

CFL Charlie Says "Come Get Your Free CFL!"



This month's lucky winners are...

Isaac Aberson, Alfredo Retana, Chad Stapleton, Sheon Elledge, Salvator Lara, Charles D Webb, Bonita Blackburn, and Steven Deno. Come by Victory Electric Cooperative to get your free compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL). Every month, Victory Electric gives members free CFL light bulbs. Congratulations winners!

Visit our Website & Join us on Facebook



Visit our website at www.victoryelectric.net. On our website, you will find a calendar of events, frequently asked questions, bill pay and energy calculators—just to name a few tools!

You can also become a fan of Victory Electric at www.facebook.com/VictoryElectric or by searching for The Victory Electric Cooperative Assn., Inc. Check our page for updates, outage information and energy efficiency tips. Facebook is a great way to stay in touch.

Efficiency Tip of the Month

Circulate savings! Ceiling fans will keep you cool during summer months and can even allow you to raise your thermostat setting about four degrees without affecting your comfort.

Victory Electric Monitors Regulations *Continued from page 20-A*

would not a be rate increase by your cooperative, nor would you receive additional or improved services because of it. Your bill would increase by 6.15 percent simply because of the new tax, which we would be required to collect for the state of Kansas.

Victory Electric believes that electricity is a health and quality of life necessity. This new tax on utility bills would unfairly burden many of our members, as well as all disadvantaged Kansans. We ask that you consider contacting your legislators, and express your opinions on Senate Bill 261.

Prairie Chicken and EPA Regulations

Last spring, USFWS announced its decision to list the Lesser Prairie Chicken (LPC) as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), a decision that is expected to cost Kansans millions as local governments and businesses comply with regulations associated with the listing.

Electric cooperative members, in particular, will feel the impact of the listing since electric cooperatives often serve rural areas where there are fewer members to share the cost of utility operations.

In the event that a LPC or its habitat is disturbed or harmed as defined in the ESA, Victory Electric can be subject to hefty fines. What is certain is that costs will increase to complete transmission and distribution line projects, thereby increasing the cost of electricity.

Any new lines built in habitat areas will be subject to mitigation fees and may be required to be buried underground, thus increasing the cost by two to three times. Any new overhead line built requires an environmental survey to be conducted between March 15 and May 7 by a trained biologist at a cost of

\$2,000-\$3,000 per square mile. This only scratches the surface of the fees and reporting requirements.

EPA's proposed "Clean Power Plan" will fundamentally change how electricity is generated, distributed and consumed in the U.S. Cooperatives across the nation are particularly concerned about this plan because it will result in the premature closing of existing power plants, even relatively new plants, and those with significant debt remaining.

In the case of cooperatives, our member-owners will be left holding the bag for that debt, essentially being forced to pay twice for their electricity. The "Clean Power Plan" is projected to cost consumers nationwide \$2.9 billion per year. For Victory Electric and the other five cooperative owners of Sunflower, our generation and transmission cooperative, the cost is upwards of \$53 million per year.

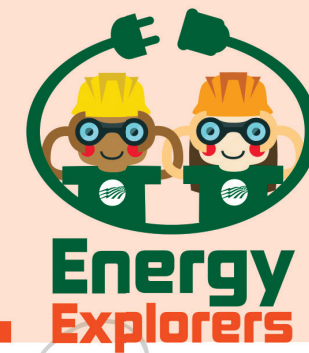
What You Can Do to Help

Victory Electric, cooperatives across the nation, and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, are continuously talking to our legislators, testifying in hearings, and lobbying for fair, affordable rates for our members.

With your help, through letters and emails to our legislators and the EPA, we can demand that government regulations for energy production take into account consumers' need for reliable, affordable energy and reasonable, achievable EPA standards that govern electric generation facilities, especially those that use fossil fuels. Having a voice is one of the most important rights each of us has as a U.S. citizen and as an electric cooperative member. We need to use it. For more information on how to make a difference, visit www.action.coop.

