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# Electronews

## CEO MESSAGE

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## Why Does the Power Blink?

At one time or another, we've all returned home or woken up late for work to see a blinking "12:00" on our digital alarm clock. We then have to reset our digital clocks that don't have battery backups, from the microwave oven to the answering machine. Usually, this state of "eternal midnight" was caused by a "blink" in the electrical system. While blinks can be annoying, they show that an electrical system is working exactly as designed.

Let's look at blinks. These momentary power interruptions can occur anywhere along a power system—from the time electrons are generated at a power plant, sent across transmission lines to substations, or travel on a distribution electric system to homes and businesses.

#### Why blinks?

Blinks occur when some type of disturbance on the line causes a breaker—which functions much like the breaker panel in your home—to open along any portion of the power system. The breaker usually opens because of a large, quick rise of electrical current. This large rise, called a fault condition, can occur for various reasons, such as a tree branch touching a line, lightning striking, or a wire breaking. When this happens, a relay senses the fault and tells the breaker to open, preventing the flow of power to the problem

site. After opening, the breaker quickly closes and permits power to continue flowing through the line with only a short interruption of service. The brief delay, which allows the fault to clear, usually lasts less than two seconds.

If the fault clears, every home or business that receives electricity from that power line experiences a blink. This could include thousands of accounts if the breaker protects a transmission line or a substation.

If the fault continues, the breaker opens again. This creates a second blink. Triple-shot settings allow the device to reclose a third time, and if the fault is still there, it stays open and the electric consumers downline experience a power outage. Yes, blinks are annoying, but this process protects the line from serious damage by cutting off the power to the affected section of the line and isolates the problem until it can be repaired.

#### Reducing the blink's effects

Victory Electric employs methods to reduce blink frequency. Tree trimming is probably the easiest and most common way and is one area where you can



Shane Laws

Continued on page 16D ►

# Be in Control of Your Energy Future

## PowerMyWay Program Empowers Members to Take Charge of Their Electric Bill

Victory Electric is happy to announce our members now have an easy, convenient option available to help manage their electric bill and energy use. With our PowerMyWay billing plan, there are no due dates, late charges, security deposits or reconnect charges, EVER, because you determine when and how much you pay each month.

Traditionally, consumers receive a monthly bill and pay for electric use after the fact, which works well when members pay bills on time. However, it is easy for any member to receive an electric bill at the end of the month and be disappointed you had not been more aware of your habits and how much electricity you were using until it was too late. This can affect even the most generous of budgets and make it difficult to pay your bill. Monthly bills can also pose a problem for those members who are on a monthly paycheck cycle and cannot coordinate paydays with your electric bill due date.

As an alternative, PowerMyWay is a self-managed program that provides our members the convenience of paying for electricity on an as-needed basis. This program offers more flexibility because payments can be made monthly, weekly or even daily, in any amount that fits your budget. Each day your balance will adjust based on your

household consumption, allowing you to put back a little here and there and better understand how much you need to budget. Members can fill up an electric account just like filling up the gas tank in a car—one gallon at a time or with a full tank.

Just as your gas gauge reminds you when you are getting low on fuel, members using PowerMyWay receive a reminder via text, email or phone each day your account balance is \$25 or less. In addition to low balance reminder notifications, electric use and account balance information is available to members 24/7 on Victory Electric's SmartHub online bill payment site.

SmartHub can be viewed from your smartphone, tablet or computer and provides members instant, real-time access to electric use information so energy use patterns can be easily monitored and tracked. In addition, once a PowerMyWay payment is made, you can watch your account balance decrease on SmartHub as electricity is used, which can give you a better understanding of how much and what activities use the most electricity and how your daily actions directly affect your electric bill. That knowledge can be used to adjust habits and appliance operation and help reduce

*Continued on page 16D* ▶

### What is PowerMyWay?

PowerMyWay is Victory Electric's bill pay program that puts you in charge of your energy use and bill due date.



