



**Oakdale Electric
Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 



BEAT THE PEAK

Chris Tackmann, General Manager & CEO

If you look around your home, you likely have more devices and equipment that require electricity than ever before. Our connected lives are increasingly dependent on more electricity to function. At the same time, as demand for electricity rises, Oakdale Electric Cooperative (OEC) must deliver an uninterrupted 24/7 power supply—regardless of market conditions or other circumstances.

As you would expect based on your family’s habits, electricity use fluctuates throughout the day based on consumer demand. OEC must be able to provide enough electricity to meet the energy needs of all members during times of highest energy use or “peak hours.” These peak times are typically in the morning as people start their day and in the evening as people return to their homes.

What you may not know is that electric utilities including OEC typically pay more for electricity—either from a power plant or from another utility with excess power—during those morning and evening “energy rush hours.” In addition, the demand for electricity is even higher when it’s especially cold outside, when heating systems must run longer to warm our homes.

If the “peak times” concept is puzzling, here’s an easy way to think about it. It’s like a major concert. We know costs go up when there is strong demand for tickets (or electricity), and both are subject to the basic economic laws of supply

and demand. When a lot of people want the same thing, it’s more expensive. When they don’t, it’s cheaper—like a bargain matinee or an “early bird” special at a restaurant.

During peak periods when the cost to produce and purchase power is higher, we encourage you to take simple steps to save

energy, such as turning your thermostat down a few notches, turning off unnecessary lights and waiting to use of large appliances during off-peak times.

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You can also save energy by plugging electronics and equipment such as computers, printers and TVs into a power strip, then turn it off at the switch during peak hours. If you have a programmable thermostat, adjust the settings to sync up with off-peak periods. When we all work together to reduce energy use during periods of high electricity demand, we can relieve pressure on the grid and save a little money along the way.

Reducing the peak impacts the power-supply cost to every co-op member. This is particularly noticeable as energy costs have risen across the United States. Collectively, everyone conserving energy and making small changes can truly make a difference.

RESIDENTIAL DEMAND NOTICE

Beginning 2023, members will see an additional line item on statements. OEC will be adding monthly demand peaks data to residential general service account statements, at zero charge to members. Peak demand charges—the highest demand for power in a given month—can be separated from the energy rate to more fairly allocate costs to serve members. Separating demand costs from energy costs can therefore help ensure that we can allocate actual costs of service as fairly as possible.

A cost-of-service study will be completed this year. Results of the study may influence other rate changes later this year, with the possibility of residential demand charges in future years. If changes are implemented, it will be communicated to our membership.

There are no plans to implement residential demand charges in 2023.

**SAVE
the
DATE**



**88th Oakdale Electric
Cooperative
Annual Meeting
Saturday, April 29**

Registration 8 a.m.
Business Meeting 9 – 10 a.m.
Tomah Recreation Park

WINTER STORM ELLIOTT BROUGHT DAMAGING SNOW ON DECEMBER 15, 2022



On Thursday, December 15, 2022, a snowstorm producing heavy wet snow affected Oakdale Electric Cooperative's (OEC) overhead powerlines due to excess weight on lines from snow and downed trees. OEC's five-county service territory had outage reports with highest outage count being in Monroe and Juneau counties. Beginning at 2 a.m., OEC crews were dispatched to begin power restoration.

Crews worked diligently and safely as trees continued to fall and outage numbers increased. At the height of the event, approximately 5,000 members were without power. With a tornado event impacting OEC's membership six months prior to-the-date with 7,081 members without power, each weather event has its difficulties.

"The tornadoes took a lot of construction to repair but was in a more precise section of our territory," stated Operations Supervisor John Ollendick. He went on to say, "this snowstorm was across our entire territory and trees continued to fall,

making it difficult to stay ahead on power restoration."

Two additional crews were called in through the cooperative's mutual assistance program known as ROPE – Restoration of Power in an Emergency. Jo-Carroll Energy (Elizabeth, Illinois) sent four journeymen linemen to aid

in power restoration. Zielies Tree Service assisted in tree removal to clear paths for linemen to access power equipment.

