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Electronews



FROM THE CEO

THE VICTORY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ASSN., INC.

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Managing Growth and Power Generation Challenges

Trends and developments in the energy industry present several challenges for power providers at every level. Careful analysis is needed to understand complex issues, including supply and demand fluctuations and other factors that affect the ability to provide safe, reliable and affordable power for homes and businesses. Let's take a look at current power industry trends and consider the prospects for 2026.

MORE DEMAND, MORE POWER GENERATION

You have likely read about the rapidly increasing demand for electricity, driven by industrial expansion and the growth of data centers and artificial intelligence. Electrification in transportation and heating and the expansion of domestic manufacturing have also increased the demand for electricity in the United States — and the demand will continue to grow.

Electricity generation has also grown as a result of that increased demand.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) said in its September 2025 Short-Term Energy Outlook it expects total generation by the U.S. electric power sector will grow by 2.3% in 2025 and 3% in 2026.



Shane Laws

EIA forecasts that solar power will supply the largest share of the increase in new electricity generation in 2025 and 2026. We can see the growth of wind and solar projects right here in Ford County. Although there have been policy shifts and rollbacks of tax credits and incentives for solar generation under the current administration, renewable energy is still expected to play an important part in growing generation capacity. Battery storage capacity is growing as well.

Fossil fuels remain the dominant

Continued on page 12B ►

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Infrastructure Costs

The past five years have been a period of exploding costs for the electric utility industry and broadband providers, escalated by soaring demand, supply chain challenges, raw materials shortages, increased labor costs and tariffs. The impact has been rapid increases in the cost of producing power, longer and more unpredictable project timelines and the need for more financing, all of which have driven electric rates up for residences, businesses and other end-users. Here's a look at what's contributing to the trend.

PERCENT INCREASE SINCE 2020:

● Infrastructure

Utility poles (wood, steel, composite)	+25-40%
Crossarms & braces (steel/wood)	+20-35%
Conductor wire (aluminum/copper)	+30-50%
Transformers	+70-100%
Grain-oriented electrical steel	+80-100%
Oil/dielectric fluids	+25-40%
Copper wiring	+50%
Concrete	+25-35%
Smart meters	+20-35%
Pad-mounted switchgear	+25-40%
Circuit breakers/reclosers	+20-35%

● Generation

Diesel gensets	+20-40%
Gas turbines	+20-30%
Solar PV systems	+25-35%
Wind turbines	+25-35%
Hydropower components	+20-30%
Battery storage	+25-40%
SCADA/EMS systems	+20-30%
Inverters	+20-30%
Relays & switchgear	+25-40%
Natural Gas	+20-120%
Coal	+30-60%
Diesel/fuel oil	+40-70%

● Build-outs

Utility construction labor	+20-40%
Freight/logistics	+30-60%

● Broadband

Fiber-optic cable	+25-40%
Splicing & telecom gear	+20-30%

● Fleets

Light trucks	+25-40%
Bucket trucks, digger derricks	+20-50%
Fuel costs (especially diesel)	+20-30%
Maintenance	+15-25%
Insurance premiums	+20%

SOURCES: BLS; ENERGYNEWS.COM; REUTERS; WOOD MACKENZIE; NREL; IEA

Managing Growth Power Generation

source of the country's electric energy, and current energy policies prioritize coal and natural gas generation. Coal plants are still being retired, while new power sources, transmission lines and gas pipelines face permitting delays, local opposition and supply chain problems. Pending legislation aims to streamline the permitting process and standardize the requirements for permits.

Though EIA predicts U.S. solar, wind, hydropower, nuclear and coal generation will grow in the coming year, it does not expect natural gas production to grow much. Supply chain constraints for natural gas turbines may slow the addition of natural gas facilities, and some reports indicate that backlogs for gas turbines might mean wait times of more than five years. Liquefied natural gas exports are also expected to increase considerably while natural gas generation remains relatively flat, so natural gas prices are expected to increase.

RIISING COSTS

Meeting power supply needs is a balance between minimizing energy costs and managing risks. In the past five years, electric utility industry costs have increased significantly because of supply chain challenges, materials shortages and increased labor expenses. Tariffs on copper, steel and other imported materials needed for producing transformers and other infrastructure components also raise the cost of producing energy.