Thanks, Shane

STORM SAFETY WORD SEARCH



Summer is the season for fun in the sun, but this time of year can also bring dangerous storms with lightning, wind and heavy rain. Remember to stay safe!

- If you hear thunder, seek shelter.
- Avoid flooded areas.
- Never go near a downed power line.

Circle all words associated with summer storms. The hidden words appear straight across, backward, up and down, and diagonally. Use the word bank below as a guide.

WORD BANK

- DANGER
- LIGHTNING
- SHELTER
- WIRES
- POWER LINE
- STORM CLOUD
- FLOODING
- SAFETY
- THUNDER

Y A Y G Q X N G H C R W Q S D
 Z T U T Q V R Q J U S K X R U
 F D I D E X K V J H J P W S O
 Z L E C C F J H E P A S H V L
 H F O G I O A L L G V E J M C
 E J T O N R T S N V T R Q O M
 P N B A D E T I E Z H I E D R
 T T L C R I N C Y G U W E M O
 I P W J B T N J E S N S O O T
 J E D D H X Z G L L D J G F S
 O R E G N A D W J E E X N L C
 A X I O E P V E T B R C L R C
 T L G C P H Z J S E V J I W L
 P O W E R L I N E T R R Q T H
 F G G Y A R U I G D C L W Q W

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THE VICTORY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

electronews



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FROM THE CEO

Victory Electric Monitors State & National Regulations

State Tax Initiatives and National EPA Regulations have the Potential to Affect Your Energy Bill

Electric cooperatives exist to provide our members safe, reliable and affordable power. Currently there are several state and national regulations that threaten our ability to keep electricity affordable for all of our members. The most devastating of these regulations include eliminating the Kansas sales tax exemption for residential utility bills; the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) decision to list the Lesser Prairie Chicken as a threatened species; and the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed "Clean Power Plan" aimed at reductions in CO₂ emissions from existing power plants.

State of Kansas Eyes Taxing Energy Bills

The Kansas state government faces some big challenges in balancing its books for the next couple of years. The Kansas Legislature is holding hearings on a number of bills that will provide options to fund schools, state government, and state services. Among the proposals under consideration is Senate Bill 261, which would apply the state's

6.15 percent sales tax to residential energy bills.

Currently, the state of Kansas does not levy sales tax on natural gas and electricity for residential use. Agriculture use is also exempt—as is the sale of propane when used for heat and light in residences.

From a government standpoint, it is easy to collect revenue as a part of the utility bill. But it is not so easy to pay that bill in an area where so many customers are dealing with lower commodity prices and oil prices.

As a member-owned cooperative, Victory Electric serves all, regardless of income. We're reminded of the daily struggles many of our members have in paying their bills, and work hard to control costs and keep your rates affordable. A 6.15 percent sales tax increase would be a jolt to our members, with the average Victory Electric residential member paying an extra \$122 a year.

Remember, this sales tax

Continued on page 20-E



Shane Laws

Beat the Heat with Cool Products

When temperatures soar in the summer, utility bills can do the same. There are several small ways to manage your energy use this summer. Victory Electric is happy to help you with those simple, no- or low-cost ways to save—but for those who are considering remodeling or making larger purchases, here are a few ideas that may help keep your energy use in check and keep your wallet cool.

Remodeling?

If you are making esthetic changes to your home, consider products that will also make it work more efficiently. Heating and cooling systems use the most energy in our homes, so if you are making upgrades to your floors and cabinets, consider making some energy efficient upgrades, too.

If you're making additions to your home or converting attics or basements into living spaces, a ductless heating and cooling system is a great option. A ductless system does not require adding pipes or ductwork to a home's existing system, making it a more affordable upgrade for many. Ductless systems tend to be more efficient, meaning homeowners will use less energy and save on their electric bills. Contact your local HVAC expert for more information.

If making changes to your heating and cooling system isn't the right upgrade for you now, consider installing a smart thermostat. These "cool" devices learn your behavior and adjust heating and air conditioning settings with a goal to save energy. Smart thermostats also have the capability to connect to the Internet, allowing homeowners to manage energy use via a smart phone app. There are several smart thermostat options available on the market, and typically costing between \$200 and \$400.

