now offers shares in the energy produced at the Johnson Corner solar farm for members to purchase with no long-term commitment or setup fees. Residential members may



Shane Laws

Continued on page 12E ▶

Victory Electric
COMMUNITY SOLAR

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO SIGN UP, SCAN HERE!

5 Ways to Safeguard Your Home This Winter

As the temperatures drop and the days grow shorter, there's a natural inclination to create a warm and cozy haven at home. Unfortunately, as we see increased use of heating equipment, candles and electrical items, the number of home fires tends to increase during winter months.

Here are five ways you can safeguard your home for the winter season.

1 ENSURE CARBON MONOXIDE AND SMOKE DETECTORS ARE WORKING PROPERLY. If your detectors are battery-operated, replace the batteries annually. Test the detectors once a month and give them a good dusting to ensure the sensors are clear of dirt and debris.

2 INSPECT ELECTRICAL CORDS. We depend on more cords during winter, whether for holiday lighting, extension cords or portable heaters. Before using any corded items, double check to make sure cords aren't frayed or cracked. If you use portable space heaters, remember to keep them at least 3 feet away from flammable items. Use models that include an auto shut-off feature and overheat protection. Space heaters can take a toll on your energy bills. Use them efficiently (to heat smaller spaces) and safely. Never plug a space heater into a power strip.

3 AVOID OVERLOADING ELECTRICAL OUTLETS AND POWER STRIPS. When overloaded with electrical items, outlets and power strips can overheat and catch fire. If you use power strips

for multiple devices, make sure the strip can handle the electrical load. For a safer bet, look for power strips that include surge protection.

4 CLEAN THE FIREPLACE TO IMPROVE SAFETY AND EFFICIENCY. There's nothing better than a warm fire on a chilly night, but it's important to maintain your fireplace for safety. As wood burns, a sticky substance known as creosote builds up in the chimney. When creosote buildup becomes too thick, a chimney fire can ignite. The chimney should be cleaned at least once a year to reduce fire risks. Regular cleaning also improves air flow and limits the amount of carbon monoxide that seeps indoors.

5 PRACTICE SAFETY IN THE KITCHEN. As we spend more time in the kitchen during the holiday season, be mindful of potential fire hazards. Never leave food that's cooking on the stovetop unattended. Clean and remove spilled foods from cooking surfaces and be mindful of where you place flammable items like dish towels.

Victory Electric wants you and your family to stay safe during the winter season. Visit www.victoryelectric.net/electrical-safety-tips for additional safety tips.



Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors once a month and clean them to ensure the sensors are clear of dirt and debris.



There's nothing better than a warm fire on a chilly night, but it's important to maintain your fireplace for safety.



Avoid overloading electrical outlets and power strips. When overloaded with electrical items, outlets and power strips can overheat and catch fire.



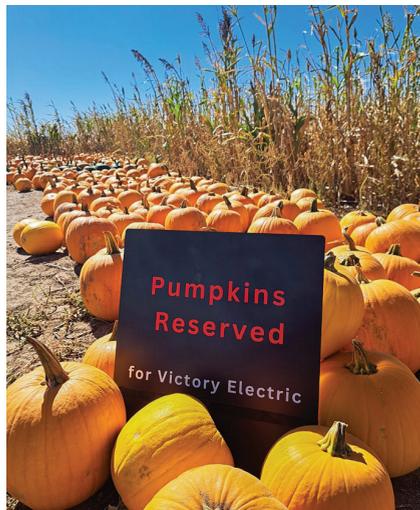
Hickory Hollow Pumpkin Patch is located southwest of Spearville, Kansas. Victory Electric members Allison and Cody Langlois started the pumpkin patch in 2021.

Employees enjoy celebrating the fall season and connecting with community members of all ages during the Pumpkin Painting Festival every October at Victory Electric. We appreciate all the volunteers from local groups who help us put on the event, which features festive fall fun with hundreds of pumpkins for children to decorate, train rides, games and other activities — plus plenty of popcorn!