Victory Electric's generation and distribution utility, Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, maintains a diverse portfolio of owned and purchased generation resources, using multiple technologies and fuel sources. This energy mix helps them manage market risks and keep member rates competitive. As Victory Electric, Sunflower Electric Power Corporation and the Southwest Power Pool (SPP)

and Challenges *continued from page 12A* ▶

navigate rising industry costs, we are always looking ahead and exploring more ways to control costs for our members.

PREPARING FOR GROWTH

Adding large loads such as data centers to a system may cause some growing pains, but it also contributes to an electric cooperative's gross margins. The large amount of continuous electricity demand from a data center is a predictable, stable demand that can help optimize generation and support grid stability. Victory members also benefit when larger loads are connected to our system. Selling more kilowatt-hours reduces the average wholesale energy cost for members by spreading out fixed costs.

As industrial customers look to expand in SPP's territory, the SPP board recently approved guidance on integrating new interconnections of large loads. This policy will help SPP facilitate the connection of large users of electricity to the power grid while continuing to support the energy needs of its entire region.

To navigate these trends, cooperatives are developing new rate structures, contract provisions and financial policies for data centers and other high-load customers. This will enable them to recover costs, prevent cost shifts to other members, manage risks and ensure adequate resources are available to accommodate future growth.

The U.S. generation mix continues to evolve based on load requirements, power supply technologies and policy changes. Administrations, market conditions, geopolitical factors and policies may vary over time, but Victory Electric and our partners remain focused on providing safe, affordable, reliable electricity to our member-owners.

THANKS, SHANE

Schulte Completes Leadership Academy

Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (KEC) recently announced that 14 electric cooperative professionals graduated from the High Impact Leadership Academy (HILA), a program designed to develop leadership skills among frontline supervisors, managers and executives.

Victory Electric

Director of Communications **CHANDA SCHULTE** participated in the second KEC HILA cohort and graduated during a Sept. 24 ceremony in Wichita.

Participants engaged in dynamic group exercises, case studies and leadership assessments tailored to Kansas electric cooperatives. From May to September, the group completed weekly sessions that provided hands-on, practical training in finding solutions to real-world challenges.

"HILA's curriculum has enhanced my ability to lead with confidence, build trust and drive accountability within my co-op team," Schulte said. "I've strengthened my decision-making capabilities — especially when under pressure."

A team of experienced instructors with military leadership backgrounds leads the disciplined and results-driven HILA program.

Victory Electric Vice President of Engineering Rob Henry graduated with the inaugural KEC HILA cohort in May.



Victory Electric Director of Communications Chanda Schulte (center) is presented her graduation certificate from the High Impact Leadership Academy by Lt. Col. Matt Hager (left) and KEC CEO Lee Tafanelli (right).



Fourteen electric cooperative employees from across the state participated in the second cohort of the High Impact Leadership Academy.

STAY TOASTY AND WARM WHILE TURNING DOWN THE THERMOSTAT



When the winter winds blow, it is tempting to adjust the thermostat up a few degrees. However turning to other ways to help keep you warm could help reduce your energy bills. Each degree you reduce your thermostat saves 1% on your heating bill.

No one home during the day? Lower your thermostat 7-10 degrees to save!



Ways to stay warm when it's cold outside:



BUNDLE up by wearing layers and heavy socks.

GET your body moving and stay active.

CAULK windows and doorframes that leak air.



REPLACE OR UPDATE old or ineffective door seals.



REDUCE how long you use ventilation fans (they transfer warm air outside.)

KEEP your furnace clean and change your filter monthly.

MAKE SURE your home's heating system is working properly.



HUMIDIFY your home to make air feel warmer.

LET THE SUN SHINE IN during the day and close window coverings at nights.

KEEP the fireplace damper closed when not in use.



Use portable space heaters safely and for short amounts of time — extended use can cause your energy bill to spike!

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY,
WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG

Parade of Lights and Chili Cook-Off Set for Dec. 1

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, truck or even a tuba for the annual Parade of Lights and Chili Cook-Off, which returns to Dodge City on Dec. 1.