Purchasing new appliances?

If you are considering purchasing new appliances that will use less energy, but may not have the budget for a complete appliance overhaul, start with replacing your clothes dryer. Dryers are big consumers of electricity, using around 900 kWh each year as compared to a refrigerator, which uses around 455 kWh each year.

There have been big developments with dryers in recent years, and Energy Star awarded two standouts—the LG EcoHybrid Heat Pump Dryer and the Whirlpool Hybrid-Care™ Heat Pump Dryer—the 2014 Emerging Technology Award.

Using heat pump technology, these dryers offer 40 percent in energy savings if operated on their most efficient settings and can save more than \$400 over the life of the dryer. If you are interested in purchasing other appliances or products, remember to visit energystar.gov and check out their "Most Efficient 2015" list to help you determine which products—from windows and HVAC systems to televisions and washers—are the most efficient for your home.



This smart thermostat is easy to program. The display is very large and easy to read.

Stay safe exploring the great outdoors this summer

Summer is in full swing, and that means it is time for fun in the sun! As you find yourself spending more time outdoors, Victory Electric reminds you to stay safe.

Planning a home improvement project? When working outdoors, you may be using tools, such as ladders, power tools, shovels—or even paintbrushes with extendable arms. These items help you get the job done but have the potential to be dangerous if used improperly.

Pay attention to where you place metal ladders or dig for fence posts. Before you start any project, always look up and avoid overhead power lines. Keep a minimum of 10 feet between you and overhead lines.

If you are planning a project that requires digging, remember to dial "811" first to find out if the area you will be working in is clear of underground power lines. Power tools should be kept away from wet surfaces, and outlets should not be

overloaded.

Exploring the great outdoors is a great way to spend time with the family, but keep these safety tips in mind.

Children should never climb trees near power lines—always assume a wire is live. Fly kites and remote-controlled airplanes in large open areas like a park or a field, safely away from trees and overhead power lines.

Planning to take a dip in the pool? Electrical devices, such as stereos, should be kept at least 10 feet away from water sources, and outdoor electrical outlets should always be covered. If you hear a rumble of thunder, exit the pool right away.

Speaking of thunder, summer



Ladders placed too close to power lines become dangerous conduits of electricity.

storms can be dangerous if you're caught in the wrong place at the wrong time. If you find yourself outdoors during a storm, move toward suitable shelter with covered sides, and stick to low-lying ground if possible.

These are just a few tips to remember when you are spending time outdoors this summer with your family. Have some fun out there, and always keep safety in mind!

Mantente fuera de peligro a explorar al aire libre este verano

Verano está en pleno apogeo, y eso significa que es hora de diversión bajo el sol! Como encuentras pasar más tiempo al aire libre, Victory Electric le recuerda que debe mantenerse a fuera de peligro.

¿Está planeando proyecto de mejoras para el hogar? Cuando se trabaja al aire libre, puede que esté utilizando herramientas tales como escaleras de mano, herramientas eléctricas, palas—o incluso pinceles con brazos extensibles. Estos elementos ayudan a hacer el trabajo, pero tienen el potencial de ser peligrosos si se usan indebidamente.

Preste atención a donde colocar escaleras de metal excavación para postes de la cerca. Antes de iniciar cualquier proyecto, siempre evitar líneas de tendido eléctrico. Mantenga un mínimo de 10 pies entre usted y líneas aéreas.

Si usted está planeando un proyecto que requiere excavar, recuerde marcar "811" primero para saber si vas a estar trabajando en el área está libre de líneas eléctricas subterráneas. Herramientas eléctricas deben mantenerse alejado de las superficies mojadas y salidas no deben estar sobrecargadas.

Exploración de la naturaleza es una gran manera de pasar tiempo con la familia, pero tenga en cuenta estas sugerencias de seguridad.

