



# PRIORITIZE SAFETY YEAR-ROUND

Chris Tackmann, General Manager & CEO

**A**t Oakdale Electric Cooperative, we recognize Electrical Safety Month every May; however, we also know the importance of practicing safety year-round. From our crews to you, we recognize that everyone has a part to play in prioritizing safety.

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International, thousands of people in the United States are critically injured or electrocuted as a result of electrical fires and accidents in their own homes. Many of these accidents are preventable. Electricity is a necessity, and it powers our daily lives. We also know how dangerous electricity can be because we work with it 365 days a year.

To me, safety is more than a catchphrase. As general manager & CEO, it's my responsibility to keep co-op employees safe. Additionally, we want to help keep you and all members of our community safe. That's why you'll see Oakdale Electric Cooperative hosting safety demonstrations at community events and in schools throughout the year, to demonstrate the dangers of electricity. We discuss emergency scenarios, such as what to do in a car accident involving a utility pole and downed power lines. We caution students on the dangers of transformers and overloading circuits with too many electronic devices. Visit our website for more information.

Electricity is an integral part of our lives. Given the prevalence of electrical devices, tools, and appliances, I'd like to pass along a few practical electrical safety tips.

**Frayed wires pose a serious safety hazard.** Power cords can become

damaged or frayed from age, heavy use, or excessive current flow through the wiring. If cords become frayed or cut, replace them, as they could cause a shock when handled.

**Avoid overloading circuits.** Circuits can only cope with a limited amount of electricity. Overload happens when you draw more electricity than a circuit can safely handle—by having too many devices running on one circuit.

**Label circuit breakers to understand the circuits in your home.** Contact a qualified electrician if your home is more than 40 years old and you need to install multiple large appliances that consume large amounts of electricity.

**Use extension cords properly.** Never plug an extension cord into another extension cord. If you “daisy chain” them together, it could lead to

overheating, creating a potential fire hazard. Don't exceed the wattage of the cord. Doing so also creates a risk of overloading the cord and creating a fire hazard. Extension cords should not be used as permanent solutions. If you need additional outlets, contact a licensed electrician to help.

I encourage you to talk with your kids about playing it safe and smart around electricity. Help them be aware of overhead power lines near where they play outdoors.

Our top priority is providing an uninterrupted energy supply 24/7, 365 days per year. But equally important is keeping our community safe around electricity.

Contact us for additional electrical safety tips or if you would like us to provide a safety demonstration at your school or upcoming community event.

**PLUG INTO SAFETY**



**ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH**

Make electrical safety a priority this month, and every month.

## BOARD APPROVES RECENT POLICY UPDATES

#6.01 Line Extension Policy Single Phase [revised]

“Consumers requesting staking services will be required to pay a “Service Planning Fee” before any staking services are performed. If the consumer decides to proceed with the project within 12 months of the collection of the “Service Planning Fee,” the fee will be credited onto the member’s account. This fee may be waived at the management’s discretion at any time.

Prior to the start of construction of any line extension, the Cooperative will decide what type of construction will be used (overhead or underground) and the consumer or consumers involved shall pay the Cooperative all amounts hereunder plus provide the Cooperative with all necessary executed easements and a signed membership application.

The consumer or consumers are also responsible for providing a CERTIFIED INSPECTION for any temporary service to facilitate a permanent service or a new service. For any agricultural or commercial service, including temporary services, the consumer or consumers are responsible for providing a CERTIFIED STATE INSPECTION per the State of Wisconsin, January 1st, 2020.”

For questions, contact OEC’s Engineering Department at [engineering@oakdalerec.com](mailto:engineering@oakdalerec.com).



## ARBITRATION COMMITTEE

Oakdale Electric Cooperative (OEC) is searching for members to serve on an Arbitration Committee for OEC. This committee works with the cooperative’s legal counsel to select an arbitrator should one need to be selected to resolve a legal issue with the cooperative. If you are interested in serving please contact the cooperative’s General Manager & CEO Chris Tackmann at 608-372-4131.



## WI HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (WHEAP)

Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) assists households that have low-to-moderate income and may have difficulty paying their bills. WHEAP can help eligible households reduce their heating and non-heating electric bills and may also provide additional help with past-due amounts they owe.

Members can conveniently apply for WHEAP online at <https://energybenefit.wi.gov/>, by phone via 1-800-506-5596, or by contacting their local WHEAP agency. If unsure how to contact their local agency, call 1-866-432-8947 or access the Where to Apply map via <http://homeenergyplus.wi.gov/>.





## CONTACT OUR OFFICE IF YOU HAVE A GENERATOR OR AN ELECTRIC VEHICLE

For the safety of our line crews and equipment, it is beneficial to the member and the co-op to be aware of this in order to avoid potential issues. Contact us if you have a generator or an electric vehicle at 608-372-4131 Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

## GENERATOR SAFETY

Generators offer a reliable back-up source for electricity during an extended power outage. However, they must be installed and used correctly to avoid serious health and safety risks—not only to your household, but also to the linemen working to restore power. The best way to ensure you and co-op line crews stay safe when you are using a generator is to educate yourself and plan ahead.

