

# Rural Power

Electronic Edition

A newsletter for and about Kansas Electric Cooperatives

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## Have an idea or a story for Rural Power?

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## Cooperatives promote new lineman training program

Dodge City Community College has announced a new Electrical Power Training Program which is scheduled to begin January 2010.

“Victory Electric recognized a great need for an additional lineman program in western Kansas, and we approached DCCC a year ago about adding a program in their Technical Education department,” Victory’s general manager, Terry Janson, said. “DCCC’s new Electrical Power Training Program is a win-win situation for both prospective students and the electrical utility industry, students need stable jobs and we need qualified employees.”

In the development of the program, DCCC also worked with many industry partners including, Lane-Scott, Pioneer, Wheatland, Western, J&J Powerline Contractors and High-Line Services.

“We are eager for the new lineman program to begin at DCCC,” Melissa McCoy, DCCC director of business, technology and continuing education, said. “We have been working on developing this program for over a year, and we believe it will bring great value to the people of western Kansas by providing both training and jobs.”

There are currently two other electrical lineman schools in Kansas: Pratt County Community College and Manhattan Area Techni-

cal College. Both schools have a waiting list, which makes DCCC’s program another opportunity for prospective students.

DCCC entered into a three-year cooperative agreement with PCC, and will work to provide a state-of-the-art program for western Kansas. DCCC will offer a one-year certificate in Electrical Power Training, and 12 hours of that certificate will be provided by PCC. Students who wish to earn an associate’s degree in addition to the one-year certificate will be able to do so by enrolling in PCC’s online program

“We need well-trained linemen, and there is an increasing demand for lineman in Kansas as well as the US,” Victory’s director of operations, Tom Lowery, said.

“In fact, a recent study shows Kansas has a shortage of over 150 linemen this year alone and in the next few years more than half of the nation’s 400,000 utility workers will be eligible for retirement,” he continued. “It is an advantage to students entering into the program because there is a stable job market in both Kansas and the US.”

Financial aid, scholarships, sponsorships and occupational experience programs will be available through DCCC’s industry partners. For more information about the program, contact Rhonda Weil, DCCC’s technical recruiter, at 620-227-9250 or [rweil@dc3.edu](mailto:rweil@dc3.edu).

## Kansas electric cooperatives successfully appeal property valuations

Several Kansas electric cooperatives recently learned that their 2009 tax bills will not be as high as previously anticipated.

Five co-ops requested an informal conference to appeal their state-appraised valuations before the Kansas Division of Property Valuation (PVD), four with the assistance of KEC’s Doug Shepherd. Of those four appeals, three valuations were decreased.

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“We pointed out to the PVD staff why the co-ops’ future income streams would likely be lower than what the PVD projected,” said Shepherd. “Most of the appeals centered around past sales that were no longer there, such as a large-use member who had shut down or anticipated co-op growth that didn’t materialize,” he stated.

The three co-ops received relief totaling about \$1.9 million in valuation, saving \$76,000 in property taxes.

Overall, electric cooperative valuations in Kansas increased an average of 4.5% from last year.

“Managing property taxes translates to lower electric rates, and is another example of the value of KEC membership,” Shepherd added.





