P.O. Box 1335, 3230 N. 14th Ave.
Dodge City, KS 67801
620-227-2139
victoryelectric.net
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Electronews

THE VICTORY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ASSN., INC.

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FROM THE CFO & ASSISTANT CEO

Cooperative Membership Benefits Members Now and in the Future

December is a time to give, reflect on the year behind us, and set goals for the year ahead. At Victory Electric, our members are at the center of those efforts. The benefits of cooperative membership continue all year and well into the future.

Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit and member-owned companies built by the communities they serve. A cooperative is uniquely suited to meet local needs because it is led by members who live in the districts they represent.

If you receive electric service from Victory Electric, you are also a member of our cooperative, which means you have a share in our ownership and success. The cooperative difference means we can focus on meeting our members' needs rather than on maximizing profits for outside shareholders.


Angela Unruh

Capital credits are among the many benefits of your cooperative membership. Capital credit allocations depend on your rate class and how much electricity you purchase during the year. Capital credit retirements apply to allocations that were made years ago.

The Victory Electric Board of Trustees has authorized the retirement of $1,231,512 worth of capital credits this year. Since 2019, Victory has retired almost $10.3 million in capital credits in total.

Continued on page 12E ▶

NOTICE OF OFFICIAL RATE CHANGE MEETING BY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Victory Electric Board of Trustees will hold a public meeting to discuss and vote upon proposed changes to rates.

The meeting will be held at 8:30 a.m. on **FRIDAY, DEC. 18, 2026,** at Victory Electric at 3230 N. 14th Ave. in Dodge City, Kansas.

The meeting is open to all members of Victory Electric. Any member with questions may contact the Victory Electric office during business hours at 620-227-2139.

K.S.A. 66-104D(G) GIVES MEMBERS THE RIGHT TO REQUEST A KANSAS CORPORATION COMMISSION REVIEW OF ANY RATE CHANGE.

RATE CHANGE

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Find more information, including the proposed rate changes, on our website!

VICTORY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
Established 1945

UNDERSTANDING THREE-PART RATES

SERVICE AVAILABILITY CHARGE

A fixed, minimum cost to stay connected to Victory Electric's lines. This helps cover the cost of equipment, labor, materials, etc.



ENERGY CHARGE

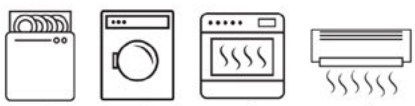
The total amount of energy you use within the billing period.

Measured in kilowatt-hours (kWh)



DEMAND CHARGE

The intensity at which you use energy. The *demand* you put on the grid at any given time.



The more appliances you use at the same time, the higher your demand. Spread out usage and save!

1.20 kW + 0.90 kW + 3.40 kW + 4.00 kW = 9.50 kW TOTAL DEMAND

FAQ

WHY ARE ELECTRIC COSTS RISING?

- Growing demand for electricity
- Aging infrastructure
- Supply chain challenges
- Inflation
- Increased needs for generation and transmission

WHO DECIDES THE AMOUNT OF A RATE CHANGE?

An independent consultant conducts a Cost-of-Service Study, which the Board of Trustees uses to determine rates.

WHEN WOULD THE PROPOSED RATE BECOME EFFECTIVE?

Jan. 1, 2027—Changes appear on February bill.

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES WILL VOTE ON THE PROPOSED RATE CHANGE

FRIDAY, DEC. 18, 2026

The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc. **620-227-2139**

Answering Member Questions About Proposed Rate Changes

WHAT IS THE OVERALL RATE INCREASE GOING TO BE?

Based on a cost-of-service study and an independent rate consultant's recommendation, the proposed rate changes will result in a 5.9% average increase across the Victory Electric system. Depending on the rate class, energy use and other factors, members may see a greater percentage increase than that on their bills. Although a demand charge will be added and the service availability charge will increase, the energy charge rate will decrease.

DO LARGE INDUSTRIAL MEMBERS GET SPECIAL RATES OR DEALS?

Yes, Victory Electric offers special contract rates to some large industrial members. These customized rates for industrial or high-load members help attract economic development to the area while balancing operating costs, grid reliability, and risk sharing.

WHAT CHANGES ARE BEING MADE TO IRRIGATION RATES, AND HOW WILL THEY AFFECT BILLS?

