

Since 1940

# WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative*

April 2024 NEWS



**Oakdale Electric  
Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 



**Annual Meeting  
Saturday,**

**April 27, 2024**

**Tomah Recreation Park**

Recreation (gold) Building

(see inside cover for details)

## **KWIK TRIP GIFT CARD**

Receive a Kwik Trip \$10 grocery gift card and cookie following the meeting.

## **DRAWINGS**

Two trees, two homemade bird houses, and \$750 in co-op cash cards will be drawn to registered voting members in attendance at the annual meeting.

## **GIFTS & FOOD**

Enjoy donuts, coffee, juice, and milk prior to the business meeting. Each member account will receive one member gift at registration.

# CALL AND NOTICE

## of Annual Meeting of Oakdale Electric Cooperative

The Annual Meeting of the members of Oakdale Electric Cooperative will be held at 9 a.m., Saturday, April 27, 2024, at Tomah Recreation Park in the Recreation (gold) Building, with registration beginning at 8 a.m.

Action will be taken on the following:

1. Reading of the notice of the meeting and proof of the due publication of mailing thereof.
2. Reading of the unapproved minutes of last year's meeting of the members and taking of necessary action thereon.
3. Election of a director from District #2 (comprised of the Townships of Knapp, Bear Bluff, Lincoln, Scott, La Grange, Byron) for a three-year term to fill the vacancy of the term of James Van Wychen (incumbent), 3365 Auger Rd. Warrens, WI 54666.
4. Election of a director from District #4 (comprised of the Townships of Oakdale, Orange, Clearfield, Fountain, Lisbon) for a three-year term to fill the vacancy of the term of Richard Barrett (incumbent), W8376 Orange Rd. New Lisbon, WI 53950.
5. Election of a director from District #5 (comprised of the Townships of Kingston, Cutler, Necedah, Germantown, Marion) for a three-year term to fill the vacancy of the term of Martin Potter (incumbent), N11569 County Rd. H Camp Douglas, WI 54618.
6. Reports of officers, directors, committees, and employees, summarized in the Annual Report previously distributed to membership and published in the Annual Meeting web page.
7. Consideration of the adoption of amendments to the Cooperative Bylaws.
8. Such other business, regular or special, which may come before said meeting.
9. Adjournment.

*The 2023 Annual Meeting minutes can be viewed at [oakdalerec.coop](http://oakdalerec.coop).*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Notice of Annual Meeting – inside front cover
- Program – inside front cover
- GM & CEO and Board Chairman Message – page 15
- Oakdale Electric Cooperative Illuminated – page 16
- Financial Report – page 17
- Proposed Bylaw Amendments – page 18
- Director Districts – inside back cover

# ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAM

**Saturday, April 27, 2024**

Tomah Recreation Park –  
Recreation (gold) Building  
1625 Butts Avenue, Tomah

### 8:00 a.m.

- Registration of Members – Coffee and donuts prior to meeting

### 9:00 a.m.

- Business Session
- Meeting Called to Order – Richard Barrett, Chairman
- Invocation – James Van Wychen, Treasurer
- Certification of Quorum Present
- Approval of Program Agenda
- Notice of Meeting and Proof of Mailing
- Approval of Minutes and Prior Meeting
- Director Election Process – Attorney John Behling
- Presentation of General Manager & CEO and Director reports as summarized in the Annual Report previously distributed to membership – Christopher Tackmann
- Proposed Bylaw Amendments – Attorney John Behling
- Any Other Business
- Adjournment

Oakdale Electric Cooperative member and retiree Dan Hoag crafted the two birdhouses that members who attend the annual meeting will have a chance to win.



Cooperative employees will be available to assist members with golf cart transportation from parking to the recreation building entrance.



Chris Tackmann,  
General Manager & CEO



Oakdale Electric  
Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

## GENERAL MANAGER & CEO AND BOARD CHAIRMAN MESSAGE



Rick Barrett,  
Board Chairman

We hope to see you at our Annual Meeting on Saturday, April 27, 2024, at Recreation Park in Tomah.

Registration begins at 8 a.m., and the business meeting starts at 9 a.m.; please come early for coffee and donuts. Each member account will receive one welcome gift, and following the meeting, all members in attendance will receive a \$10 Kwik Trip grocery card.

In 2023, Oakdale Electric returned almost \$1.4 million in capital credits to our members. An aggressive retirement is planned again for this year with another \$1.4 million. External auditors gave your cooperative another clean report regarding our financial systems and controls. Both the continued retirement of capital credits and a clean report are something that we are very proud of.

