



# PREPARING TO SERVE YOU BETTER

Chris Tackmann, General Manager & CEO

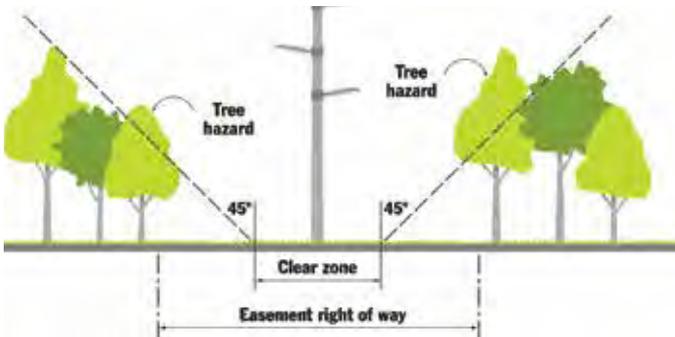
Providing reliable power to you will always be a top priority for Oakdale Electric Cooperative (OEC). These days, power reliability seems to be making news now more than ever.

As the energy industry continues to transition and more segments of the economy are becoming electrified, such as vehicles, machinery, and even lawn equipment, additional pressures are being placed on our nation's electric grid.

With summer storm season upon us, it's a good time to tell you about a few measures we're taking to ensure you continue receiving the reliable power you depend on and deserve.

Let me be the first to say I love trees and the charm they add to our communities, and I know you do too. While trees provide shade and add beauty to our landscape, you may be surprised to learn that overgrown vegetation accounts for about half of all power outages.

That's why we strive to keep the co-op's power lines clear in right-of-way (ROW) areas. A ROW area is the land a co-op uses to construct, maintain, replace, or repair underground and overhead power lines. This ROW enables OEC to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder distribution power lines. The overall goal of our vegetation management strategy is to provide reliable power to our members while maintaining the beauty of our area.



## Modernizing Vegetation Management

Healthy trees usually do not fall on power lines, and clear lines usually do not cause problems. Proactive trimming and pruning keep lines clear to improve power reliability. However, traditional vegetation management is costly and time consuming. It entails on-the-ground, labor-intensive efforts involving workers assessing vegetation and overseeing the quality and completion of contractor work. Although this approach has worked for decades, advances and improvements in planning and technology have allowed us to reduce costs and improve efficiency.

## Planned Outages Improve Reliability

Although it may seem counterintuitive, we also maintain power reliability through planned outages. By carefully cutting power to one part of our area for a short time, OEC can perform system repairs and upgrades, which ultimately improve electric service. Planned outages can also be used to balance energy demand, but only in extremely rare circumstances. Rest assured, we will do our best to notify you in advance of a planned outage, so make sure we have your correct contact information on file to receive the latest emails and/or texts.

Vegetation management is an essential tool in ensuring power reliability and minimizing the risk of outages. As advancements become more accessible and costs drop, we anticipate using additional technologies to ensure a consistent energy supply while managing the environment.

Lastly, I encourage you to follow OEC on social media so you can learn about the latest co-op updates, renewable energy projects, community involvement, and more.



Although right-of-way areas need to be cleared of trees and overgrown vegetation, OEC plants trees back into our environment. This year, OEC donated seven maple trees to local elementary schools to engage youth with an outside learning day. Pictured is Ms. Jillian Meister's kindergarten class at Oakdale Elementary School.

# ATTENDANCE GROWS AT OEC ANNUAL MEETING

The 88th Annual Meeting for Oakdale Electric Cooperative (OEC) was held on Saturday, April 29, at Tomah Recreation Park. Attendance increased from last year to 172 registered members with 227 total attendees.

General Manager & CEO Chris Tackmann spoke on the rate study being conducted and the rate challenges associated. "Since we are a distribution co-op, 65% of our operating costs goes to wholesale power from Dairyland Power Cooperative," stated Tackmann. "To work toward a lower carbon footprint and offset high demand costs, we are currently building two solar gardens."

