



10 THINGS YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW ABOUT POWER RESTORATION



Chris Tackmann, General Manager & CEO

Over the past few years, members have had questions about power outages and why it can take time to get the lights back on. Given our reliance on electricity, there's simply never a good time to be without it.

This month, I'd like to review our restoration process to help our members understand what may be happening behind the scenes. Here are 10 things you might not know about restoration:

- We need you.** When your power goes out, it might be just at your home or small section of a neighborhood. Even though our metering system automatically sends us a message that your power is out, there is a chance we may not know about it. We still rely on you to let us know if your power is out. Please contact us at 800-241-2468.
- Our employees might be affected too.** Since Oakdale Electric Cooperative (OEC) is a local electric cooperative, our employees are local too. They are your neighbors, friends, and familiar community volunteers. When you're without power, our people might be as well.
- It's a team effort.** Every one of OEC's employees are working to get your power restored as soon as possible. Our consumer service specialists are taking your calls, engineers and field staff are surveying damage, our vegetation management team is clearing hazards, dispatchers are organizing crews, and communicators are keeping everyone informed of progress or potential dangers. When your power goes out, we all work together as quickly and safely as possible to get you back to normal.
- We assess the situation first.** Every outage is different, and we don't know how dangerous it is or what equipment might need to be replaced. When

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COMMON CAUSES OF POWER OUTAGES

There is never a good time for the power to go out, but if it happens on a sunny day, you might be left wondering why. Here are the most common causes of a power outage.

WEATHER

High winds, snow and ice can cause tree limbs to fall on power lines. Other weather effects, like wildfires and lightning strikes, can cause major damage to equipment.

CRITTERS

Squirrels, birds, snakes and other animals can inadvertently contact power lines, causing short circuits and disruptions to electrical supply.

ACCIDENTS

Vehicles can crash into utility poles, bringing down power lines. Construction and excavation work can also result in disruptions to underground lines.

Scheduled MAINTENANCE

Occasionally, we plan outages to perform upgrades or repairs to parts of the local grid.



Notice of Facility Charge Increase

Rising costs are seen all around us every day; however Oakdale Electric Cooperative (OEC) is not exempt from those price increases. The facility charge printed on energy bill statements covers the costs associated with providing electricity to your home. This encompasses equipment, materials, labor, and operating costs necessary to serve each meter in OEC's service area, regardless of the amount of energy used. To ensure the co-op remains financially sustainable, an increase in the facility charge is necessary.

Beginning on August 1, 2024, residential members' facility charge will be increased by \$0.08 per day to reflect a total of \$1.33 per day.

Know that at OEC, we do everything in our power to keep costs at a minimum and plan accordingly for future projects, rising costs, and maintaining reliable service to our members. If you have any questions, feel free to contact our office.

NEW PAY-BY-PHONE NUMBER

1-855-938-3610



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responding to outages, we first need to see what happened, then figure out what materials we need and a plan for how to fix the problem(s) without compromising electric flow for the rest of our members.

- Restoration is normally prioritized by the largest number of members we can get back on in the shortest amount of time.** Our crews focus on responding first to public safety issues and critical services. Then we complete work that impacts the largest number of people first.
- Our employees face many dangers.** Besides working around high-voltage electricity, our crews are on alert for wild animals, weather elements, falling trees, and fast-moving cars. (If you ever drive past one of our vehicles, please do so slowly.)
- Flickering lights are a good thing.** Some folks mistake flickering lights for outages, but these “blinks” are important because they indicate our equipment worked and prevented a possible outage likely caused by wayward animals or stray tree limbs on the lines. Please let us know if your power keeps blinking. We will want to investigate the issue.
- You need a backup plan.** We do our best to help those who need it, but if you depend on electricity for life-support purposes, you must have a back-up plan—remember, we don’t always know how long restoration efforts will take.
- Our employees have to plan and eat.** If you ever see our trucks in a restaurant parking lot while your power is out, know that sometimes our employees gather in a safe, common area to map out their plan for getting your power back on. Also, our crews work long hard hours during outages and need to take time for meals just like everyone else.
- Sometimes it’s a waiting game.** Our portion of the power grid is connected to other electric utilities, and we maintain positive relationships with power providers interconnected to our system. If our outage is due to an issue from their feed into our system, we must let them do their repairs and be mindful of what they’re going through to fix it.

We do our best to avoid power disruptions, but they are inevitable from time to time. If the lights go out, know that the OEC team is working as quickly and safely as possible to restore power.

UPCOMING EVENTS

AUGUST

National Night Out
Tuesday, August 6
4–8 p.m.

Tomah Recreation Park
1625 Butts Ave.
Tomah, WI 54660

Necedah Lions Park
901 North Harvey St.
Necedah, WI 54646

SEPTEMBER

EV Ride & Drive
Wednesday,
September 18
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

OEC headquarters –
489 N Oakwood St. on
Hwy PP, just north of
I90/94 in Oakdale

*Complementary lunch
provided*

OCTOBER

**Member
Appreciation Day**
Saturday, October 12
7:30 – 11 a.m.

OEC headquarters –
489 N Oakwood St. on
Hwy PP, just north of
I90/94 in Oakdale

*Family fun, food, gifts,
prizes, and more!*

DON'T FALL FOR THE SPAM!