Generators come in a variety of sizes. They can range from 500 watts up to several megawatts of output, and run on gasoline, diesel, propane, or natural gas. The size of generator needed can be determined by totaling the wattage of the lights, appliances, devices, etc., and then adding about 20 percent for the increased start-up power requirements.

A whole-house generator—one that is tied directly into your wiring—must have a double-throw transfer switch installed at your breaker panel by a qualified electrician. Without the switch, a generator can backfeed 240 volts to the transformer, where it is then stepped up to 7,200 volts and sent down the lines, creating a life-threatening situation for the linemen trying to restore your power.

The double-throw switch makes it impossible to have both the generator and the power supplier service connected at the same time. It opens one in order to close the other.

Portable generators (usually with wheels) are smaller and can supply enough power for necessary applications but not the whole house. These generators also need a double-throw switch.



Another reason for having a qualified electrician hook up your generator is for the protection of everything you plan to have powered by it. Improperly connecting to the generator could damage all of your appliances, electronics, etc.

When weather threatens, generators can provide peace of mind, but they must be installed correctly. Please consider the following safety tips involving generators:

- Follow the instructions included with your generator.
- Make sure your generator is properly grounded.
- Never overload the generator.
- Never add fuel while it is running.
- Never use a generator indoors.
- Always keep a fully charged class ABC fire extinguisher nearby.
- Turn off all appliances powered by your generator before shutting it down.

**CHARGE™**  
POWERED BY CO-OPS  
www.CHARGE.coop

Contact us if you have an EV to ensure our equipment is sized correctly to avoid potential issues.

**608-372-4131**

Up to 80% of EV charging is done at home



# Plant the Right Tree in the Right Place

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

Trees 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.

## LARGE TREES

Height/spread of more than 40 feet, such as:

- Maple
- Birch
- Oak
- Sweetgum
- Spruce
- Linden
- Pine

## MEDIUM TREES

Height/spread of 25 to 40 feet, such as:

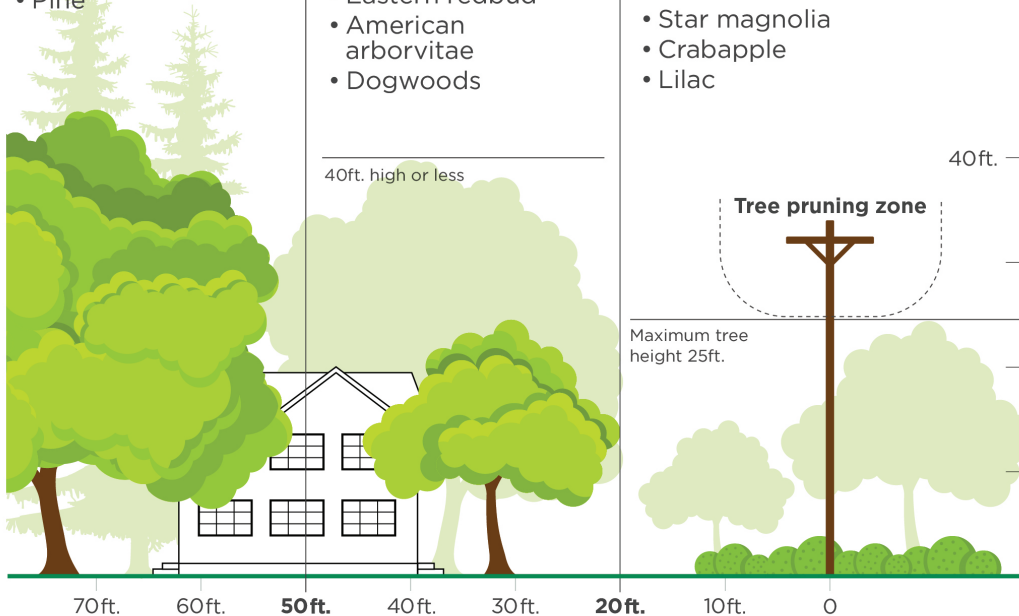
- Washington hawthorn
- Goldenraintree
- Eastern redbud
- American arborvitae
- Dogwoods

## SMALL TREES

Avoid planting within 20 feet of power lines. When planting within 20 feet is unavoidable, use only shrubs and small trees.

Height/spread of no more than 25 feet such as:

- Star magnolia
- Crabapple
- Lilac



**Be safe! Always call 811 before you dig to locate any buried utility lines.**

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

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Even in summer months, adding insulation to your attic can keep your home more comfortable and save energy used by your cooling system. If your attic insulation is level with or below your floor joists (meaning you can easily see your joists), you should add more. If you can't see any of the floor joists because the insulation is well above them, you likely have enough insulation.

Attic insulation should be evenly distributed with no low spots. Make sure the areas along the eaves are adequately covered.

Source: [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov)



## 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 866-392-4307

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