### How does it work?

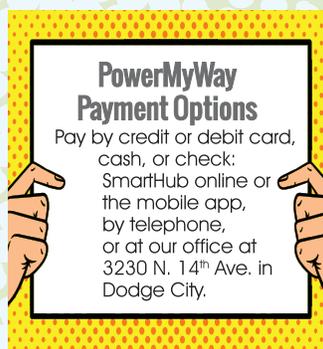
PowerMyWay is a self-managed, pay-as-you-go program. You decide how much electricity to purchase—enough to last a day, a week, a month or more. To start, purchase at least \$50 of energy. No deposit.

Receive text, email or phone notifications when your balance is equal to or less than \$25.

Add money to your account on your schedule!



### Payment options & notifications



You receive reminders when your account balance is low.

Receive account balance updates through:  
 Text or phone call  
 Email  
 SmartHub mobile app

### You have control



No security deposits, late charges or reconnect fees. Flexibility to purchase electricity in any amount that fits your budget and anytime that works for you. 24/7 access to monitor your energy use and your account balance. Power YOUR way!

# Victory Electric Partnered with CoBank to Award 2018 Sharing Success Grant to Ford County Sheriff's Office



Pictured left to right: Tara Burkhardt, president of Dodge City Area Chamber of Commerce; Marisa Vargas, Dodge City Area Chamber Commerce membership director; Joni Wittman, Dodge City Area Chamber of Commerce events director; Bridget Perez, FCSO; Mikey Goddard, Victory Electric vice president of safety; Martha Castillo, FCSO; Randy Quint, Victory Electric board trustee; Rob Henry, Victory Electric vice president of engineering; Shawn Fletcher, Ford County assistant administrator; JD Gilbert, Ford County administrator; Shane Laws, Victory Electric CEO; Cedric Drewes, Victory Electric board trustee; Ryan Miller, Victory Electric vice president of operations; Angela Unruh, Victory Electric CFO; Richard Lightner, Victory Electric board trustee; Jim Imel, Victory Electric board trustee; Pat Morse, Victory Electric board trustee; Bill Carr, Ford County Sheriff; John Hunter, FCSO; Kyndell Penick, Victory Electric manager of key accounts; Kennedy St. George, Victory Electric communications specialist; Dale Coleman, Ford County Undersheriff; and Chris Boys, Ford County commissioner.

The Victory Electric Cooperative, Assn., Inc., is pleased to announce **FORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE** as the recipient of this year's Victory Electric/CoBank Sharing Success grant. The Ford County Sheriff's Office was awarded two checks totaling \$10,000—\$5,000 from Victory Electric and \$5,000 from CoBank—for security upgrades.

"Ford County's Wild West law enforcement history of gunfights and lawmen is legendary, but in today's 21st century, technology and security is key," said Bill Carr, Ford County Sheriff. "The generous grant from Victory Electric and CoBank will help the Ford County Sheriff's Office's 80 plus full-time and part-time deputies, support and administrative staff continue to protect and serve the community."

Sheriff's deputies and staff cover more than 1,098 square miles and 1,540 miles of roadway and are responsible for providing law enforcement services to all 12 communities in Ford County, to include civil and criminal processes, assistance to municipal agencies, crime prevention programs, and security for the Ford County Courthouse and Detention Center.

"Victory Electric appreciates the hard work and dedication of the sheriff's office personnel," said Shane Laws, Victory Electric CEO. "Their role in keeping our communities safe and secure is key to the health and vibrancy of both local citizens and the area, and I'm pleased, on behalf of Victory Electric, to award this grant to the Ford County Sheriff's Office."

The annual Sharing Success grant opportunity, capped at \$10,000, is made possible by Victory Electric's governing

board of trustees, in partnership with CoBank—a cooperative bank that provides loans, leases, export financing and other financial services to agribusinesses and rural power, water and communications providers in all 50 states. CoBank believes strongly in the cooperative principle of "Concern for Community," and partners with its customers to support worthy causes as a way to make a positive difference and fulfill its mission of service to rural America.

"Thanks to our board of trustees and CoBank, the Sharing Success Grant enables Victory Electric to give back to the communities we serve," Laws said.