Los niños nunca deben trepar a los árboles cerca de líneas eléctricas—asumir siempre un cable está vivo. Volar cometas y remotos controlado-aeroplanos en grandes áreas abiertas como un parque o un campo, con seguridad lejos de árboles y líneas eléctricas aéreas.

La intención de darse un chapuzón

en la piscina? Los dispositivos eléctricos, tales como equipos de audio, deben mantenerse por lo menos 10 pies lejos de fuentes de agua, y siempre se deben cubrir los enchufes eléctricos al aire libre. Si escucha un ruido de trueno, salir de la piscina enseguida.

Hablando de los truenos, tormentas de verano pueden ser peligrosas si estás atrapado en el lugar equivocado en el momento equivocado. Si te encuentras al aire libre durante una tormenta, avanzar hacia el refugio adecuado con los lados cubiertos y mantenerlo bajo tierra si es posible.

Estos son sólo algunos consejos para recordar cuando usted pasa tiempo al aire libre este verano con su familia. Pasar un buen rato allí y siempre mantener seguridad en mente!

Invest in efficiency and watch your savings grow

It is the middle of the summer, temperatures are rising and so are your electric bills. It might be time to make a big investment, an investment in energy efficiency.

Making your home more energy efficient is still one of the safest investments you can make. Try employing these energy saving measures to collect major returns on your investments:

- ▶ Install a programmable thermostat
- ▶ Install a hot water heater "blanket"
- ▶ Change your shower heads
- ▶ Upgrade appliances like your clothes washer or your refrigerator
- ▶ Replace old windows with energy efficient ones
- ▶ Install water efficient toilets

Making all of these changes at once could be difficult—if not impossible—but investing in just one of these measures can yield a significant return on your investment.

For example, installing a new, energy efficient clothes washer can yield around a 24 percent return on investment.

Do your research, and make sure you are purchasing the right size appliances. A small, energy efficient washer will save you money, but if you have a larger family, having to do multiple loads could negate your energy savings.

Multiple energy efficient upgrades will help you save no matter where

you live or what time of year it is, but upgrading to efficient home cooling systems will help lower energy costs significantly during the hotter months of the year.

Six percent of American energy consumption goes toward space cooling and it costs \$11 billion per year for homeowners to power their air conditioners. You can reduce your energy use by 20 to 50 percent when you upgrade to energy efficient home cooling unit. One option is to install a split unit air conditioner and heating unit—they can be more expensive, but they are highly efficient, especially in homes without ductwork. Another option is to invest in an ENERGY STAR approved air conditioning unit, which can be 15 percent more efficient than a standard unit.

If buying a new cooling unit isn't in the cards for you this summer, no need to worry! Replacing appliances isn't the only way to lower energy costs, one of the most important energy efficient improvements to make during the hot summer months is

air sealing and insulating. By adding insulation in attics, floors over crawl spaces and accessible basement rim joints, you can reduce your heating and cooling costs by an average of 15 percent (and it could lower your overall energy costs by an average of 11 percent!).

You can also lower your air conditioners energy consumption by between 5 and 15 percent by cleaning your air ducts. You can install energy efficient window treatments, which can reduce energy costs by around 10 percent. Or, you can simply turn on a ceiling fan, which will allow you to raise your thermostat temperature by four degrees, without impacting your comfort.

Investing in any of these energy efficient improvements will keep you cool in the summer, warm in the winter and will make significant changes to your energy bills. So do yourself, and your wallet, a favor and invest in a more energy efficient home!



Using heat pump technology, new energy efficient dryers offer up to 40 percent in energy savings if operated on their most efficient settings and can save more than \$400 over the life of the dryer.

A FEW FACTS ABOUT **home** **COOLING**

America's Electric Cooperatives

6%

The percentage of the average household's energy use that goes to space cooling.

20% ↓ 50%

You can reduce air conditioning energy use by 20-50% by switching to high-efficiency air conditioners and taking other actions to lower your home cooling costs.

2/3 of all U.S. homes have air conditioners

\$11 BILLION

The amount it costs homeowners every year to power their air conditioners.

source: energy.gov