Starting at 4 p.m. the Dodge City Visitor Information Center will transform into Santa's House, where you can take a free photo with the jolly man himself and tell him what you want for Christmas.

At 4:30 p.m. at the Boot Hill Museum, the public is invited to taste samples of

the tasty chili contest entries. Awards for the judges' winning selections will be announced beginning at 4:45 p.m.

Then at 5:30 p.m., gather outside the Visitor Center for the Mayor's Tree Lighting Ceremony events.

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

Times are subject to change. 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.



Cold Weather Rule Begins Nov. 15

Victory Electric is a self-regulated electric utility under the direction of a board of trustees, so it is not under the jurisdiction of the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC). However, Victory Electric voluntarily participates in KCC's Cold Weather Rule disconnect procedures for qualifying residential member-owners from Nov. 15 through March 15.

WHAT IS THE COLD WEATHER RULE?

During the Cold Weather Rule time period, the cooperative will not disconnect service when the local National Weather Service forecasts the temperature will fall below 35 degrees Fahrenheit in the next 24 hours. However, Victory may disconnect for non-payment between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, when the temperature is at or above 35 degrees Fahrenheit.

HOW TO QUALIFY

- ▶ Contact Victory Electric as soon as possible if you are unable to pay your electric service bill.
- ▶ Victory Electric will inform you about the Cold Weather Rule requirements and set up a payment plan.
- ▶ Make the initial payment and comply with the stated payment arrangements every month to avoid disconnection or the initiation of a deposit.
- ▶ Continue paying your monthly bill on time along with any payment arrangement installments.

DISCONNECTION POLICY

- ▶ 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.
- ▶ If your account is disconnected for

non-payment, any past due balance plus the reconnection fee must be paid in full to restore power.

- ▶ If a check or payment is returned to Victory Electric for non-sufficient funds, the member must re-issue a payment and pay an NSF penalty fee to Victory Electric to avoid possible disconnection.
- ▶ The Cold Weather Rule does not apply to Prepay Power accounts, which will be disconnected if the account balance is at or below \$0.01, regardless of the temperature forecast.

These requirements protect Victory Electric member-owners and the cooperative. For more details about Victory Electric's policies and payment arrangement guidelines, please visit our website at www.victoryelectric.net or call our office at 620-227-2139.

Groundmen Join Victory Electric

Victory Electric welcomed three new linemen to the operations team in September.

XANDER MYERS, a Kiowa native, completed lineman internships at Southern Pioneer Electric for the past two summers. After graduating from South Barber High School, he attended Pratt Community College and received a certificate in electrical power technology. He is currently working toward his associate degree and previously worked for the City of Kiowa.

In his spare time, Myers enjoys going to the gym, hanging out with friends and cheering for the Wildcats.

"Seeing successful people makes me want to be successful myself," Myers said.

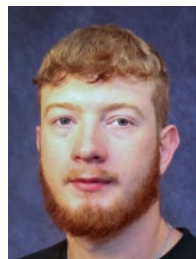
JESTON CONGER, a Hays native, recently completed a transmission line internship with Sunflower Electric Power Corporation in Concordia. He completed his certificate in electrical power technology from Pratt Community College and is working toward an associate degree. He previously worked for the Hays School District.

Conger said he enjoyed working in the transmission world with Sunflower but decided to pursue journeyman licensure on the distribution side at Victory.

He enjoys hanging out with friends and family, watching football, hunting and fishing, and he is a fan of the Wildcats and Chiefs.



Xander Myers



Jeston Conger



Gavin Bange

GAVIN BANGE, a Gypsum native, joins Victory Electric after working at Stryten Energy in Salina as an assembly operator and for PAR Electrical Contractors as a distribution groundman. He previously worked for the City of Colby as an apprentice lineman. Bange recently received his associate degree in electrical power technology from Pratt Community College.

"I wanted to top out with a good company and set my roots somewhere in western Kansas," Bange said.

In his free time, he enjoys watching football and hanging out with friends, and he cheers for the Chiefs and the Wildcats.

Welcome to Victory!

Victory Electric Board Seeks Nominations

Member-owners, elected trustees and employees power a rural electric 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 also cooperative member-owners. They live throughout the Victory Electric service area in the districts they represent and are local citizens with the best interests of members, the community and the cooperative always in mind.