This is the seventh year Victory Electric has awarded Sharing Success grants to local non-profits. Applicants must be federally recognized as 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. The Bucklin Library received the grant in 2012 to help fund the construction of their new library building. In 2013, the Mission of Mercy dental clinic in Dodge City was awarded \$10,000. The grant funded the Stauth Memorial Museum in Montezuma for the 2014 "Suits in Space" Smithsonian exhibit. In 2015, local shelter and food bank, the Manna House, was awarded a grant to repair and improve their facilities. The Depot Theater upgraded their theater sound system in 2016. And last year, the Ford County Historical Society made repairs to preserve history in the Home of Stone—Mueller Schmidt House.

For more information on the Victory/CoBank Sharing Success grant or how your organization can apply, visit our website at [victoryelectric.net](http://victoryelectric.net).

## Why Does the Power Blink? Continued from page 16A ▶

help. Make sure Victory Electric knows of any trees or limbs located close to a power line. Call 620-227-2139 or 800-279-7915 to tell Victory Electric about potential problems.

Technology has also improved service reliability. A co-op can remotely program intelligent electronic devices, like advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) and outage management systems (OMS), to behave a certain way when a specific event occurs. An AMI meter allows radio frequency communication between meter and the cooperative, and OMS maps system data and meter locations into a piece of software that models the electric grid. When a device on the grid reports loss of power, the OMS runs calculations to determine the exact location of the fault and the number of members impacted. Victory Electric can then send out or redirect a crew to the exact location of the problem. A map of the outage and number of impacted members is generated, and member service reps are notified that an outage is in progress. Members who have signed up for text messages on SmartHub may receive a text stating there's an outage and another when power is restored. The end result of all this technology is the minimization of



outages and their length, plus more availability of up-to-date information for the consumer.

Mother Nature is a tough opponent, and it's impossible to eliminate outages and blinks altogether. However, frustration with blinks can be reduced with the purchase of an alarm clock equipped with a battery backup. This type of digital clock offers "ride through" ability for momentary outages. It will also keep the correct time and sound an alarm in case of a long-duration outage, provided a charged battery is in place. As an added benefit, these devices only use the battery in the event of a power interruption.

Blinks affect all electrical equipment, not just digital clocks. If there is a blink during the operation of a computer, the computer may crash and require a reboot. An uninterruptible power supply (UPS) on computers can help prevent information loss. The UPS incorporates surge suppression technology with a battery backup and provides time to save documents and exit the computer properly.

### The future of blinks

Victory Electric operates an active system maintenance program and works hard to identify and fix sources of service interruptions. Even though blinks will never disappear from our electrical energy delivery system, by working together we can minimize effects of the interruptions and the frequency they occur.

*Thanks, Shane*

## Cold Weather Rule Begins Nov. 15

Members who are unable to pay their electric bills from Nov. 15 to March 15, may qualify for this program, provided they fulfill certain good faith requirements when attempting to pay.

The requirements members must meet to qualify for the program are summarized below.

Members must notify the cooperative and state their inability to pay their bill in full.

Members must apply to federal, state, local or other financial assistance programs for which they may be eligible to receive aid.

Members and the cooperative will reach a mutually agreeable payment arrangement.

Please note failure to follow the above requirements, illegally diverting utility service, receiving service by tampering, or defaulting on a payment arrangement, will disqualify the member from receiving the benefits under the cold weather rule.

In no event will the cooperative disconnect a service if the temperature is forecasted by the local National Weather Service to fall below 35 degrees within 24-hours following the time of disconnection.

Victory Electric reserves the right to disconnect between 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday - Friday when the temperature is at or above 35 degrees.

The cold weather rule is to ensure human health and safety are not unreasonably endangered during the colder months.

If you have any questions, call our office at 620-227-2139 during business hours.

## Control Your Energy Future

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the amount of electricity you use while saving you money. You turn things off more often. You may change the setting on your thermostat so you don't cool or heat as much. You might cook outside to avoid using the oven or make sure your dishwasher is full before running it. Statistics show members who monitor energy use, use less, and by making lifestyle changes, a typical household can reduce energy use by 10 to 15 percent.