Tackmann expanded on the new solar gardens located in Mauston and New Lisbon. Including the current solar garden in Necedah and the two under construction, the gardens will be able to power approximately 856 homes annually.

Guest speaker Jeremy Browning, Vice President of Generation at Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC), continued with Tackmann's statement, "Market volatility with natural gas, de-carbonization, and congestion are the primary causes for rates to inflate."

"However, if you can build strategically in your system something like solar to combat peak energy usage times, you're drawing less energy from DPC to combat those peak energy times," Browning added. He went on to say that DPC operates in the lower 25% of wholesale rates in the Midwest area, including investor-owned utilities that are prominent in urban areas.

Browning stated, "It is a challenge at DPC and by its board to operate in the most efficient and reliable way to stay in that lower 25% for our member distribution co-ops like Oakdale Electric and you, the members."

"To work toward a lower carbon footprint and offset high demand costs, we are currently building two solar gardens."

– General Manager & CEO  
Chris Tackmann



OEC Board of Directors – L-R: Richard Barrett, Robert Hess, Martin Potter, Jonathan Williams, Gregory Eirschele, Robin Craker, and James Van Wychen.

Tackmann added that \$1.2 million will be going back to the membership in the October timeframe this year. The floor was opened up for member comments and questions. Much of the discussion related to the transition to clean energy and peak energy usage times.

Cooperative members had equal voting rights and three options this year to vote by mail-in, electronic, or in-person to bring a total of 1,786 ballots cast in the contested director election. Incumbent Robin Craker ran unopposed for district 7 and was re-elected. In district 1, incumbent Robert Hess was re-elected against opposing candidate Patricia Stanislawski. One \$250 bill credit and five \$100 bill credits were drawn and the winners are as follows: Robert Troka, Lyndon Station (\$250); Joan Burkhalter, Tomah; Pat Johnson, Warrens; Robert Pedersen, Warrens; Richard Raith, Mauston; and Raymond Russell, Necedah.

New this year, five members were drawn to rent OEC's Electric Vehicle

(EV) for a weekend to provide members with access to the EV experience. Those winners are as follows: Raymond Drew, Warrens; Lawrence Hagemann, Mauston; Pat Johnson, Warrens; James Phillips, Tomah; and Kanda Vopelak, Necedah.

Two members were drawn to receive a maple tree that will be planted by co-op employees. Those winners are Nana Griffin and Pat Johnson, both from Warrens.

Special guests in attendance were OEC's attorney John Behling, guest speaker DPC's Vice President of Generation Jeremy Browning, Wisconsin State Representative Nancy Vandermeer, and Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association representative Dana Kelroy.

At the reorganizational meeting, all officer positions remained unchanged. They are as follows: board chairman, Richard Barrett; vice chairman, Gregory Eirschele; secretary, Jonathan Williams; treasurer, James Van Wychen; assistant secretary, Deana Protz; DPC director, Robert Hess; and alternate DPC director, Richard Barrett.

Refreshments and donuts were served prior to the meeting. Following the business meeting, members were given a \$10 Culver's gift card and ice cream token.

# CONGRATULATIONS

## 2023 Oakdale Electric Scholarship Recipients



**Braden Heath**  
Mauston High School  
Luke and Tammy Heath  
UW-Platteville Baraboo  
Sauk County  
Engineering



**Mason Franek**  
Mauston High School  
Jasan and Shannon Franek  
Western Technical College  
IT-Cybersecurity and Network  
Administration



**Heather Hersil**  
Mauston High School  
John and Ann Hersil  
Western Technical College  
Business Management



**Graham Hallwood**  
Mauston High School  
Ken and Dawn Hallwood  
Ripon College  
Pre-med, Chemistry & Biology



**Roslyn Malacina**  
Mauston High School  
Joseph and Dailene Malacina  
University of Evansville,  
Indiana  
Archaeology