In December 2023, Oakdale, working with OneEnergy Renewables, finalized the construction of two solar gardens in our service territory. The combined output of these two systems is 4.5 megawatts (MW) and can provide energy to approximately 1,000 homes each year. We are very excited and proud of this accomplishment. In 2025 or early 2026, we are looking at constructing an additional 4.5 MW somewhere in our service territory.

The sale of electricity was strong for 2023. Annual kWh sales surpassed more than 371 million kilowatts, which is one of the highest sales totals Oakdale has ever had. Unfortunately, though, the higher sales were not enough, which led to a small

increase in our residential facility charge. This was due to increases in our material costs for our distribution equipment, higher costs for fuel, and increases in our wholesale power bill. We are still hoping to not have a rate increase in 2024; however, depending on costs and kWh sales due to weather, a small one may be needed later this fall.

Oakdale Electric was busy with construction last year, and invested nearly \$6.5 million in new construction, electric line upgrades, and 264 new services. The capital budget for 2024 calls for us to invest \$7.5 million in system improvements. This includes starting the construction of three new substations to improve power reliability in the Castle Rock, Oakdale, and Armenia areas.

There are two bylaw amendments that are being proposed. The first amendment is lowering the number of petition signatures that is needed to run for the board from 15 to 10. The second amendment is to allow the membership to cast a unanimous ballot at the annual meeting for a member who is running unopposed for a board seat. This change would allow the cooperative to save money on ballot printing and voting process costs. You can read more about the proposed change on page 18.

The future continues to look bright for Oakdale Electric Cooperative. You, our members, are an integral part of the cooperative business model. Without your support, feedback, and appreciation, Oakdale Electric Cooperative's success would not be possible. Thank you!



# OAKDALE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## *Illuminated*

**18,936**  
METERS

**5.19**  
MEMBERS PER  
MILES OF LINE

**7**  
MEMBER-  
ELECTED  
DIRECTORS

Rick Barrett,  
chairman  
Greg Eirschele,  
vice chairman  
Jim Van Wychen,  
treasurer  
Jon Williams,  
secretary  
Bob Hess  
Martin Potter  
Robin Craker

**171**  
PRIVATE  
GENERATION  
SYSTEMS

**18**  
SUBSTATIONS

**14,702**  
MEMBERS

**39**  
FULL-TIME  
EMPLOYEES

**2,833**  
MILES OF LINE

**\$32 Million**  
CAPITAL CREDITS  
RETURNED TO  
MEMBER-OWNERS



# 2023 FINANCIAL REPORT

## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

|                                    | Dec. 31, 2023 | Dec. 31, 2022 |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Operating Revenue                  |               |               |
| Elec Sales Revenue                 | 43,649,821.00 | 43,495,802.00 |
| Other Elec Revenue                 | 105,174.00    | 128,955.00    |
| Total                              | 43,754,995.00 | 43,624,757.00 |
| Operating Expenses                 |               |               |
| Cost of Power                      | 27,961,440.00 | 27,830,788.00 |
| Distribution Expense – Operations  | 1,710,923.00  | 1,825,223.00  |
| Distribution Expense – Maintenance | 1,929,789.00  | 2,113,493.00  |
| Administrative & General Expense   | 2,902,600.00  | 2,868,003.00  |
| Depreciation Expense               | 4,161,792.00  | 3,781,705.00  |
| Tax Expense                        | 503,814.00    | 503,828.00    |
| Interest on Long-Term Debt         | 2,243,918.00  | 2,130,833.00  |
| Other                              | 64,867.00     | 26,450.00     |
| Total Cost of Electric Service     | 41,479,143.00 | 41,080,323.00 |
| Operating Margins                  | 2,275,852.00  | 2,544,436.00  |
| Non-Operating Margins              | 842,754.00    | 444,747.00    |
| DPC Capital Credits                | 1,333,156.00  | 1,036,305.00  |
|                                    | 4,451,762.00  | 4,025,488.00  |