PowerMyWay is available to residential members only, but both new and existing members are eligible. For new members, \$50 toward future energy use is all that is needed to establish a PowerMyWay account.

Existing members must have their account paid-in-full, including unbilled electrical use, before they can switch to PowerMyWay. Existing members who have previously paid a deposit may apply the deposit to any outstanding balance, transfer the deposit to their PowerMyWay account, or request to have the deposit refunded.

For more information on PowerMyWay, visit our website or contact us at 620-227-2139.

# Promotion and Four New Faces at Victory Electric

Retirements, promotions, and new opportunities have created new careers for five Victory Electric employees.

## Metering gains new meterman



Ray Brown

Victory Electric is pleased to welcome **RAY BROWN** as a third class meterman.

Brown served as an electrician for several electrical contractors before landing his dream job with Victory Electric.

"Working for Victory Electric has always been the dream," Brown said. "I heard good things about the company and know it's a good atmosphere to work in."

His electrical knowledge will help him in the metering department but he realizes he has a lot to learn.

"I like all of the learning I am doing," Brown said. "These new experiences are great."

The Ford native enjoys "regular redneck stuff" like hunting, fishing, and four-wheeling. He also enjoys spending time with his daughter, Arabella.

## Henry promoted to crew chief



Kade Henry

Recently, **KADE HENRY** was promoted to crew chief.

Henry has been with Victory Electric for nearly four years and worked his way up the ladder to crew chief.

"I was a contracted lineman for J&J Powerline for several years before coming to Victory Electric, but I earned my journeyman certification here and have learned a lot from these guys,"

Henry said. "I love it. I love being a lineman and working outdoors but mother-nature can be a battle and can be unpredictable—that's the hardest part of being a lineman."

The promotion to crew chief means Henry runs a crew, and is responsible for training new apprentice linemen.

"Educating these guys and leading them until we finish a job is the most rewarding part for me," Henry said. "It's more than keeping the lights on, we have an obligation to our members and keeping my crew focused on providing that electricity safely is a huge responsibility."

He and his wife, Ellen, live in Cimarron and stay busy with their sons' sporting events and enjoy spending time together at the lake. Kyler is a junior and Cope is in eighth grade. Henry's black lab, Belle, completes their family.

Congratulations, Kade.

## Three new apprentice linemen join Victory Electric

Victory Electric introduces Tyler Trent, Colton Lee and Kody



Tyler Trent

Stockton as new linemen.

Apprentice lineman **TYLER TRENT** is a Dodge City native and worked at J&J Powerline after graduating from Dodge City Community College's line program.

"I knew I wanted to be outdoors," Trent said of his career as a lineman. "Our days change all the time. It's hard work, but I enjoy it."

"Working with these guys is a brotherhood and I have enjoyed getting to know them all," Trent said. "They're a fun bunch of guys."

Trent hopes to continue learning and eventually become a crew chief.

Trent is a Pittsburg Steelers football fan who enjoys hunting, fishing, and any other outdoor activities, and has a black lab named Trigger.



Colton Lee

**COLTON LEE** is another new face at Victory Electric. The Hanston native graduated from Pratt Community College and just finished an internship with Midwest Energy in Kinsley.

"It is hard work and fast paced," Lee said. "I would encourage anyone who

is interested in becoming a lineman to do it. I know it's going to be a rewarding career. Nate Selfride is my old foreman in Kinsley and I really learned a lot from him and he influenced me to become a lineman."

As a former intern for Midwest Energy, Lee knows what it's like to work for members, and he values the work of cooperatives.

"Working for members is all I've known. I haven't had to work for anyone else and I like it," Lee said. "Being in a cooperative is just different. A good kind of different and I am glad to be at Victory Electric."



Kody Stockton

Lee also joins his fellow linemen in his love for the outdoors and hunting and fishing.

Apprentice lineman **KODY STOCKTON** is our newest team member.

Stockton joins us from Montana where he was working as a contractor.

"I'm from Meade and as soon as this opportunity came available, I applied," Stockton said. "I wanted to be closer to home."

