



BACK-TO-SCHOOL ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS

Chris Tackmann, General Manager & CEO

As the school season approaches, students and parents can prepare for a new year filled with learning. Along with purchasing school supplies and organizing schedules, it's essential to consider safe electrical measures. With the increased use of electronic devices and appliances in homes and dorm rooms, understanding and implementing safety practices can prevent accidents and ensure a safe environment for everyone.

Understanding Electrical Hazards Electrical hazards can pose significant risks, especially in areas where young students are present. Common hazards include overloaded power strips, damaged cords, and improper use of extension cords. Overloaded power strips can overheat and potentially cause fires, while damaged cords expose live wires that can lead to electrical shocks.

It's crucial to educate children about the dangers of playing with outlets and the importance of reporting any damaged equipment to an adult. Additionally, teaching kids to unplug devices by pulling the plug, not the cord, can prevent wear and tear on the cords and reduce the risk of accidents.

Safe Use of Electrical Devices Students often use laptops, tablets, and other devices for their studies. The safe use of devices is vital to maintaining a safe learning environment. It's important to use devices according to the manufacturer's instructions and avoid using them with wet hands or in damp areas.

Charging devices should be monitored to prevent overheating. When not in use, chargers should be unplugged. Furthermore, using devices with undamaged cords and ensuring that charging stations are not cluttered can minimize the risk of fires and shocks.

Dorm Room Electrical Safety For college students living in dorms, electrical safety takes on added importance due to shared living spaces and increased use of personal appliances. It's essential to follow dorm rules regarding electrical appliance usage, such as restrictions on high-wattage items like hot plates and space heaters.

Using surge protectors with built-in circuit breakers can help protect electronic devices from power surges and prevent overloading circuits. Regularly inspecting appliances for damage and avoiding the use of outdated or faulty equipment can also contribute to a safe living environment. Educating students about the importance of having an emergency plan in place can further enhance dorm room safety.

For savings on surge protection power strips, visit

www.oakdalerec.coop and under the Energy Solutions tab, click Focus on Energy.

By being proactive and mindful of electrical safety practices, students and parents can ensure a safer back-to-school experience. Through education and vigilance, the risk of accidents can be significantly reduced.

7 CAMPUS SAFETY TIPS

Every College Student Should Know

Relay these safety tips to your young adults who are about to hit campus for the first time or return for another year.

1. Do not overload electrical outlets, power strips or extension cords. Use power strips with an overcurrent protector.
2. Be aware of your surroundings, especially when listening to music or texting.
3. Unplug small appliances when not in use and all appliances when away for extended periods.
4. This tip still holds true: never walk alone at night.
5. Avoid using generic cubes or cords. They could overheat, shock or burn you.
6. Locate the emergency call buttons or phones across campus in case of an emergency.
7. Do not put your cell phone on or under your pillow or bedding. It could overheat or catch fire.

SafeElectricity.org

OAKDALE ELECTRIC YOUTH DELEGATE REPRESENTS CO-OP IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association (WECA) led a group of 18 youth delegates from 11 Wisconsin electric cooperatives on a tour of the nation's capital in June. Nearly 2,000 youth delegates and chaperones from 44 states attended the Youth Tour hosted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). Among the group of 18 was Oakdale Electric Cooperative's (OEC) delegate and WECA Youth Board member Carson Welter.

Students gained a better understanding of American history and political processes by meeting their state representative and senators. During their packed schedule, students visited multiple sites which included: Capitol Hill, Federal Bureau of Investigation, George Washington's Mount Vernon, Holocaust Museum, Iwo Jima Memorial, MLK Memorial, National Air and Space Museum, the Pentagon, Smithsonian Museum, the White House, WWII Memorial, and more. While visiting Arlington National Cemetery, four students laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on behalf of WECA.

Oakdale Electric sponsors students who are elected to the WECA Youth Board, which is picked during Youth Leadership Conference (YLC) held in July. YLC is free for high school juniors who live on OEC lines, with scholarship opportunities to follow. To be voted onto the youth board by their peers, students must advocate for themselves and should possess leadership qualities.

Carson Welter attended YLC in 2023, was elected to the WECA Youth Board, attended NRECA Youth Tour, and just recently planned and carried out this year's



Students visited Capitol Hill and engaged in a selfie with Senator Tammy Baldwin, taken by Carson Welter.



YLC. Welter is a graduate of New Lisbon High School and will attend UW-Eau Claire this fall.

"My experience on the WECA Youth Board provided me valuable leadership skills, made lifelong friendships, and gave me the opportunity to make a real difference in my community," Welter reflected. "From attending YLC, to being on the Youth Board, these opportunities helped me grow personally and professionally."



MEMBER PHOTO CONTEST

“Life in Rural Wisconsin”

The Oakdale Electric Cooperative (OEC) photo contest for members' photos to be featured in our 2025 calendar is open through the end of August. Winning photos may be used in future newsletters or cooperative publications. Submit any season photos by 4 p.m. August 30, 2024.

