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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

# Electronews

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## CEO MESSAGE

# America's Electric Cooperatives Post-Election Priorities

With the midterm elections in the rearview mirror, Victory Electric is looking ahead at the impact and opportunities for rural America and electric cooperatives.

Electric cooperatives across the nation played an active role in the midterm election and worked to get to know each candidate running for federal office. This was particularly important since more than 60 members of Congress decided to retire or run for another office.

Through Co-ops Vote, a nonpartisan political engagement effort led by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, more than 100 candidates attended electric cooperative functions or met with cooperative staff. Several statewide associations sponsored or hosted a debate or forum for gubernatorial candidates, while more than 30 local electric cooperatives participated in National Voter Registration Day activities.

As we continue getting to know our new elected officials, Victory Electric

**We are proud to continue working towards a brighter and more prosperous rural America for everyone.**

will continue advocating for policies that protect local business interests and advance the quality of life in southwest Kansas.



**Shane Laws**

There are several opportunities for our elected leaders to find common ground and advance legislation to benefit our community.

Improving our nation's aging infrastructure is a great place to start. Congress and the White House should explore an infrastructure package that benefits all Americans, especially those at risk of being left behind in rural America. And this investment in critical infrastructure needs to go beyond roads and bridges. Congress should leverage an infrastructure package to help maintain and modernize the electric grid and connect rural communities to the modern economy.

The new Congress also presents an opportunity to expand access to high-speed internet service in rural communities that currently lack it. According to the FCC, 23 million rural

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## Post Election Priorities

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Americans lack access to broadband internet—most of them are members of an electric cooperative. Roughly 100 electric cooperatives are working to close the digital divide by bringing broadband to their communities. Despite that progress, an expanded combination of grants and loans is necessary to continue providing rural communities with the means for education, telemedicine and a 21<sup>st</sup> century economy. Everyone—the Trump administration and both Democrats and Republicans in Congress—agrees on the need to bolster rural broadband.

A third area of possible bipartisan agreement lies in the need to produce a new farm bill. The farm bill, which authorizes numerous rural economic development programs, traditionally has enjoyed bipartisan support in Congress. Although the House and Senate have passed very different versions of a farm bill this year, we're hopeful lawmakers can come to an agreement on a compromise bill that promotes rural economic development and protects Rural Utilities Service electric loan funding on which electric co-ops depend.

Electric cooperatives like Victory Electric are engines of economic development in Kansas. We are proud to continue working towards a brighter and more prosperous rural America for everyone.

*Thanks, Shane*



There are several opportunities for our elected leaders to find common ground.

PIXABAY.COM

## Chance Joins Victory Electric Team

Victory Electric recently hired **TRACY CHANCE** as the newest tree trimming member.

Chance joins us after a complete career change. Prior to Victory Electric, Chance worked for National Beef of Dodge City in the electrical project department.

"I am glad to be here," Chance said. "I had heard great things about the people at Victory Electric and know they serve a lot of people with what we value a lot – electricity."

Chance has lived in Dodge City for more than 25 years and has raised a family here. The Colby native came to Dodge City after graduating from Colby Community College and Fort Hays State University in exercise science.

"It took me a while to get to where I am now," Chance said of his career choice. "I hope to retire from Victory Electric, it has been nothing but great since I came here."

His primary role is clearing right of ways for line and trimming trees that may be disrupting service to members. Chance joins tree trimmer foreman Aramando

Ceja's crew.

"It is just the two of us," Chance said. "It has been a lot of fun to get to know Armando and while learning the ropes and all the equipment has been a challenge, I'm really enjoying it here. It's nice to enjoy going to work every day!"

Tree trimmers are a big part of Victory Electric's work, even with minimal trees.

"They're the crews we send a head of construction crews when we need new line built or there are tree rows in the way," said Ryan Miller vice president of operations. "They are necessary every day and even more so when we have weather storms that may damage trees. We are thankful Tracy is here to help."

Chance enjoys hunting, going to the lake and spending time with his family. Victory Electric welcomes Tracy, his wife Roxanne and his two older sons Cody and Drew to the Victory Electric team.

Tracey Chance

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# Dodge City 2018 Parade of Lights and Chili Cook-off



Hundreds of community members enjoyed the chili cook-off sampling in Eisenhower Park for this year's event.