Stockton knew family friends who were linemen and said learning everything has been the hardest part.

"There is so much to learn, but I am enjoying it," Stockton said. "I like working with a lot of different people."

Join us in welcoming Ray, Tyler, Colton and Kody!

# Tome Control de tu futuro Energético

El programa PowerMyWay permite a los miembros hacerse cargo de su factura eléctrica

Victory Electric esta orgulloso en anunciar que nuestros miembros ahora tienen una opción fácil y conveniente para ayudarlo administrar su factura de electricidad y uso de energía. Con nuestro plan de facturación PowerMyWay, no hay fechas de vencimiento, cargos por pagos tarde, depósitos de seguridad o cargos de reconexión, NUNCA, porque usted determina cuándo y cuánto paga mes tras mes.

Tradicionalmente, los consumidores reciben una factura mensual y pagan por el uso de electricidad después del hecho, que funciona bien cuando los miembros pagan las facturas a tiempo. Sin embargo, es fácil para cualquier miembro recibir su factura a fin de mes y sentirse decepcionado por no haber sido más consciente de sus hábitos y la cantidad de electricidad que estaba usando hasta que fue demasiado tarde. Esto puede afectar incluso los presupuestos más generosos y dificultar el pago de su factura. Las facturas mensuales también pueden representar un problema para aquellos miembros que están en un ciclo de pago mensual y no pueden coordinar su día de pago con la fecha de vencimiento de su factura.

Como alternativa, PowerMyWay es un programa auto gestionado que brinda a nuestros miembros la conveniencia de pagar electricidad según sea necesario. Este programa

ofrece más flexibilidad porque los pagos se pueden hacer mensualmente, semanalmente o incluso diariamente, en cualquier cantidad que se ajuste a su presupuesto. Cada día su saldo se ajustará según el consumo de su hogar, lo que le permite retroceder un poco aquí y allá y saber cuánto necesita presupuestar. Los miembros pueden llenar una cuenta eléctrica igual que llenar el tanque de combustible en un automóvil, un galón a la vez o con un tanque lleno.

Así como su medidor de combustible le recuerda cuando se está quedando sin combustible, los miembros que usan PowerMyWay reciben un recordatorio por mensaje de texto, correo electrónico o llamada telefónica cada día en que el saldo de su cuenta es de \$25 o menos. Además de las notificaciones de recordatorio de bajo saldo, el uso eléctrico y la información del saldo de la cuenta están disponibles para los miembros las 24 horas del día, los 7 días de la semana, en nuestro sitio en línea de pagos de factura de Victory Electric.

SmartHub se puede ver desde su teléfono inteligente, tableta o computadora y proporciona a sus miembros acceso instantáneo y en tiempo real a la información de su uso eléctrico para que su uso de energía pueda ser monitoreo y ajustado fácilmente. Además, una vez que se realiza un

## ¿Qué es PowerMyWay?

PowerMyWay es un programa de factura que te pone en control de su uso de energía y de su fecha de dar un pago.



## ¿Cómo funciona?

PowerMyWay es un programa auto gestionado, paga como vas. Usted es responsable de decidir cuánta electricidad comprara-suficiente para durar un día, una semana, un mes o más.

- » Para empezar, compre por lo menos \$50 de energía. No hay depósito.
- » Reciba una notificación de texto, correo electrónico o teléfono cuando su saldo sea igual o inferior a \$25.
- » ¡Añada dinero a su cuenta en su propio horario!



## Opciones de pagos y notificaciones



Recordatorios son enviados cuando su balance empieza bajar.