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

Photo Contest Criteria:

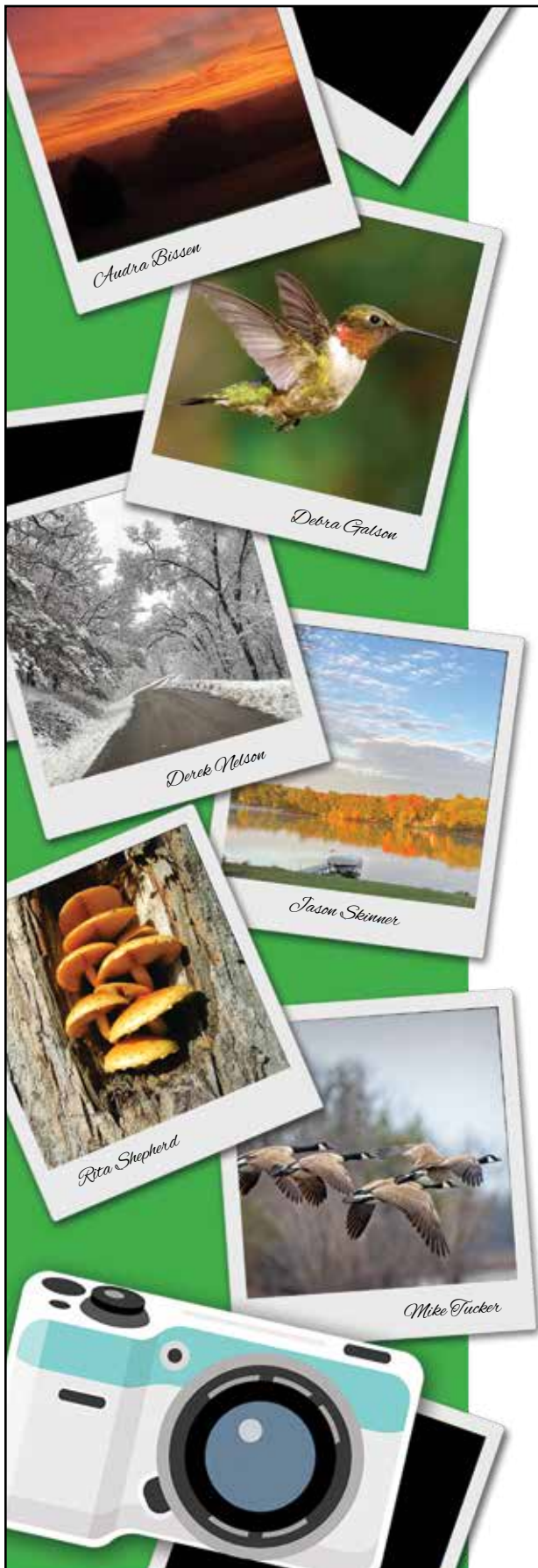
- Photos must be taken within OEC's service area.
- Photos should capture life in rural Wisconsin (seasons, wildlife, landscape, power lines, people, etc.).
- Photos must have a horizontal (landscape) orientation.
- Photos can be in color or black and white.
- **Only high-resolution photos can be used.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



OPERATION ROUND UP SURPASSES \$53,000

Operation Round Up (ORU) would not be possible without the generous members who round up their energy bill each month. That small change adds up and is donated back to communities across Jackson, Juneau, Monroe, Sauk, and Wood counties.

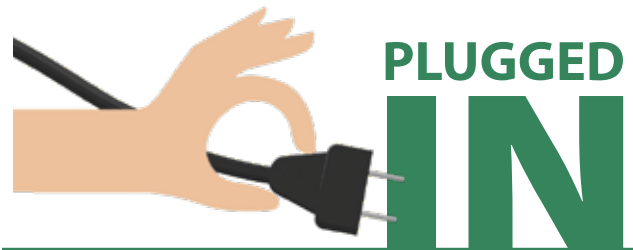


Following the quarter two meeting, the ORU board of trustees donated over \$53,000 back to various community-oriented organizations. Donations this year have gone to:

- Agriculture Societies
- American Legion Posts
- Ambulance/EMT Services
- Animal Shelters
- Fire Departments
- Food Pantries
- Nonprofits
- School Book Fairs
- Veterans of Foreign Wars Posts

Application requests are reviewed quarterly for disbursement of funds. If you are part of a nonprofit or organization that gives back to your community, we encourage you to apply for an Operation Round Up grant. Visit www.oakdalerec.coop/operation-round to view donation history or apply for a grant.

Quarter three applications must be received by August 12, 2024.



Need Energy Assistance?

The state of Wisconsin provides a program to assist Wisconsin households in reducing their energy burden. The Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) administers the federally funded Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and Public Benefits Energy Assistance Program.

Oakdale Electric Cooperative does not administer energy assistance funding. To find out if you qualify or for more information, contact the appropriate office for the county in which you live.

Jackson County(715) 284-4301
 Juneau County(608) 847-5988
 Monroe County(608) 487-9356
 Sauk County(800) 506-5596
 Wood County(715) 421-8654

Additional information can be found at www.energyandhousing.wi.gov or at www.oakdalerec.coop under the Billing & Payment dropdown menu and click Payment & Billing Options.



Heather Linenberg
Member Relations Specialist



UDDERLY ARTISTIC!

Many of Oakdale Electric Cooperative's employees have hidden talents. For Journeyman Lineman Travis Moser, he always has a masterpiece up his sleeve. Travis took on the Monroe County Dairy Promotions project and holy cow, he blew it right out of the pasture. He added intricate details like a glass insulator as a cowbell, pole climbers, and a detailed lineman silhouette, complete with a hardhat. All participating cows were on display at the Tomah Recreation Park entrance.

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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: 1-855-938-3610

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