Currently, irrigation service members pay an annual horsepower (hp) charge of $30 per hp but not less than $250. Under the proposed rate structure changes, the hp charge will be discontinued. Instead, a service availability charge of $55 per month and a demand charge of $5 per kilowatt will be added. The energy charge will be 11.5 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh). The effect on bills will depend on the size of the operation, energy use, and demand.

WHY DO MEMBERS UNDER LEGACY AND MKEC PAY DIFFERENT SERVICE AVAILABILITY CHARGES?

The service availability charge helps cover the cost of wires, poles, meters, transformers, and other electric infrastructure. Victory's original certified territory, also called Legacy, has fewer meters per mile than the Mid-Kansas Electric Company (MKEC) territory, which was served by Aquila before being acquired by Victory as part of MKEC in 2007. Serving rural areas with fewer meters per mile costs more than serving cities, where the member density is greater and meters are closer together.

HOW CAN MEMBERS REDUCE THEIR DEMAND?

Using multiple large appliances at the same time increases demand, which is measured in kilowatts and is based on the maximum amount of energy used at one time during the billing period. Instead of stacking chores by cooking, doing laundry, and running the dishwasher all at once, spread out your usage to lower your demand. Use delayed-start settings if available so you can run a load of clothes or dishes at different times of the day or night. We have more tips available on our website.

If you have additional questions, please call our office at 620-227-2139. We also encourage you to visit www.victoryelectric.net to see proposed rate schedules, a bill calculator, videos, and other important information about rate changes.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Our office will be closed:

- Dec. 23 at 3 p.m.
- Dec. 24-25 all day
- Dec. 31 at 3 p.m.
- Jan. 1 all day

HEATING PAD AND ELECTRIC BLANKET *SAFETY*

Stay Safe and Warm



BEFORE USE:

- Read and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Check cords, plugs and fabric for damage, scorch marks or worn spots.
- Replace damaged or worn heating products.
- Choose products with UL safety labels.

ELECTRIC BLANKET SAFETY:

- Keep flat while in use. Do not fold, bunch or tuck under a mattress.
- Keep heavy items, extra blankets and pets off the top.
- Do not store folded; instead, roll or store flat.
- Follow proper washing instructions and wash sparingly.
- Do not use a heated blanket with a heating pad.

HEATING PAD SAFETY:

- Do not sleep with a heating pad turned on.
- Do not sit, lie or place pressure on a heating pad.
- Do not place it under bedding, pillows or your body.
- Do not use on infants or anyone who cannot feel heat normally.
- Use the lowest comfortable setting and follow the recommended time limit.

SAFETY REMINDERS:

- Plug directly into a wall outlet, not a power strip or extension cord.
- Keep heating products dry and away from water.
- Turn off and unplug after each use.
- Stop using immediately if it sparks, smokes or overheats.

! WARMTH SHOULD NEVER COME BEFORE SAFETY

To check for a recall, find the brand and model number on the care tag, packaging or instructions. Then search Consumer Product Safety Commission alerts at cpsc.gov/recalls.

SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG

"When in doubt, spread it out."

Victory Electric Times

Late Edition
Today, mostly sunny with a high chance of smart energy use. **Tonight**, demand dips into the low kilowatts. **Tomorrow**, cloudy with delayed starts expected across the area.

Volume 1 No. 1 © The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc. DODGE CITY $3

KILOWATT CULPRITS CAUGHT



Photo courtesy: Burnie Watts

A group of Kilowatt Culprits. The alleged ringleader, Electric Oven (left) has been released on bond.

Appliance Energy Audit Found Household Appliances May Be Driving Up Your Bill

By Willie Wiredhand

Did you know that running multiple large appliances at once can increase your demand? By spacing out when you use high-energy appliances, you can help reduce strain on the electric grid and better manage your electric bill. Make sure you watch out for common demand drivers, like clothes dryers, electric water heaters, and electric furnaces or heat pumps. These are the Kilowatt Culprits that use more energy and can spike your demand!

The Power Behind The Plug: Watt's Eating Up Your Energy?