Oakdale Electric Cooperative has extensive security measures put in place to keep members' confidential information confidential. However, just as SPAM® can have some questionable ingredients, there are plenty of questionable emails, phone calls, and text messages sent every day.

Cyber criminals can exploit people in the ways of spam, phishing, and spoofing, but here's a simple breakdown of what to look out for and how to know it's coming directly from Oakdale Electric Cooperative.

If you're contacted with potential spam, NEVER give out personal or account information over the phone or computer. It is better to question and call us directly at 1-800-241-2468.

Common cyber scams:

Spam – an unsolicited email, instant message, or social media message.

Phishing – an internet criminal disguised as an email from a trustworthy source and will lure you into revealing confidential information.

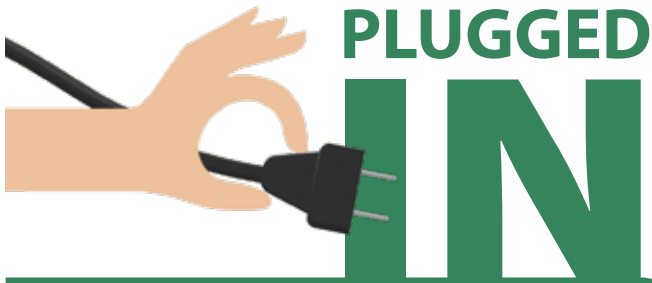
Spear Phishing – internet criminals obtain information about you from websites or social media sites and customize a scheme to you.

Spoofing – an internet criminal impersonates another individual or organization with intent to gain confidential information.

SPAM/SCAMMERS

OAKDALE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE (OEC)

	SPAM/SCAMMERS	OAKDALE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE (OEC)
Email	<p>Cyber criminals are heavily active through emails. Whether it is spam, phishing, spear phishing, or spoofing, know what to do in the event you receive or question one.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> X – Don't open unexpected files or downloads X – Don't give personal information over email or social media X – Don't fall for immediate time sensitive threats ✓ – Call our office to confirm legitimacy and delete suspicious email 	<p>Common emails that come from OEC:</p> <p>SmartHub alerts – oakdalerec@smarthub.coop info@oakdalerec.com</p> <p>OEC sends an e-newsletter every month around the 15th to members with emails on file.</p> <p>This will show in the inbox as: Oakdale Electric Cooperative Your July (month) Co-op News</p>
Phone Calls	<p>Scammers will call with a sense of urgency for you to act immediately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> X – Don't provide any information ✓ – Hang up and call our office with any questions 	<p>Common phone numbers that come from OEC:</p> <p>Alerts a member signed up for through SmartHub (i.e. bill statements, outage alerts) – 1-855-938-3610</p> <p>Main office – 608-372-4131 or 1-800-241-2468</p>
Text Message	<p>Scammers will text with a sense of urgency and ask you to take immediate action with a spam website link.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> X – Don't click the link or reply to the message ✓ – Delete the message and call our office with any questions 	<p>Alerts a member signed up for through SmartHub – 1-855-938-3610</p>
In-person	<p>There have been reports of people impersonating utility workers to scope out properties to potentially break into.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> X – Don't approach someone if they don't openly identify themselves to you ✓ – Call our office first to ensure that we don't have workers in the area. 	<p>OEC employees will always have a vehicle with Oakdale Electric Cooperative on the side door panel.</p> <p>Employees can show proof of employment with OEC.</p>



PLUGGED

IN

Preparing Your Home for Summer Vacations

Prior to leaving town on vacation this summer or other extended periods of time, take these extra precautions before leaving to ensure you don't have extra surprises upon returning and know that you can thoroughly enjoy "vacation mode."

- Secure doors and windows
- Provide a spare key for emergency access
- Have a trusted neighbor or family member keep a watchful eye
- Disable the water heater but leave a reminder for yourself to turn it back on
- Adjust thermostat up to 78, program your thermostat, or turn it off (only if no people or animals are staying home)
- Invest in a light timer for added security at night and use LED bulbs
- Keep window shades drawn to keep the house cool from the afternoon sun
- Install a security camera system for added security
- Unplug non-essential appliances and electronics
- Clear out perishable food items and take out the trash
- If leaving a pet at home, be sure to have someone check on them
- Turn off the water supply for extended vacations in the event of unexpected plumbing failures

Whether you're gone for the weekend, a week, or longer, it's good to take these precautions for the sake of your energy bill and home's physical security.



Jim Suzda
Energy Services
Technician

WINNING MEMBERS!

AutoPay Giveaway



New AutoPay member winner:
Katherine Hartmann



Existing AutoPay member winner:
Azizah T. accepts prize on Beau Krostag's behalf



Annual Meeting Tree Giveaway

Steven and Valerie Suehring received their maple tree



Third grade Safety Poster Contest Winner

Anna Miles, daughter of Katie Miles

Chris Tackmann, General Manager & CEO

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

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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.