**Kaley Tourdot**  
Mauston High School  
Brian and Sara Tourdot  
UW-Stevens Point  
Elementary Education



**Keagan Shankle**  
New Lisbon High School  
Rusty and Stephanie Shankle  
Western Technical College  
Criminal Justice



**Nikita Shankle**  
Lineworker Scholarship  
New Lisbon High School  
Rusty and Stephanie Shankle  
Blackhawk Technical College  
Electric Power Distribution Program



**Easton Dammann**  
Pittsville High School  
Hondo and Ellen Dammann  
Mid-State Technical College  
Welding



**Elizabeth Colwell**  
Reedsburg High School  
Brian and Becky Colwell  
UW-Platteville Baraboo Sauk County  
Animal Science and Wildlife  
Ecology



**Maureen Cook**  
Royall High School  
Alan and Chelsea Cook  
Viterbo University  
Nursing



**Makayla Martin**  
Royall High School  
Jason Martin and April Teal  
Western Technical College  
Business



**Hannah Van Treese**  
Tomah High School  
Robert and Tonya Van Treese  
UW-Whitewater  
Business



**Joe Venner**  
Tomah High School  
John and Annette Venner  
UW-Madison  
Engineering



**Reid Spolum**  
Tomah High School  
Kurt and Jobi Spolum  
UW-Whitewater  
Business & Finance

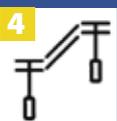
# POWER OUT? REPORT TO **1-800-927-6151**

## REPORTING & MONITORING

1. Call **1-800-927-6151** to report an outage.
2. Log into your SmartHub account and follow the prompts for outage reporting.
3. View the live outage map on our website at [ebill.oakdalerec.com/maps/OutageWebMap/](http://ebill.oakdalerec.com/maps/OutageWebMap/)
4. Follow Oakdale Electric Cooperative's Facebook account for the most up-to-date outage information.

## POWER OUTAGE TIPS

1. When storms are forecasted, keep your cell phone fully charged.
2. Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
3. Stay away from downed powerlines and warn others to stay away at least 50 feet!
4. Hire an electrician to ensure your generator is installed properly. An improper install puts lineworkers and the homeowners at great risk.
5. You may consider turning off appliances and unplugging major equipment until power is restored.



Know that Oakdale Electric Cooperative (OEC) employees are prepared and ready to respond to any of the following outage scenarios:

### Hazardous Conditions

Member service and dispatch monitor outage reports for potential hazards from live wires on the ground, wires crossing roadways, or in contact with buildings or vehicle.

### Transmission

During a transmission outage event, OEC's generation and transmission provider, Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC), may call OEC crews to assist in locating a transmission fault. Transmission lines act as the arteries of our grid, and without lines in place, power cannot be routed to our substations.

### Substations

Dispatch and automated grid technology monitor the 18 substations throughout the service area, working to re-route power when transmission or distribution lines are damaged.

### Distribution System

Dispatch team members coordinate with crews to isolate larger outage areas. Line crews patrol line corridors, removing trees and large limbs. Often, a tree or limb on distribution lines can lead to major faults across the system.

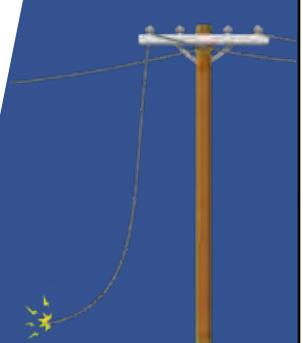
### Localized Outages/Single Residence

Line crews and dispatch re-energize areas physically damaged by trees or where equipment such as transformers became overloaded and need replacement.

See a line on the ground?

**STAY AWAY!**

Treat any line as though it is live and call 911.



**Chris Tackmann, General Manager & CEO**

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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 833-526-0293

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