Washing Machine
0.4-1.4 kW



Clothes Dryer
1.8-5.0 kW



Electric Water Heater
3.0-4.5 kW



Electric Tankless Water Heater
12.0-30.0 kW



Central Air Conditioner
1.0-3.5 kW



Electric Range/Oven
2.0-5.0 kW



Dishwasher
1.2-2.4 kW



Electric Furnace or Heat Pump
3.0-10.0 kW

Smart Energy Use Tips

- Use appliance delay-start settings to stagger energy use and lower demand.
- Adjust your thermostat when away, or use a smart thermostat for added convenience and efficient energy use.
- When possible, choose cold water cycles for laundry and run full loads.

Cooperative Membership Benefits Members Now and in the Future

Continued from page 12A ▶

WHAT ARE CAPITAL CREDITS?

Victory Electric sets rates to bring in enough money to pay operating costs, make payments on loans and provide an emergency reserve. Any proposed rate changes are guided by the same principle of setting rates to cover the cost of reliable service, with the best interests of our members at the center.

A cooperative does not earn profits. Instead, any revenues that exceed the expense of providing electric service are considered margins and are returned to you over time in the form of capital credits. These margins represent a contribution of operating capital by the membership to the cooperative, and that capital will be retired (repaid) to you in later years.

Victory Electric retains these allocated margins to maintain reliable service, upgrade facilities and improve the system. These funds also help the cooperative adapt to rapid industry changes.

When the board retires (refunds) capital credits from years in which you received an allocation, you receive that money back and your equity in the cooperative decreases. Members with allocations from those years receive the refund as a credit on their December bill.

Former members who no longer receive Victory Electric service will receive a check if their capital credits for the years being retired total $50 or more. Unpaid amounts from previous retirements are combined with this year's retirement, and a check is issued once the total reaches $50.

Your capital credit allocations remain in Victory Electric's records even if you leave our service area. If we are unable to deliver capital credit refund checks to former members, those funds go into an Unclaimed Capital Credits account. Please check the list at www.victoryelectric.net/what-are-capital-credits to see if you recognize any names.

- If your name or someone you know appears on the list, call 620-227-2139 with updated contact information.
- Successors of deceased individuals whose names appear on the list should call for instructions and required paperwork.
- Please always keep your address current and notify Victory Electric of any changes to your contact information so that you receive future refund checks when your capital credits are retired.

The Victory Electric trustees, staff and employees thank you for your continued support and wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season.

THANKS,
ANGELA

TREES PLANTED TO COMMEMORATE AMERICA'S 250TH BIRTHDAY

In partnership with Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (KEC) and Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, Victory Electric worked with the City of Dodge City to plant two redbud trees at Centennial Park. The native trees were planted recently to commemorate America's 250th birthday on July 4.

As a member of the Kansas 250 Commission, state Sen. Brenda Dietrich, who represents District 20 in northeast Kansas, launched a statewide tree-planting initiative to encourage communities to recognize this national milestone. All 105 counties in Kansas were urged to plant a native tree to serve as a living tribute to the nation's semiquincentennial. KEC issued a challenge to Kansas electric cooperatives to participate in this project and work with local officials to find a suitable location and select a tree.

The new redbuds are near a tree the city planted at Centennial Park on Arbor Day 2026. Chris Austin, landscape and grounds superintendent with the City of Dodge City, said this was a notable year for city parks, as Dodge City is celebrating 50 years as a Tree City USA community. Dodge City is one of only four Kansas communities and 16 communities nationwide to have participated in Tree City USA since the Arbor Day Foundation program's inception in 1976.



FROM LEFT: Dodge City Manager Nick Hernandez, Victory Electric Senior Vice President of Corporate Services Amy Grasser, and Director of Communications Chanda Schulte help city workers plant a redbud tree at Centennial Park Nov. 3.

Victory will also coordinate a tree planting in Gray County in recognition of America's 250th birthday.

SMART TECH CONSIDERATIONS:
Convenience or Energy Savings?



With a tap on your phone, you can adjust the thermostat or start an appliance, whether you're in another city or reclining on the living room couch. Many smart devices also promise better efficiency. But while some smart technologies can help lower energy use, others are designed primarily for convenience. Before investing in the latest smart technologies, consider the features that matter most to you.

Start with your goals. Smart appliances and devices connect to the internet, typically through Wi-Fi or Bluetooth, allowing you to control them with a smartphone, tablet or voice assistant. Some can monitor energy use, automate tasks, or learn your household's routines to help optimize performance.