## BALANCE SHEET

|                               |                |                |
|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Assets                        |                |                |
| Net Utility Plant             | 88,853,268.00  | 85,156,192.00  |
| Long-Term Investment          | 21,036,097.00  | 19,817,619.00  |
| Cash & Temporary Investments  | 188,371.00     | 1,237,363.00   |
| Accounts Receivable           | 3,192,687.00   | 3,507,361.00   |
| Materials & Prepayments       | 2,306,880.00   | 1,571,899.00   |
| Other Assets & Deferred Debts | 613,465.00     | 653,889.00     |
| Total Assets                  | 116,190,768.00 | 111,944,323.00 |
| Liabilities & Equities        |                |                |
| Patronage Capital             | 50,541,946.00  | 47,456,057.00  |
| Consumer Deposits             | 238,416.00     | 267,127.00     |
| Long-Term Debt                | 55,941,401.00  | 55,942,699.00  |
| Accounts Payable              | 2,998,684.00   | 2,689,917.00   |
| Other Current Liabilities     | 6,470,321.00   | 5,588,523.00   |
| Total Liabilities & Equity    | 116,190,768.00 | 111,944,323.00 |

Our 2023 financial records and the reports contained herein have been audited by Bauman Associates, Ltd., Eau Claire, WI.

## YOUR ENERGY DOLLARS

For every dollar you spend on electricity, two-thirds goes toward the cost of wholesale power.



|                                       |                        |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span>  | Energy Cost: 64%       |
| <span style="color: orange;">■</span> | Operating Expense: 15% |
| <span style="color: blue;">■</span>   | Depreciation: 10%      |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span>    | Interest & Tax: 6%     |
| <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> | Margins: 5%            |

## COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY IN 2023

Operation Round Up:  
**\$80,600**

Scholarships:  
**\$19,250**

Donations & Sponsorships:  
**\$20,500**

# OAKDALE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## 2024 PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENTS

This amendment proposes to make changes to two (2) sections of the bylaws, including the addition of another subsection. The changes are summarized as follows:

- Language in Article III, Section 4(b) of the bylaws will be updated so that a petition to nominate a candidate for director requires ten (10) signatures instead of fifteen (15) signatures.
- Language in Article III, Section 4 will be updated to provide that uncontested director elections may be conducted by unanimous consent, voice vote, electronic voting, or similar means. This language will be Article III, Section 4(c) and what was Article III, Section 4(c) prior to the amendment will be Article III, Section 4(d).

### PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

NOTE: Additions are underlined and bolded – e.g., **add these words**. Deletions are indicated by strikeout – e.g., ~~delete these words~~. Explanations of the reasons for these amendments are included after each section proposed to be amended or created.

**Amend Article III, Directors, Section 4, to read as follows:**

#### ARTICLE III DIRECTORS

##### **Section 4. Districts, Nominations and Elections.**

(a) Territorial Districts. The territory served by the cooperative shall be divided into a number of territorial districts equal in number to the number of directors of the cooperative. Each such district shall be composed of one or more continuous townships and each district shall contain as near as may be practicable the same number of members as each other territorial district. The territorial limits of such division shall originally be determined and may be changed from time to time by the board of directors but shall be subject to revision by the members at any membership meeting. At least every three years, the board of directors shall review the district boundaries and make revisions determined by the board of directors to be necessary to ensure that the districts comply with the requirements of this Section. No change in district

boundaries shall disqualify a director from completing his or her current term.

(b) Nominations. Nominations of candidates for director shall be by petition. To be valid, a petition shall be in a form designated by the Cooperative, shall designate the district the candidate resides in and is being nominated for, shall be signed by not less than ~~fifteen (15)~~ **ten (10)** members residing in that district (with the signature of either or both joint or tenancy in common members counting as one signature), and shall be delivered to the Cooperative's principal office at least 90 days prior to the annual meeting. In the event no valid petitions have been filed by that date, the Board shall appoint a Nominating Committee from the members in the director districts for which directors are to be elected at the following annual meeting. In that event, the Nominating Committee shall use its best efforts to nominate one (1) or more qualified candidates for each director position up for election. The names of all nominees shall be set forth in the notice of the annual meeting.

**(c) Uncontested Director Election. In the event during a director election there is only one candidate for any director position(s), the election for the uncontested director position(s) may be conducted at the annual meeting by unanimous consent, voice vote, electronic voting, or similar means, at the discretion of the Chairman, without the need for the Cooperative to provide, or for the members to cast, mail-in, electronic, or in-person ballots.**

(d) The winner of the election for a director vacancy shall be the nominee receiving a plurality of the votes of the members voting thereon at such meeting. In the event of a tie, the tie shall be resolved, and the result determined, by the flip of a coin.