Reciba avisos de su cuenta por

- » Texto o llamada
- » Correo electrónico
- » Aplicación móvil de SmartHub

## Usted tiene el control



- » Diga no a depósitos, fianzas tardes y cargos de reconexión.
- » Compra electricidad en cualquier monto que se ajuste a su presupuesto cuando usted guste.
- » Acceso de 24 horas los 7 días de la semana para monitorear su uso de energía y su balance de cuenta.
- » ¡Energía a su manera!

pago de PowerMyWay, puede ver cómo se reduce el saldo de su cuenta en SmartHub a medida que se utiliza la electricidad, lo que le permite comprender mejor qué actividades utilizan más electricidad y cómo sus acciones diarias afectan directamente a su factura de electricidad. Ese conocimiento se puede utilizar para ajustar sus hábitos y el uso de sus aparatos y ayudar a reducir la cantidad de electricidad que usa y ahorrar dinero. Usted apagar las cosas más a menudo. Puede cambiar la configuración de su termostato para que no se enfríe ni caliente tanto. Puede cocinar afuera para evitar usar el horno o asegurarse de que el lavavajillas esté lleno antes de usarlo. Las estadísticas muestran que los miembros que monitorean el uso de energía, usan menos y al hacer cambios en el estilo de vida, un hogar típico puede reducir el consumo de energía en un 10 a 15 por ciento.

PowerMyWay está disponible solo para miembros residenciales, pero tanto los miembros nuevos como los existentes son elegibles. Para los nuevos miembros, \$50 para el uso de energía en el futuro es todo lo que se necesita para establecer una cuenta de PowerMyWay.

Los miembros actuales deben tener su cuenta pagada en su totalidad, incluido el uso eléctrico no facturado, antes de que puedan cambiar a PowerMyWay. Los miembros existentes que hayan pagado previamente un depósito, pueden aplicar el depósito a cualquier saldo pendiente, transferir el depósito a su cuenta de PowerMyWay o solicitar que se reembolse su depósito.

Para obtener más información sobre PowerMyWay, visite nuestro sitio web en [victoryelectric.net](http://victoryelectric.net) o llame a un representante de servicio al miembro al 620-227-2139.

## Join Cooperatives at the Polls Nov. 6

Victory Electric's No. 1 priority is providing our members with safe, reliable and affordable electricity. But doing this job requires a lot more than stringing and maintaining power lines throughout our service territory. It requires political engagement. That may seem far removed from our core mission, but it's absolutely essential to serving you, our members.

That's why we're participating in a national program of America's electric cooperatives called Co-ops Vote.

Co-ops Vote encourages all cooperative members to participate in national, state and local elections while educating political candidates and elected officials about the important role played by electric cooperatives in their communities.

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the service organization representing the nation's electric cooperatives, launched Co-ops Vote in 2016. Co-ops Vote started as a national non-partisan get-out-the-



vote initiative that helped drive rural voter turnout in the 2016 presidential election.

Through this program, electric cooperatives realized they had a unique advantage: As electric cooperatives, the civic virtue of voting is in our DNA. We show concern for community—one of the seven cooperative principles—through participation in our democracy.

We have another advantage. Elected officials and decision-makers across the political spectrum trust us because of the work the electric cooperative family has put into political engagement. When we all get involved, we can make things happen politically and in our local communities.

Victory Electric's participation in Co-ops Vote helps to ensure that rural issues remain part of the national discussion—and are supported by our elected officials. But Co-ops Vote isn't just for co-ops. It's for co-op members just like you.

You can participate by registering to vote and committing to cast your ballot on Nov. 6. If you're interested in getting more involved, visit [www.vote.coop](http://www.vote.coop) to learn more about the upcoming elections and access online tools that can help you participate. We look forward to seeing you at the polls!

**Through this program, electric cooperatives realized they had a unique advantage: As electric cooperatives, the civic virtue of voting is in our DNA. We show concern for community—one of the seven cooperative principles—through participation in our democracy.**



### Time Change Approaching

Victory Electric reminds you that daylight saving time ends on Sunday, Nov. 4. Don't forget to change your clocks back one hour.



12<sup>th</sup> annual  
**PUMPKIN**  
PAINTING & CARVING FESTIVAL

5:27

VICTORY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE  
9 TO 11 A.M. | 3230 N. 14<sup>TH</sup> AVE.  
PUMPKIN PAINTING AND CARVING  
FACE PAINTING | GAMES | COSTUMES

Join us for fall fun at the Pumpkin Painting and Carving Festival. A pumpkin and a carving kit will be provided free to the first 800 children ages 13 and younger. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