Whether these features are worth the cost depends on your lifestyle, budget and existing appliances. If convenience is your priority, smart technology can simplify your daily routine. But if your goal is to lower your energy bills, a new device may not be necessary. Adjusting your daily energy habits and using your existing appliances more efficiently can often deliver savings without the upfront investment in new technology.

Before purchasing a smart device, research its features, compatibility and potential benefits. Consider the purchase price alongside any expected long-term savings. A higher price tag doesn't automatically mean greater efficiency.

If you want to explore smart technology to help manage home energy use, consider these options.

Smart thermostats can automatically adjust heating and cooling settings based on your schedule, preferences or whether you're home. Some models learn your routines, while others let you control temperatures remotely. Because heating and cooling account for a significant share of household energy use, a smart thermostat may help reduce waste. Check compatibility with your HVAC system before purchasing. You can also save energy with a traditional thermostat by adjusting the temperature when you're asleep or away.

Smart bulbs and switches let you turn lights on or off remotely, establish schedules and, in some cases, use motion sensors to prevent lights from staying on in empty rooms. These features may be useful if your household frequently leaves lights on. For a simpler, lower-cost approach, turn off lights when you leave a room and replace older bulbs with energy-efficient LEDs.

Smart plugs fit into standard outlets and allow you to schedule or remotely control compatible electronics. They can help manage devices that don't need to run continuously, but savings depend on what you plug into them and how you use them.

Smart appliances, including refrigerators, washers, ovens and water heaters, also offer features such as remote monitoring, alerts and customized settings. However, internet connectivity alone does not guarantee lower energy consumption. Evaluate the specific features and look for credible efficiency information before upgrading an appliance that still works well.

Smart home technology can offer convenience, control and, in some cases, meaningful energy savings. The key is understanding the difference. A device that makes life easier may be worth the investment even if it doesn't lower your electric bill. But if saving energy is your primary goal, changing everyday habits may be the most practical place to start.

Before buying, ask yourself what problem you want to solve. Then choose the approach that best fits your home, budget and priorities. Sometimes the smartest energy decision isn't buying something new — it's making better use of what you already have.

Whether these features are worth the cost depends on your lifestyle, budget and existing appliances. If convenience is your priority, smart technology can simplify your daily routine. But if your goal is to lower your energy bills, a new device may not be necessary.

View Your Demand Data on SmartHub

Victory Electric's proposed rate changes will introduce a $3-per-kilowatt (kW) charge for demand for residential members. SmartHub, available as a web page or a mobile app, offers several digital tracking tools in its Usage Explorer section.

1 **LOG IN** to your SmartHub account.

2 Click **USAGE** in the sidebar.

3 Select **USAGE EXPLORER** (see Chart A).

4 To view your energy consumption in kilowatt-hours (kWh) and demand in kilowatts (kW) on the same graph, in the Usage Type drop-down menu select kWh and Demand (kW). If you prefer, select only one type to see the data separately.

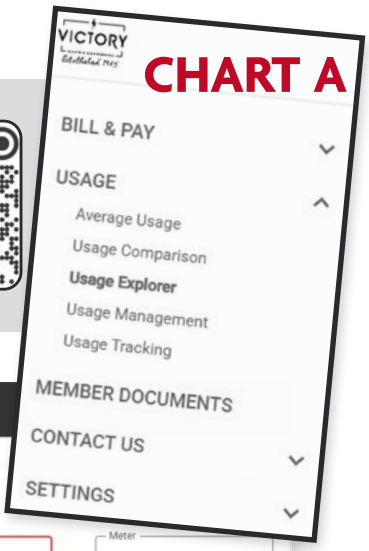
5 Adjust the **START DATE AND END DATE** and **INTERVAL** settings to see how demand and usage vary throughout the day, month, year, or any other time period you select. Monthly shows information by billing month, Daily by day and Interval in 15-minute intervals.