Victory Electric highlighted 50 local businesses during National Cooperative Month for our popular Co-ops Love Local gift card giveaway in October. Our fondness for local businesses in our community extends to the pumpkins we distribute at the Pumpkin Painting Festival, which are grown locally in Ford County at **HICKORY HOLLOW PUMPKIN**

PATCH. Victory Electric members **ALLISON AND CODY LANGLOIS** started the agritourism destination in 2021. Their seventh-generation farm, located southwest of Spearville, Kansas, dates back to 1911.

We were proud to partner with Hickory Hollow for this year's festival and were pleased with our batch of locally grown pumpkins. Watch for photos from the festival in our December issue of *Kansas Country Living*.



Victory Electric's Pumpkin Painting Festival each year includes hundreds of pumpkins grown at Hickory Hollow Pumpkin Patch.

Victory Electric Seeks Your Input

Member satisfaction is important to Victory Electric. We work throughout the year to provide excellent service to you, our members. We rely on your feedback to help determine where to make improvements to the cooperative's operations, measure progress and enhance member satisfaction.

To evaluate member satisfaction and better serve you, Victory Electric will be sending an **EMAIL SURVEY TO COOPERATIVE MEMBERS ON NOV. 20**. Victory Electric would appreciate your participation, and we will use the survey results to help us improve service and make future plans.

As Victory Electric members, you have a voice in the future of your cooperative. Completing this survey is a simple way to share your perspective and offer feedback about your electric service.

Please note that when contacting members by phone or email, Victory Electric employees and our representatives will never ask you to share bank account and credit card details or other personal information. This survey from Victory Electric is a legitimate request for opinions, and you will not be asked to provide private data or payment information.

Contact Victory Electric at 620-227-2139 if you have any questions.



Working on the Line

Hotline School



Victory Electric linemen received additional training on working safely with live power lines at the recent Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (KEC) Hotline School.



Linemen Tyler Trent (left) and Carlos Rojas Garcia attended the KEC Hotline School. Austin Gooder and Manny Banuelos also attended from Victory.



Victory linemen learned the proper procedures for positioning, covering up, changing layouts and switching out structures when working with live lines.

Parade of Lights and Chili Cook-Off Set for Nov. 27

Pull out grandma's top-secret chili recipe, dust off your apron, polish your ladle and warm up the roaster! While you're making plans for the upcoming holidays, grab some lights and get ready to decorate a trailer for the annual Parade of Lights and Chili Cook-Off, which returns to Dodge City on Monday, Nov. 27.

Festivities will begin at the Boot Hill Museum at 4:30 p.m., when the public is invited to taste samples of the chili contest entries. Awards for the judges' winning selections will be announced beginning at 4:45 p.m.

At 5:30 p.m., join us at the Dodge City Visitor Information Center for the Mayor's Tree Lighting Ceremony events.

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

For more information, follow the Christmas in Dodge City Facebook page at facebook.com/christmasindodgecity, email askcommunications@victoryelectric.net or contact the Dodge City Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The planning committee for the 2023 Dodge City Christmas Parade of Lights



FIND OUT MORE!

FACEBOOK: [Christmas in Dodge City](#)

EMAIL: askcommunications@victoryelectric.net

CALL: Dodge City CVB at 620-225-8186

event and other Christmas festivities includes representatives from Victory Electric Cooperative, City of Dodge City, *Dodge City Globe*, Southwind Broadcasting, Main Street Dodge City, Dodge City Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Dodge City Area Chamber of Commerce.

Offices Closed for Thanksgiving

Our offices will close on Wednesday, Nov. 22, at 3 p.m. and remain closed on Thursday, Nov. 23, and Friday, Nov. 24, in observance of the holiday. Our office will reopen for business on Monday, Nov. 27.