The Victory Electric Board of Trustees' primary functions are 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 that are each represented by a trustee. Trustees are elected at the annual meeting for three-year terms of office. A commitment to the cooperative board is a commitment 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 those in their district. They are the liaisons between the greater membership and cooperative management and employees.

ELECTION AND SERVICE QUALIFICATIONS

Victory Electric's annual membership meeting is scheduled for April 14, 2026. We are currently soliciting nominations for Victory Electric's Board of Trustees. Member-owners will submit their ballots by mail before the meeting and the election results will be announced at the annual meeting. The four trustee positions up for election in 2026 are:

- ▶ **DISTRICT 2**, open
- ▶ **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 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.

HOW TO RUN FOR A POSITION

If you would like to run for a trustee position, please send a letter of interest detailing your qualifications to Shane Laws at Victory Electric, P.O. Box 1335, Dodge City, KS 67801 by Nov. 30, 2025.

BUCKLIN VETERANS DAY

MEMBER APPRECIATION

MEAL SPONSORSHIP

NOV 11 TUESDAY

★ CARNIVAL ★ SILENT AUCTION ★
CHICKEN NOODLE DINNER ★ PARADE

The Bucklin Community Veterans Day Celebration has been a tradition since the 1940s.

School and community groups join together annually to honor veterans with a parade, carnival, silent auction and chicken noodle dinner.

We are excited to participate in this year's celebration as a sponsor of the dinner.

2026 APPLICATIONS ARE NOW OPEN!

Attention all high school juniors! You could score an **all-expenses-paid trip of a lifetime** plus receive a **\$500 Scholarship** upon graduation!

SCAN FOR A
SNEAK PEEK!



Applications are
open from
NOV. 1 — DEC 15



SCAN to
APPLY!

SCAN FOR A
SNEAK PEEK!



IT'S TIME TO
APPLY FOR A
**TRIP OF A
LIFETIME!**



Electric Cooperative Youth Tour | June 13–19

Step into history in Washington, D.C.! Tour inspiring museums and monuments, cruise the Potomac River, and even meet elected leaders. Along the way, you'll gain a deeper understanding of the cooperative difference and build friendships with students from across Kansas and 43 other states.



Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp | July 10–16

Adventure awaits in the Colorado Rockies! Go whitewater rafting, tour an energy facility, and soak in the stunning mountain views. You'll sharpen your leadership skills while connecting with nearly 100 other students from Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, and Oklahoma.

South Gray Hosts Friday Night Lights

Victory Electric sponsored admission to the football game at a Friday Night Lights member appreciation event in Montezuma on Sept. 26. The South Gray Rebels hosted the Spearville Lancers for their Homecoming game. Victory Electric held a prize giveaway for adults and kids during the game, and the cheerleaders from both teams tossed T-shirts and mini footballs from Victory to the fans. By participating in community events like Friday Night Lights, we aim to power connections and thank our member-owners where they live.



The Spearville Lancers met the South Gray Rebels Sept. 26 in Montezuma.



Katrina B. won a stadium seat in the drawing.



Victory employees (from left) Shauna Rumbaugh, Chanda Schulte and TJ Ackerman help members sign up for prizes.



Garrett Love (left) visits with Victory Electric District 5 Trustee Megan Evans (center) and her husband, Scott (right).



Fall back on Nov. 2

On Sunday, Nov. 2, remember to turn your clocks back one hour. It is also a good time to change the batteries in your smoke detectors and have a professional check your fire extinguishers.

VETERANS DAY

Honoring All Who Served

NOV. 11, 2025



Happy Thanksgiving

from our co-op family to yours

Our offices will be closed Thursday, Nov. 27, and Friday, Nov. 28, to celebrate the holiday.



FREEMAN PROMOTED TO CREW CHIEF



Kevin Freeman

Kevin Freeman has been promoted to crew chief at Victory Electric. He began his career with Victory in February 2017 as a second-class lineman and earned his journeyman certification in 2018. Before joining Victory, he attended lineman school at Manhattan Technical College and worked for J&J Powerline.

CONGRATULATIONS, KEVIN!