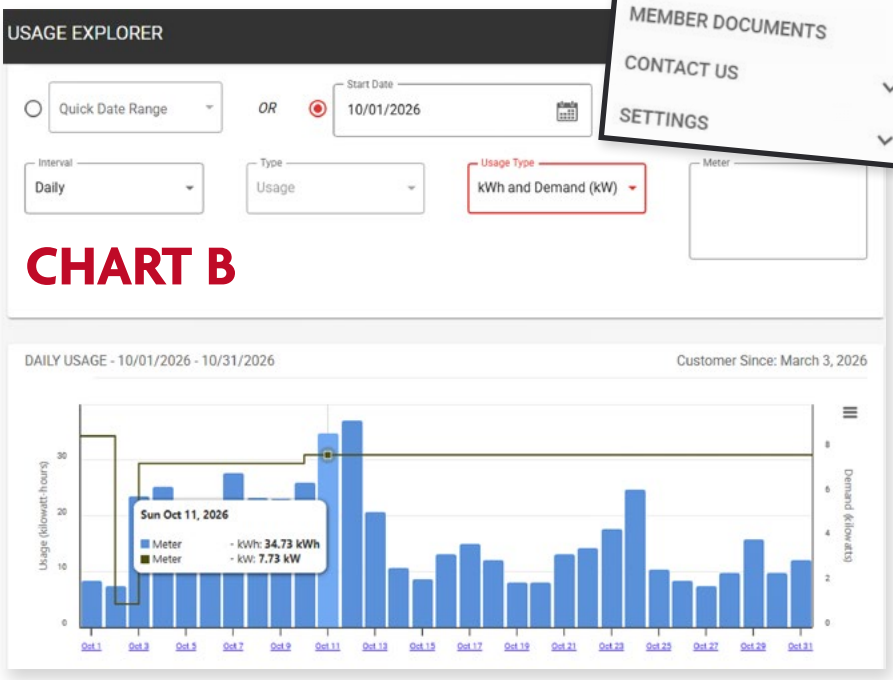
6 **IN CHART B,** the dark line shows demand and the blue bars show usage for each day of October. The line on the left indicates the previous month's demand, which resets at the beginning of each month. Your demand charge for the monthly billing period will be based on the highest recorded demand for the month, which in this example occurred on Oct. 11.

Hover over or tap on specific points on the graph to drill in and see more detail. Try different settings to view your usage and demand data. This information will give you an estimate of your typical demand and see how it varies by day of the week, time or month. You may also check the box beside Average Temp to see a line showing average outdoor temperature and how it relates to usage and demand.

If you have questions about SmartHub, please contact us at 620-227-2139 or visit the office in person. Also visit www.victoryelectric.net to learn more about demand and the proposed rate changes.

Scan the QR code to register for your SmartHub account.







Several hundred costumed kids painted pumpkins at the festival Oct. 24.

Pumpkin Festival

Brings Fall Fun to Victory Warehouse

Hundreds of community members joined Victory Electric in our warehouse for the Pumpkin Festival Oct. 24. The annual event featured games, giveaways, inflatable axe throwing, touch-a-truck, photo opportunities, snacks — and, of course, free pumpkins for every child to paint.

The pumpkins were grown locally at Hickory Hollow Pumpkin Patch in Spearville. USD 334's Bright Beginnings program provided free books and led children's activities, and area Boy Scouts, the Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe youth group and the Dodge City High School bowling team helped make the event a success. Victory appreciates all our community volunteers and everyone who participated in the festival.



Victory Electric District 1 Trustee Daryl Tieben watches as his grandchildren visit the tattoo station.



Victory warehouse clerks Travis Barnett (left) and Kyler Henry load pumpkins for the festival from Hickory Hollow Pumpkin Farm near Spearville.



Kids line up for inflatable axe throwing.



A girl decorates her pumpkin during the festival.



Victory Electric Director of Communications Chanda Schulte (right) with her daughter Lakyn.



Thank you to all the area families who attended the Pumpkin Festival.



Victory Electric Communications and Design Coordinator Kaisha Tiemeyer (left) applies a temporary tattoo while Victory Electric trustee Hayes Kelman and his family choose tattoos.



Boy Scout troop members hand out pumpkins to festival attendees.



Manager of Warehouse and Facilities Jason Guillen (left) and Manager of Key Accounts Dylan Ratts prepare to hand out Victory Electric swag bags at the festival.



Victory Lineman Marlon Hernandez (right) stands with his family.



Victory Electric Warehouse Clerk Travis Barnett (front left) helps his daughter paint her pumpkin while his son shows off his pumpkin and Victory Mechanic Kelly Barnett and Crew Chief Ross Ackerman look on.



Candles, fireplaces and decorations can turn festive into fiery. **FOLLOW THESE TIPS TO STAY SAFE** and bright this holiday season.