*From our co-op family to yours,
Happy Thanksgiving!*



Victory Electric Community Solar Program: A Bright Opportunity Continued from page 12A ▶

subscribe to \$5 shares in 125 kilowatt-hour (kWh) blocks. Eligible members may purchase shares based on their home's 12-month average electrical usage. For example, if your average energy consumption is 1,000 kWh, you could purchase up to eight shares (e.g., 1,000 kWh/125 kWh = 8 shares).

How to Sign Up

Visit www.victoryelectric.net/community-solar to find out if you are eligible, how many shares you may reserve, and enroll in the Victory Electric Community Solar program. Interested residential members who have at least 12 months of uninterrupted service at the same location and whose accounts are in good standing (excluding accounts enrolled in PowerMyWay, Budget Billing or have a Net Metering Rider) are encouraged to sign up. The sign-up process is simple and takes only a few minutes:

- 1 Go to www.victoryelectric.net/community-solar and click **SUBSCRIBE HERE**.
- 2 Enter your **ACCOUNT NUMBER, NAME** and **CONTACT INFORMATION**, then click Next.
- 3 The page will indicate whether you qualify for the program and calculate the number of shares you may purchase based on your average electrical use. Using the slider, **SELECT THE NUMBER OF SHARES YOU WANT** to subscribe to at \$5 per share per month, then click Next.
- 4 Review the member application to make sure it reflects the correct number of shares you want, then select the best way to contact you. Read and check the box beside the member acknowledgement, then click **SUBMIT APPLICATION**.
- 5 **A VICTORY ELECTRIC REPRESENTATIVE WILL REVIEW YOUR APPLICATION** and follow up with you within two business days.

How It Works

Two additional line items will be added to your monthly electric bill: a \$5 subscription cost for each share you purchase, and a solar adjustment line. When market conditions are favorable for solar-generated power, you will receive a solar adjustment credit from your subscribed shares. When market conditions are not favorable for solar-generated power, the solar adjustment will be a charge. Fuel costs, transmission congestion, consumer demand, weather, natural disasters and supply chain issues can all affect the cost of electric energy, so the solar adjustment may vary from one month to another. We expect that participating members will save money over time but cannot guarantee they will receive a credit every month.

Sunflower Electric offers a limited number of shares to Victory Electric, and shares are available on a first-come, first-served basis. When all shares are allocated, interested members will be placed on a waiting list and contacted as shares become available.

If you sign up in November, your Community Solar subscription will begin in December and be reflected on the bill you receive in January. Members may cancel at any time and the cancellation will take effect on the last day of the month. If you cancel your subscription, you will not be eligible to resubscribe for one year.

Victory Electric is your trusted energy partner, and we are pleased to offer interested members this solar energy opportunity without the significant initial investment, maintenance costs and ownership hassles of buying and installing a rooftop solar system.

To learn more about the program, visit www.victoryelectric.net/community-solar or call our office at 620-227-2139.

THANKS, SHANE

Cold Weather Rule Begins Nov. 15

Though Victory Electric is a self-regulated electric utility, we participate in the special Kansas Corporation Commission Cold Weather Rule disconnect procedures for residential members from Nov. 15 through March 15. The guidelines for the program were established to protect not only you, the electric member, but also your member-owned cooperative.

Residential cooperative members unable to pay their electric service bills during the cold-weather period may qualify, provided they fulfill certain good faith requirements when attempting to pay. However, the cooperative will still disconnect for nonpayment if certain criteria are not met. Victory Electric reserves the right in those circumstances to disconnect between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, when the temperature is at or above 35 degrees F. In no event will the cooperative disconnect a service if the local National Weather Service forecasts the temperature will fall below 35 degrees F within 24 hours following the time of disconnection.

Any outstanding balance remaining not set up on a payment arrangement by March 15 is required to be paid-in-full by March 16 to avoid disconnection. In the event the account is disconnected for nonpayment, any past due balance plus the reconnection fee must be paid-in-full to restore power.