As falling trees and branches leveled off on Friday, December 16, crews fully restored power at approximately 3 a.m. Saturday, December 17, 2022, to members with a primary residence with OEC.

"We are thankful to have cooperatives like Jo-Carroll Energy that could spare crews to assist in power restoration, just as co-ops were built on principles – Cooperation Among Cooperatives was showcased," stated General Manager & CEO Chris Tackmann. He added, "We are proud to have a membership that extends their gratitude during times of emergency."



Apprentice Lineman Ryan Betthausen



DEB REID: A SIMPLY AMAZING INSPIRATION TO THE COMMUNITY

The official definition of the word Volunteer is a person who freely offers to take part in an enterprise or undertake a task. Oakdale Electric Cooperative’s Selfless Service Award was implemented to recognize those volunteers who go the extra mile. With a name that’s widely recognized in the Tomah community, and considered the “volunteer queen,” Deb Reid was awarded with the latest Selfless Service Award.

Deb, originally from Iowa, moved to Tomah with her family in 2002. Shortly thereafter, she became a member of the Tomah Sports Booster Club. That was just the beginning of Deb’s 20-year (and counting) commitment to her community. Currently, she is the president of the Tomah Sports Booster Club, treasurer for the Tomah Rotary Club, and an active member in the Tomah Lions Club.

Fellow Tomah Rotarian Mandy Wagner, and Deb’s Selfless Service Award nominator, stated, “I’ve known her for over 20 years and the first thing she asked me when we met was to volunteer at the concert at Fort McCoy,

which we did for seven years.” Additionally, Deb is on the Youth Soccer Board, Tomah Holiday Lights Committee, and is the advisor for the Tomah High School Interact Club. Mandy stated, “She is always willing to help and finds joy in it. Deb truly inspires me.”

Deb works full-time for the Tomah Area School District (TASD) as the activities department assistant. “Deb knows what is going on, all the time,” stated colleague Brad Plueger, TASD activities director. For years, Deb was the treasurer for the Tomah Stix Softball Association and continues today to play a critical role for youth sports inside, and outside, of the school district by hiring officials, event workers and recruiting volunteers. Not only will you find Deb volunteering at community events, like Monroe County’s National Night Out and the Budweiser Dairyland National Truck and Tractor Pull, but organizing them too. Tomah’s



Deb Reid

Annual Freeze Fest and Rally for the Record, fundraisers coordinated by Reid, positively impact the Tomah community. Brad went on to say, “Whether it’s raising money or donating money, Deb cares and ensures such events take place for kids and community members to enjoy.”

There is no task too big or too small for Deb Reid. She is the true definition of a volunteer and well-deserving of the Selfless Service Award. Brad Plueger concluded by stating, “Deb is not a worker, nor a volunteer, but a person who truly cares. She is simply amazing.”



Brad Plueger, Deb Reid, and Mandy Wagner



Nominate a Selfless Service Award nominee by visiting www.oakdalerec.com/selfless-service-award. Next nominations are due March 15.

DEDICATED OEC EMPLOYEES KEEP THE LIGHTS ON

Employee service awards are a celebration of the hard work and dedication of cooperative employees reaching milestones in their years of service. Oakdale Electric Cooperative would not be operable without the dedication of its employees.



Travis Champlin – Field Engineer, 25 years



Lori Larsen – Operations Assistant, 25 years



Matt Riggs – Project Supervisor, 25 years



Stewart Walters – Construction Foreman, 25 years



Cory Johnson – Journeyman Lineman, 15 years



Maribeth O'Dell – Consumer Service Specialist, 10 years



Rachel Winrich – Accountant, 5 years

Working from home?

Set equipment like printers and scanners to automatically switch to sleep or energy-saver mode when not in use. In addition to saving energy, the equipment will stay cooler, which will help extend its life.



**Energy Efficiency
Tip of the Month**

Source: Dept. of Energy

Chris Tackmann, General Manager & CEO


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Jackie McGlin, Editor



**Oakdale Electric
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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 866-392-4307

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