**Explanation: There are two changes:**

**The first amendment will change the number of members required to sign a nomination petition for a candidate for a director position from fifteen (15) to ten (10) members.**

**The second amendment is to create a quicker/expedited voting procedure when one of the elections for a director position is uncontested (i.e., only one person has been nominated at the time of voting).**



# MEMBER PHOTO CONTEST



Jason Skinner



Rita Shepherd



Debra Galston



Joclynn Dudzinski

## “Life in Rural Wisconsin”

The Oakdale Electric Cooperative (OEC) photo contest for members' photos to be featured in our 2025 calendar is now open. Winning photos may be used in future newsletters or cooperative publications. The contest runs until August 30, 2024.



Mike Tucker

***\$25 Co-op Cash to picture winners • \$50 Co-op Cash to cover winner***

### Photo Contest Criteria:

- Photos must be taken within OEC's service area.
- Photos should capture life in rural Wisconsin (seasons, wildlife, landscape, power lines, people, etc.).
- Photos must have a horizontal (landscape) orientation.
- Photos can be in color or black and white.
- Only high-resolution photos can be used. Photos must be at least 300 dpi.

### Photo Contest Rules and Details:

- Contest will run from April 1, 2024, until August 30, 2024; however, submitted photos can be taken outside of this date range.
- Three (3) photos per member will be accepted.
- All OEC members 18 years old and over are eligible to submit photos.
- An OEC member under the age of 18 years old is eligible to participate, but must submit a parent/guardian form with entry.
- A completed entry form must accompany each photo.
- Member must own rights to photo.
- OEC employees will determine the winning photos.

### Photo Contest Entry Options:

- Upload using the Photo Contest Entry Form, found on [www.oakdalerec.coop](http://www.oakdalerec.coop), under the Member Benefits tab.
- Mail to P.O. Box 40, Oakdale, WI, 54649. (photo(s) must be 8"x10" in size and at least 300 dpi)
- Drop off at Oakdale Electric Cooperative Office – 489 N Oakwood St., Tomah. (photo(s) must be 8"x10" in size, and at least 300 dpi)



## CALLING ALL THIRD-GRADERS:

You're invited to participate in the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association's

## ELECTRICAL SAFETY POSTER CONTEST

Submit an original poster supporting electrical safety to Oakdale Electric Cooperative by **April 30, 2024**, for a chance to win a **\$25 gift card**! The top three posters will be entered into the statewide poster contest for a chance to win one of three great prizes:

- 1st place – Chromebook**
- 2nd place – \$100 Gift Card**
- 3rd place – \$75 Gift Card**

Contact Oakdale Electric Cooperative or go to [www.weca.coop](http://www.weca.coop) for rules and registration forms.



# THANK YOU, LINEMEN!

Every employee at Oakdale Electric Cooperative plays an essential role in keeping the power on. However, on April 8, we celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day to recognize our crews for their hard work and dedication to safely keeping the power on. No matter the weather elements, no matter the challenge, we thank our crews for building and maintaining our distribution power grid for you, our members.



## Congratulations, Graduates

Ryan Betthausen, Adrian Gebhardt, and Ethan Thorson received their journeyman lineworker certificate at a recently held apprenticeship graduation. To receive this certificate, each apprentice was required to complete 7,360 hours of on-the-job training and 640 hours of related instruction time.





# Your Co-op Employees, YOUR Neighbors

The people who go to work every day, sometimes through the night, to serve you as a member of our cooperative are more than just employees, they're also your neighbors.