Any check or payment used to establish a payment arrangement returned to Victory Electric for non-sufficient funds (NSF) is considered a default on the payment arrangement. The member is responsible for immediately paying the NSF penalty and reissuing the funds to Victory Electric by cash, credit card or money order to avoid possible disconnection.

The Cold Weather Rule does not apply to PowerMyWay accounts. If the account balance is \$0.01 or below during inclement weather, the account will be disconnected regardless of Cold Weather Rule.

Please understand that Victory Electric is strict with implementing the Cold Weather Rule requirements and payment arrangement guidelines, and members should make every effort to comply to avoid broken payment arrangements and/or disconnection. Two or more broken payment arrangements will initiate a deposit or a modification of a deposit.

For more information on Cold Weather Rule requirements and payment arrangement guidelines, please visit our website at www.victoryelectric.net or call our office at 620-227-2139.

Spearville OUTAGE

On Oct. 3, a transformer fire on a pole near Spearville High School caused an outage. Victory Electric crews worked with the local fire and emergency department to extinguish the fire, replace the pole and transformer, and restore power to members in Spearville.



Victory crews and local emergency crews assess the damage after a transformer fire.



Crews work to restore power to the residents of Spearville after a transformer caught fire.

A LINEWORKER'S Restoring

“How long is it going to take?” Those are familiar words to all who work in the electric industry. It’s a phrase I’ve been asked thousands of times in my career. It’s the first thing people think when the lights go out. It doesn’t take long sitting in the dark to realize how dependent we are on electricity and how much it makes our lives better and easier.

As a lineworker, it’s always a good feeling to help people get their lights back on. I can remember times when I’ve been on storm or extended outages re-energizing neighborhoods and heard people in their homes cheering as their lights came on for the first time in days. No matter how tired I am or how long I’ve been working, that feeling will always make it worthwhile.

But what does it take to get those lights back on? Why does it sometimes take so long? Why can’t the co-op tell members when they can expect power to be restored? We want to provide you with a better understanding of the process and the work line crews from Victory Electric and other electric cooperatives are doing to restore your power.

The electricity you use travels a great distance and goes through several steps to get to your home. It starts with a power plant that typically produces voltages of less than 30,000 volts. That voltage needs to be “stepped up” so it can travel long distances. That process starts in the power plant’s substation and switchyard where a transformer will step up the voltage to 345,000 volts, or sometimes higher, and send it out on transmission lines to another substation.

At the next substation, a transformer steps down the voltage to 69,000 volts and sends it out to smaller, local substations.

TIMELINE: a Power Outage

BY BRANDON KEESEE
JOURNEYMAN LINEMAN AT SEMO
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, MISSOURI

Local substations are the final destination before the electricity reaches your home. Here electricity is stepped down to 7,200 or 14,400 volts that can then be delivered to the poles outside your home. Once it arrives outside your home, it is stepped down a final time to 120/240 volts that operate all the devices that power your life.

What I just described is hundreds of miles of line and thousands of poles. That's a lot of exposure for something to happen and cause an outage. Just like your home, our system has breakers. Our breakers help us reduce the exposure of the line and allow us to split our system into sections. Doing so helps limit the size of the outages and allows us to keep as many people on as possible. Breakers also help protect equipment on the line. Ever wonder why your lights blink a few times before going off? That's

“I can remember times when I've been on storm or extended outages re-energizing neighborhoods and heard people in their homes cheering as their lights came on for the first time in days.”

the breaker. They operate a few times trying to give the fault a chance to clear the line before they open for good.

Now that the lights have blinked, your breaker has opened, and the power is off, your local electric lineworker gets to work.

OUTAGE TIMELINE



LINeworker IS NOTIFIED

They ask questions to determine if it's an individual or section outage and its location.



CAUSE LOCATED — SAFETY FIRST

Once the cause is located, a safety briefing takes place, identifying hazards and locations of lineworkers and equipment. Lineworkers then isolate and ground the line to prevent backfeed.



