

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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Electronews

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FROM THE MANAGER

Fighting for Our Members



Shane Laws

Electric cooperatives belong to the communities we serve and we always look for ways to keep costs as low as possible while protecting electric reliability and balancing risks.

In recent years, the buildout of transmission infrastructure—the high-voltage electric grid necessary to carry energy long distances—has increased. This is due, in large part, to the influx of renewable energy in the region and the need to transport the energy to demand centers. Sunflower Electric Power Corporation and Mid-Kansas Electric Company, generation and transmission utilities that provide wholesale service to Victory Electric and our members, understand the importance of a robust transmission grid to maintain reliability, but also believe the buildout must employ best practices to prevent unnecessary redundancy. Doing so will help keep electric rates as affordable as possible.

In the past, entities wanting to

build transmission facilities within the Sunflower and Mid-Kansas service territories could do so by applying for project approval from the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), the regional transmission organization that oversees the bulk electric system. Often, entities would then request SPP allocate the cost of the project throughout the region, which impacted Victory Electric members' electric bills, even if the project was not needed to maintain credible reliability.

These duplicative facilities serve as a way for investors to make a profit. Moreover, these projects tend to be built at a premium cost, not the least-cost option, because the investor of the project has a high potential for recovering the cost of the project from the electricity consumers in the geographical area where the project is built.

To help address this issue on behalf of Victory Electric members and other electric consumers in southwest Kansas, Sunflower Electric recently developed local planning criteria to determine the appropriate level of reliable service, the necessary system upgrades, and how the upgrades are built. The new local planning criteria was filed with the SPP, implemented on April 1, and posted on the SPP website. This is a huge win for us!

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Fighting for Our Members

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Now, the planning criteria and design criteria pertain to all transmission projects built by Sunflower and Mid-Kansas and third-party customers who use the system. Projects will be built according to a standard design, with options beyond the standard design funded by the requestor. To distribute project costs under the new local planning criteria, the requestor must now prove the project is needed based on the local planning criteria and/or the SPP planning criteria.

We are appreciative of Sunflower's efforts and determination to get fair policies and procedures implemented at SPP, which in turn saves Victory Electric's members' money. The local planning criteria, which align with the requirements of other Kansas utilities, were greatly needed to mitigate rising transmission costs.

Thanks, Shane

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Look for LED products and fixtures for outdoor use, such as pathway, step and porch lights. Many include features like automatic daylight shut-off and motion sensors. You can also find solar-powered lighting for outdoor spaces.

Office Closure Reminder

Victory Electric's office will close Monday, Sept. 3, 2018, for Labor Day. We wish everyone a happy Labor Day and remind you to stay safe while celebrating.

Evans Joins Victory Electric Team

Victory Electric is pleased to announce **HALEY EVANS** as the new human resources coordinator.

Prior to joining Victory Electric, Evans worked as a nurse in occupational health. She has a degree from Garden City Community College and is completing her bachelor's degree in business administration with an emphasis in human resources from Fort Hays State University.

"I am happy to be here and be a part of the team," Evans said.

Evans is a Garden City native and enjoys her younger siblings, traveling and Jayhawks basketball and football.

She is married to Calvin, and they

have three dogs.

Evans joins Victory Electric's human resource team and will assist with general administration regarding benefits, policies and procedures, training and development and legal compliance.

Victory Electric looks forward to having Evans on our team and know she will do great things for our members and the cooperative. When you see Haley, help us welcome her.



Haley Evans

Victory Electric Sponsors 4-H Fairs



Kennedy St. George from Victory Electric, left, presents Ford County 4-H with their T-shirts.

Victory Electric sponsors the 4-H fairs each year by supplying T-shirts.

4-H is a youth development program committed to providing positive experiences for young people, and Victory Electric invests in 4-H youth programs each year.

Each 4-H member who participates in in Ford, Gray and Hodgeman fairs receive a complimentary T-shirt from Victory Electric to be worn at the fair.

"Designing the 4-H T-shirt is one of my favorite projects of the year," said Jerri Imgarten, vice president of communications. "It is a simple way to invest in the future of our communities and 4-H fits our cooperative principles."

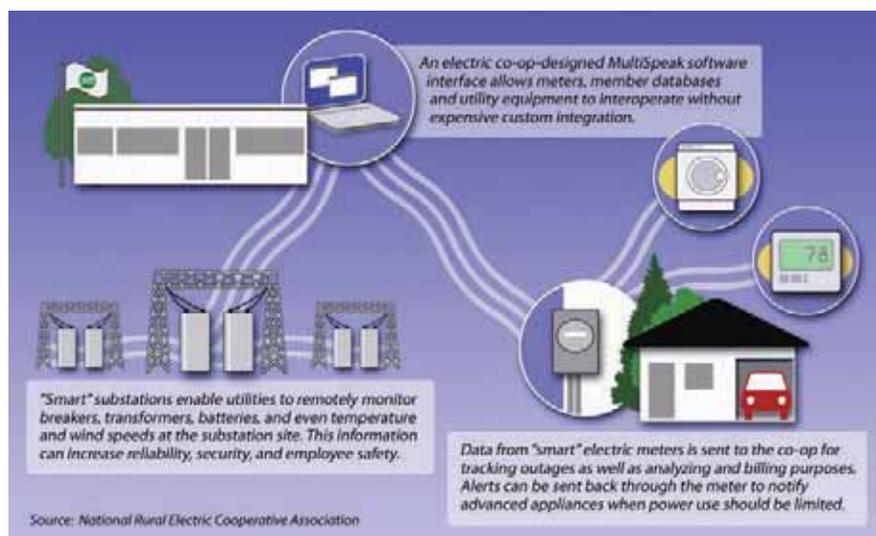
Victory Electric operates on seven cooperative principles, one of them is concern for community. Victory Electric serves you while also focusing on the development of local communities.