## EXECUTIVE STAFF

**Kyle Aschenbrenner**  
Apprentice  
Lineworker

**Ryan Betthausen**  
Journeyman  
Lineworker

**Brock Brown**  
Area Service  
Foreman

**Travis Champlin**  
Field Engineer

**Reed Coenen**  
Journeyman  
Lineworker

**Eric Flock**  
Journeyman  
Lineworker

**Adrian Gebhardt**  
Journeyman  
Lineworker

**Karter Hoag**  
Apprentice  
Lineworker

**Cory Johnson**  
Journeyman  
Lineworker

**Lori Larsen**  
Operations  
Assistant

**Cody Lenz**  
Journeyman  
Lineworker

**Heather Linenberg**  
Consumer Service  
Specialist

**Breanna Linzmeier**  
Engineering  
Assistant

**Dalton Linzmeier**  
Journeyman  
Lineworker

**Dan McGarry**  
Field Engineer

**Jackie McGlin**  
Communications  
Specialist

**Sam Moseley**  
Warehouse  
Materials Handler

**Travis Moser**  
Journeyman  
Lineworker

**Maribeth O'Dell**  
Consumer Service  
Specialist

**Dane Pasch**  
Area Service  
Foreman

**Kurt Spolum**  
GIS/AMI Specialist

**Kurt Starkey**  
Construction  
Foreman

**Vern Stayton**  
Mechanic

**Andy Steele**  
Field Engineer

**Jim Suzda**  
Energy Services  
Technician

**Al Taylor**  
Energy Services  
Technician

**Bob Thompson**  
Construction  
Foreman

**Ethan Thorson**  
Journeyman  
Lineworker

**Josh Von Haden**  
Journeyman  
Lineworker

**Tina Von Haden**  
Billing & CIS  
Specialist

**Stewart Walters**  
Construction  
Foreman

**Rachel Winrich**  
Accountant



**Chris Tackmann**  
General Manager  
& CEO



**Linda Pierce**  
Finance  
Director



**Deana Protz**  
Executive Assistant/  
HR Administrator



**Matt Riggs**  
Staking Services  
Director



**John Ollendick**  
Operations  
Director

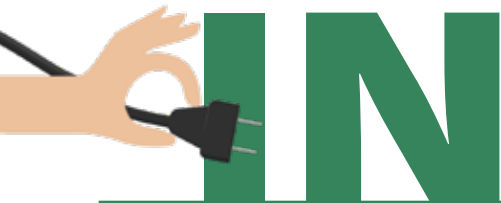


**Todd O'Neil**  
Energy Services  
Director



**Chad Schauf**  
IT Director

# PLUGGED



## Why does Oakdale Electric Cooperative trim trees around power lines?

Keeping trees and vegetation away from overhead powerlines cuts down on the number of outages that affect the power grid. The right-of-way is the area on either side of the powerline and by keeping it clear, crews can access affected areas when there is an outage.

Trees and underbrush near power lines are responsible for flickering power on windy days, large-scale outages during severe weather, and even grass and forest fires. Therefore, Oakdale Electric has a vegetation management system that manages the vegetation around powerlines to ensure safe and reliable power to our members.

Members can help by researching what type of tree to plant and where so there is not a future problem. Knowing the fully grown height and spread of the tree you want to plant will help you choose a location where the mature tree will not interfere with your electric service.

If you have trees on your property growing near or into power lines, contact the co-op at 608-372-4131. NEVER attempt to trim trees near power lines, for your safety and because it is the law for anyone working within 10 feet of electrical equipment to have proper training per OSHA requirements.

Always remember to call 811 before you dig so underground utilities are located.