USING CANDLES WITH CARE

- Keep burning candles in sight.
- Use candles on sturdy, heat-safe surfaces, away from pets and kids.
- Choose electric candles near curtains, trees and other flammable decor.

FIREPLACE SAFETY

- Keep mantel décor, such as stockings and greenery, away from flames.
- Don't burn trees, wreaths or wrapping paper, which can create dangerous sparks.
- Have fireplaces, chimneys and vents inspected annually. Follow manufacturer's instructions for electric fireplaces.

HOLIDAY LIGHTING

- Choose UL-certified lights.
- Replace damaged lights.
- Connect only the recommended number of strands.
- Don't overload outlets or extension cords.
- Hang lights with clips, not tacks, nails or screws.
- Use outdoor-rated lights and GFCI protection outside.
- Stay at least 10 feet from overhead power lines.

CHRISTMAS TREES

- Water fresh trees daily.
- Choose a fire-resistant artificial tree.
- Keep away from heat sources, walkways and exits.
- Anchor to prevent tipping, especially around kids or pets.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE OR GO TO BED:

- Extinguish candles and fireplace fires.
- Turn off holiday lights and decorations.

SOURCE: WWW.SAFEELECTRICITY.ORG

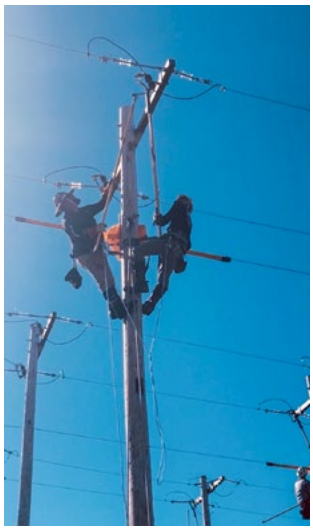
Victory Team Competes in International Lineman's Rodeo

In October, **MARLON HERNANDEZ, JASON BATRES, CARLOS GARCIA** and **JACOB GLEASON** represented Victory Electric at the International Lineman's Rodeo in Bonner Springs, Kansas. The event showcases lineworkers' important skills and provides networking opportunities, safety training and a vendor expo.

More than 285 journeyman teams and 390 apprentices competed in the 42nd annual contest, performing tasks such as pole climbing, simulated hurt-man rescue, and mystery events that test their skills and knowledge of the electric utility industry. Hernandez, Batres and Garcia competed in the journeyman team competition, with Gleason in the apprentice division.



Marlon Hernandez, Jason Batres, Jacob Gleason and Carlos Garcia represented Victory Electric at the 42nd Annual International Linemen Rodeo in Bonner Springs.



Carlos Garcia and Marlon Hernandez perform a task at the International Lineman's Rodeo.



Carlos Garcia's kids cheer him on at the competition.



Marlon Hernandez, Jason Batres and Carlos Garcia prepare to compete in the journeyman team competition.

Olivares Joins Victory Electric as VP of Engineering

Welcome to **RUBEN OLIVARES,** who recently joined Victory Electric as vice president of engineering. Rob Henry, former vice president of engineering, is now vice president of energy services.

A professional engineer licensed in nine states, Olivares received a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Texas A&M University and a master's degree at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Before joining Victory, he worked as a project engineer at a refinery then at a municipal utility in San Antonio, later taking on new service delivery and distribution engineering roles. For the past six years, Olivares provided engineering and consulting services for municipal and investor-owned utilities across multiple states.

He said he was intrigued by the staff and cooperative systems, and the vision for Victory resonated with him. Olivares said he hopes to bring his leadership skills and technical abilities together and strive for organizational alignment in his new role.



Ruben Olivares

"I would like to help contribute to the purpose that Victory has here and the service that it provides," Olivares said. "I see that Victory is a very family-structured and oriented organization. They want to take care of their members, and I would like to be part of that journey of bringing reliable service to all members."

Watching his three kids play sports and helping coach their baseball and softball teams takes up much of Olivares' free time. He also enjoys researching, learning new things, and applying new concepts to his work.

"Success happens when preparation meets opportunity," he said.

WELCOME TO VICTORY, RUBEN!





Merry Christmas
& HAPPY NEW YEAR



From all of us at Victory Electric,
we wish you a season that is
merry and bright!

VICTORY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
Established 1945