REPAIRS COMPLETE

The lineworkers contact dispatch to get clearance to re-energize the line. Once dispatch confirms no one else is working on the line, the breaker is closed restoring power.



THE DRIVE

A crew is dispatched to the outage site. If after hours, lineworkers must travel from their homes, which often adds additional travel time.



WORK BEGINS

Lineworkers take special care and awareness to remove objects causing the outage. While crews work to clear the line, materials required for repairs are located and in transit.



POWER RESTORED — OUTAGE OVER

Restoration time varies by outage depending on the cause, location and materials needed for repair.



ARRIVAL AND INSPECTION

Crews visually inspect the line for open breakers and cause of outage. Evaluating the outage is time consuming but one of the most important steps of restoration.



MATERIALS ARRIVE

Materials and equipment arrive onsite to make the repair. Broken material is removed, inspections performed and repairs made.



CREWS RETURN SAFELY HOME

Our goal is to restore power safely and efficiently and ensure co-op employees go home safe after work is complete.



NOTE: OUTAGE AND RESTORATION TIMELINES VARY BY OUTAGE TYPE AND SEVERITY OF LINE DAMAGE.

APPLY FOR A
**TRIP OF A
LIFETIME**




JUNE 14-20, 2024
AN ALL-EXPENSES-PAID TRIP
TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

WHAT IS YOUTH TOUR?

An all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., sponsored by your local electric co-op.

A week of visiting historic monuments, touring world-class museums and meeting elected officials.

An opportunity to develop lifelong friendships with delegates from across the country!

FIND
OUT
MORE



EMPOWER 

SAVE THE DATES!

CYLC
JULY 12-18, 2024
☆☆☆ COOPERATIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP ☆☆☆



**·COLORADO·
Camp**

COMMUNITY | LEADERSHIP | MEMORIES

FIND OUT MORE



SPEAKERS
RIVER RAFTING

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SPONSORED BY
YOUR LOCAL
ELECTRIC
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Calling All Juniors Who Want to Travel!

Beginning Nov. 1, Victory Electric will accept applications for the 2024 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., and Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp (CYLC) near Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

Watch history come alive at Youth Tour, June 14-20, as you explore world-class museums and monuments and take a cruise on the Potomac River. You'll meet with elected officials, learn about the cooperative business model and make new friends from all over Kansas and 43 other states.

At CYLC, July 12-18, go rafting on the Colorado River, tour a power plant and enjoy the beautiful Rocky Mountain scenery. You'll also develop your leadership skills and connect with 100 other high school students from Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming and Oklahoma.

The best part? The trips are FREE! Victory Electric will cover the expenses. New this year, \$500 scholarships will be offered to each of our four trip winners following their graduation!

“Visiting Fort McHenry had the most impact on me. Learning everything and then getting to see where it happened was amazing to me.”

IZAIAH PEARCE, BUCKLIN HIGH SCHOOL, 2023 YOUTH TOUR



To apply, visit www.victoryelectric.net/youth-tour-cooperative-leadership-camp and click “Apply Here” to submit the application, a résumé and a video that highlights the importance of energy efficiency and includes your best energy-saving tip. Finalists will be interviewed by a panel of judges, who will select two

winners for each trip. The applicant must have a parent or guardian who is a Victory Electric member.

Interested? Check out www.victoryelectric.net/youth-tour-cooperative-leadership-camp for more information, and contact Chanda Schulte, Adriana Tipton or Shauna Rumbaugh at 620-227-2139 or askcommunications@victoryelectric.net with any questions.

Don't let this opportunity pass you by. Apply today!

“The thing that inspired me was getting to know people who are different from me.”

KARLA GARCIA SEPULVEDA, DODGE CITY HIGH SCHOOL, 2023 CYLC

APPLY TODAY

[www.victoryelectric.net/
youth-tour-cooperative-leadership-camp](http://www.victoryelectric.net/youth-tour-cooperative-leadership-camp)