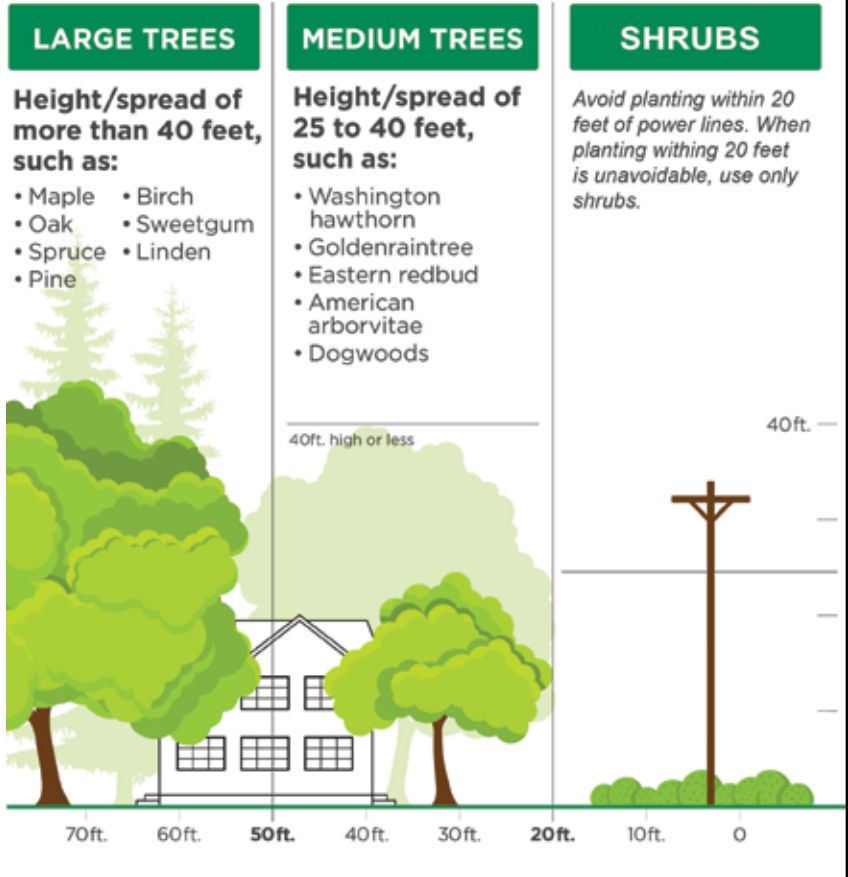
Mark Mercer  
Vegetation Supervisor



## Plant the Right Tree in the Right Place

For more tips on smart tree planting in your community, contact Oakdale Electric Cooperative or visit [www.ArborDay.org](http://www.ArborDay.org).

Trees can beautify our neighborhoods, and when planted in the right spot, can even help lower energy bills. But the wrong tree in the wrong place can be a hazard...especially to power lines.



**Always call 811 before you dig to locate any buried lines.**

Source: The Arbor Day Foundation and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

## Chris Tackmann, General Manager & CEO

P.O. Box 40, Oakdale, WI 54649  
608-372-4131 • 800-241-2468

[info@oakdalerec.com](mailto:info@oakdalerec.com)

Jackie McGlin, Editor



**Oakdale Electric Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.  
24-Hour Emergency Power Restoration: 800-927-6151  
Toll-free Online Bill Payment 833-526-0293

Diggers Hotline: For underground cable locates and power line clearance information, call 800-242-8511.

# DIRECTOR DISTRICTS



**Bob Hess**  
District 1



**Martin Potter**  
District 5



**Jim Van Wychen**  
Treasurer  
District 2



**Rick Barrett**  
Chairman  
District 4



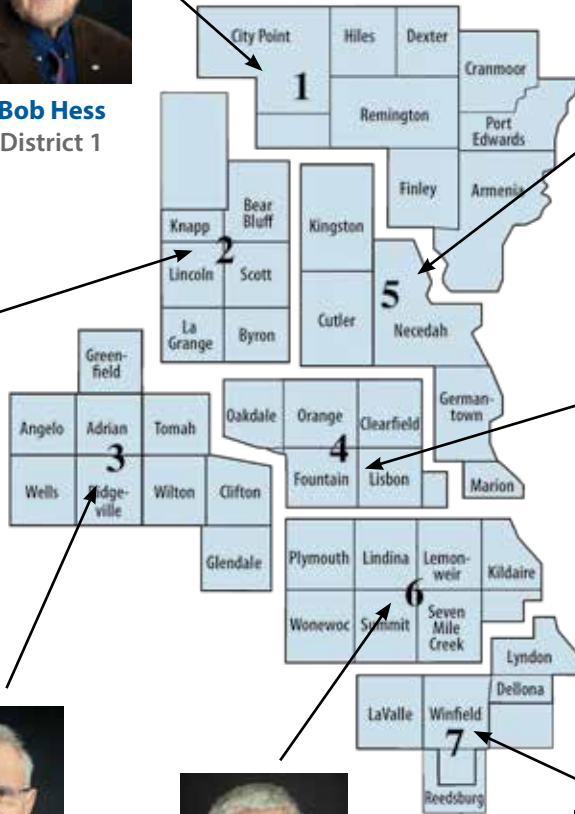
**Greg Eirschele**  
Vice Chairman  
District 3



**Jon Williams**  
Secretary  
District 6



**Robin Craker**  
District 7



## MISSION

Oakdale Electric Cooperative is dedicated to providing our members with safe, reliable, superior, and competitively priced energy services.

## VISION

Oakdale Electric Cooperative strives to enhance the quality of life for our members, while exceeding member expectations.

## VALUES

- Safety
- Integrity
- Innovation
- Environmental stewardship
- Accountability
- Open, honest communication
- Commitment to members, community, and employees

## The Role of the Cooperative's Board of Directors



14,702 OEC Members – Just like you

Your Vote



7-Member Board of Directors

Strategic Direction & Oversight



General Manager & CEO

Oversight of OEC Employees



Day-to-day Co-op Operations

Co-op members influence the way in which a cooperative is governed and operated by electing a board of directors to act on their behalf.

The co-op board of directors sets the overall direction for the cooperative. The co-op's general manager & CEO and staff are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the co-op.