The 17th Annual Christmas Parade of Lights and Chili Contest was held on Nov. 26 in Dodge City.

Sponsored by the *Dodge City Daily Globe*, Boot Hill Museum, Victory Electric, the City of Dodge City, Main Street, Salvation Army, and Southwind Broadcasting, the events attracted hundreds of visitors to the newly renovated Eisenhower Park.

Thirty-two entered the chili contest. The lucky winners in the Judges Choice category were **FAMILY CARE CLINIC OF DODGE CITY**, first place; **TERRY SCHAFFER**, second; and **DODGE CITY CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU**, third. Those who impressed the crowd won the People's Choice category. Winners were **ARROWHEAD WEST**, first place; **NATIONAL BEEF**,

second; and **FORD COUNTY FIRE AND EMS**, third. All winners received an engraved chili ladle sponsored by Victory Electric.

The parade attracted 22 entries, ranging from classical cars, Dodge City school bands, to floats decked out in lights.

For the second year Santa's sleigh virtual reality (VR) ride was at the event. Dodge City Community College, Dodge City/Ford County Development Cooperation, McDonalds and Victory Electric all sponsored the attraction. Adults and children alike, enjoyed the four minute VR ride in Santa's sleigh driving the reindeer.

The event was held in Eisenhower Park while Boot Hill Museum is under construction. Thanks to all who attended, and we hope to see you next year!



Arrowhead West receives their first place award for People's Choice.



Jerri Imgarten presents Family Care Clinic their winning ladle.



Victory Electric enters the parade with a lighted tree trimming truck in honor of the late Steve Jimmerson.

## Downed & Dangerous

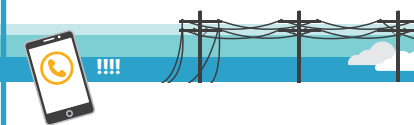
If you see a downed power line, always assume it is energized and dangerous. Avoid going near it or anything in contact with the power line.



Downed power lines can energize the ground up to **35 ft.** away – so keep your distance.



Never drive over a downed line or through water that is touching the line.



If you see a downed line, notify the local authorities immediately.



Never try to move a downed power line, even if you think the line is deenergized or if you're using a non-conductive item – this will not prevent injury or death!

Source: ESFI.org

## Five Tips for Space Heater Safety

As temperatures drop this winter, many will look for supplemental heating sources for their homes. Space heaters can be a good alternative for those who want to warm one area of their home without turning up the thermostat on the central heating system. However, space heaters are also responsible for 32 percent of house fires, according to the National Fire Protection Association. If you plan to use a space heater in your home this winter, review these tips from Victory Electric to keep you, your family and your property safe. Stay safe this winter with these tips.

- ▶ **Materials**— What are the components of your space heater made of? Parts like metal grating can be hot to the touch and may burn anyone who gets too close. Make sure you purchase a heater that is cool to the touch and has guards over the coils just in case little fingers get too close.
- ▶ **Placement**— While it can be tempting to place a small heater on a shelf so it is not in the way of pets and children, it is safest to leave the heater on a level, nonflammable floor. Placing the space heater on the floor can keep it from falling over, preventing fire hazards. Also, remember that space heaters and bathrooms are not a good combination unless the heater is designed for bathroom use. Moisture can damage the heater. The most important rule about

space heater placement is the three-foot rule. Whether you are using the heater in the bedroom, living room or kitchen, space heaters should always be kept 3 feet away from flammable materials and out of the way of children and pets.

- ▶ **Special Features**— Does your space heater have an auto shutoff function if tipped over? Auto shutoff can be a lifesaver. If you currently own a space heater without auto shutoff, consider purchasing a heater with this important safety feature.
- ▶ **Cords**— You should never use an extension cord when plugging in a space heater as it can cause overheating. The space heater should be plugged directly into a wall outlet, and should be the only thing plugged in to the wall outlet. Also make sure cords aren't in a high-traffic area so they are not a tripping hazard.
- ▶ **Use**— Never leave a heater unattended while in use. If you are leaving your home or going to bed, unplug the space heater.



Practicing space heater safety can save you from a fire.