What is the Smart Grid and Why Does it Matter?

The term “Smart Grid” is used frequently these days by energy providers and the news media. However, few people know what the smart grid is. The word grid itself refers to the electric grid, a network of transmission and distribution lines, substations, transformers, meters and more that deliver electricity to your home or business from multiple power sources such as natural gas and coal power plant and renewable sources such as wind and solar.

What makes it smart is the digital technology that allows for two-way communication between the utility and its consumers. Like the Internet, the smart grid consists of controls, computers, automation, and new technologies and equipment working together, but specific to the electric grid, these technologies work with the electrical grid to respond digitally to changing electric demand and improves the efficiency and reliability of electric power transmission and delivery. It also allows for faster power restoration after an outage, and reduced operations and management costs for the cooperative, and ultimately lower costs for consumers like you.

The smart grid is also vital to efficiently integrating increasing generation of renewable energy. Growing development of utility-scale solar and wind systems and popularity of renewable energy for residential and small business use, require the grid to provide smarter, more efficient connections to the power delivery system.



The smart grid and its resiliency improve the reliability of electric service so power flows when you flip the switch.

Increased consumer participation

The smart grid is not just about utilities and technologies; it is about giving our consumers the information and tools you need to make choices about your energy use. If you already manage activities such as personal banking from your home computer, imagine managing your electricity in a similar way. A smarter grid will enable an unprecedented level of consumer participation. For example, you will no longer have to wait for your monthly statement to know how much electricity you use. With a smarter grid and a digital AMI meter, you can have a clear and timely picture of it by allowing you to see how much electricity you use, when you use it, and its cost.

Grid resiliency

Resiliency of the grid is a popular point of discussion. Resiliency is all about improving the reliability of your electric service. It is also Victory Electric's ability to efficiently restore your power, meeting the demands of new technology, and how we serve you with various generation sources without skipping a beat. Ultimately, resilience is how Victory Electric delivers on our promise to improve the quality of life for you and all our members in southwest Kansas.

A resilient electric grid begins with a system designed and built to withstand high winds, powerful storms, cybersecurity threats and other disruptions that could result in power outages. A resilient grid is also flexible and adaptable by allowing different types of generation—such as wind, solar, coal and hydro—to seamlessly work together to provide you with safe and reliable power. The way our systems react to advancements in technology—from demand response investments to serving the needs of electric vehicles—all factor into the resilience of our grid.

Resiliency is a 24/7, 365-days-a-year task. Whether it is the power lines, substations or generation facilities on our grid, it takes proactive maintenance and investment to keep them running smoothly.

We work toward providing you with quality service 24/7/365.

Members Win FREE CFL Light Bulb

Every month Victory Electric gives away free CFL light bulbs to members. **This month's lucky winners are... LINDA ACKERMAN, STEPHEN SCHATZ, JANE SHUMARD, JACK H. TRENT and CHRIS ZORDEL.** Come by Victory Electric's office to get your free compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL). Congratulations winners!



VICTORY ELECTRIC SAFETY SHARE

Keep Yourself from Digging Out of Trouble

If you had a new fence to install at home, you would likely research property lines, ordinances and fence types. Then, you would get to the point of purchasing, prepping and assembling materials to get work started. However, you would still not be ready to dig. There is a very important step you're missing—calling 811.

"Before starting any digging project, call 811," advises Mikey Goddard, Victory Electric vice president of safety. "It is a free service that will have buried public utilities marked on your property so you can safely dig around them. Just call 811 at least a few business days before you plan to dig."

Digging without having utility lines marked can result in damage to electric, communications, gas, water and sewer systems. Checking the safety of a location before you begin digging is important for both professionals and homeowners. It helps prevent accidents on projects of all sizes and scopes.

When contacting 811, make sure you have clearly identified your planned digging area and outline it in white paint if possible. The service uses ground-penetrating radar to search for and locate the buried public utility lines that are on your property. Lines will be marked with flags or paint. The color indicates the



type of utility located. After the area has been marked, the CGA reports that you have less than 1 percent chance of causing damage if you respect the markings.

If you have any private utilities, you will need to hire a private utility locator. Some examples of private utilities include: underground sprinkler system, invisible fences, data communication systems, private water systems and gas piping.

If you do not know what facilities are on the property, look for clues to tell you what might be underground, like a propane storage tank, gas meters, a detached garage or outbuilding with lights, a grill or pool on the property, manhole lids, storm drains and pavement patches.

Even if you have had an area marked before, call to have the area checked again. Natural changes to the soil, such as erosion or root growth, can alter the depth and location of buried lines. Once all buried lines have been marked, respect the boundaries, and dig carefully.

Keep yourself from having to dig out of trouble, and call 811 before your digging project begins.

Victory Electric encourages you to be safe when you're digging for any project. Calling 811 is free and if you need any assistance, call Victory Electric at 620-227-2139.

5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Always call 811 first, because you never know what's below. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:

Source: call811.com

1. NOTIFY

Call 811 or make a request online two to three days before you start.



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for a response to your request. Affected utilities will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.



3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded by comparing the markers to the list of utilities the 811 call center notified.



4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. They are your guide for the duration of your project.



5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project.

