



STAY IN THE KNOW

Chris Tackmann, General Manager & CEO

At Oakdale Electric Cooperative (OEC), we are constantly striving to improve our operational efficiency so we can provide the most reliable electric service possible.

We rely on data for nearly every aspect of our operations, which is why we need your help. By making sure we have your most accurate and complete contact information, we can continue to provide the high level of service that you expect and deserve. Accurate information enables us to improve customer service and enhance communications for reporting and repairing outages. It also allows co-op members to receive information about other important programs, events and activities.

Up-to-date contact information can potentially speed up the power restoration process during an outage. For

example, the phone number you provide is linked to your service address to our outage management system. This means when you call to report an outage, our system recognizes your phone number and matches it with your account location. Accurate information helps our outage management system predict the location and possible cause of an outage, making it easier for our crews to correct the problem.

While we always do our best to maintain service, we occasionally plan outages to update, repair, or replace equipment. In these instances, we can provide advance notification to affected members through automated phone messages, text messages or email, if we have your updated contact information and communication preferences.

Keeping the co-op updated with your information also helps us when

there is a question about energy use or billing. Emails and text messages are also used to notify registered members of any changes in co-op event details. In addition, discrepancies on your account can be taken care of promptly if OEC has accurate account information.

Many of you have been members of the co-op for years, and it's likely that your account information has not been updated for some time. I want to emphasize that in providing your contact information to the co-op, we will never share this information with any third parties. It is only used by OEC to send important information to you. Please take a moment to confirm or update your contact information by following one of the options below. By doing so, you will be helping us improve service and efficiency so we can better serve you and all members of the co-op.

UPDATE YOUR ACCOUNT INFORMATION

To help us better serve you it is important to keep your account information up to date. This includes your contact phone number, mailing address, and email address. From outage reporting to capital credit disbursement, keeping your account information up to date is essential.

Account Number: _____

Member Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

Additional Phone: _____

Email Address: _____



Call

Dial 1-800-241-2468 Monday – Friday between 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. and speak to a co-op employee directly.



Scan

Scan the QR code to take you directly to the Update Account Information form on our website.



Click

Update information through SmartHub by following these steps: Log in to SmartHub > Settings > Contact Information



Clip

Complete the form on the left and include with your next payment.

GET OUT AND PLAY, WITH AUTO PAY

Auto Pay is free, secure and guarantees your payment will be made on time, every time. After the initial set up, you won't have to spend any time paying your bill each month and will have more time outside this summer.

Sign up by May 31, 2024, for a chance to win a prize basket!

What's inside?

- (1) 2024 Wisconsin State Parks Pass
- (1) \$25 Kwik Trip card
- (1) Stanley water bottle
- (1) Mesh insulated cooler



We're giving away two prize baskets: one to existing Auto Pay enrolled members prior to May 1, and one prize basket to NEW Auto Pay members who enroll within the month of May. Drawing will be held June 3, 2024, and winners will be contacted via phone.

**Members currently enrolled in Auto Pay are already entered and do not need to do anything.*

Enter drawing by signing up for Auto Pay within SmartHub:

Sign into SmartHub > Click **Bill & Pay** > **Auto Pay Program**

Don't have SmartHub? Sign up today by scanning the QR Code. SmartHub provides a convenient and FREE way to access your account via your computer, tablet, or mobile device.



For additional questions or assistance, call 1-800-241-2468 Monday – Friday between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Employees, directors, as well as immediate family of Oakdale Electric Cooperative, are not eligible.

Don't Become Electricity's

PATH TO GROUND



May is National Electrical Safety Month, and an important lesson to remember is what to do if your vehicle comes in contact with a downed power line or other electrical equipment. When electric utility equipment becomes damaged, **the ground and objects can become energized.**

If you are in a situation where there could be downed power lines or a damaged pole, guy wire, or padmount transformer (green box), **know what to do to save your life and the lives of others.**

CAR ACCIDENT

Stay inside your vehicle or cab since the ground or objects could be energized.



Call 9-1-1 and report that there are downed or damaged power lines or a dislodged green box.

Wait for the utility crew to arrive to deenergize the power.

Do not exit until someone from the utility says it is safe to do so.

ONLY EXIT IF THE VEHICLE IS ON FIRE

Cross your arms over your chest and make a clean jump out.

Do not touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time.

Make solid hops with your feet together as far away as you can.

Do not return to the vehicle.



IF YOU ARE A BYSTANDER

Do not approach the scene to try and help.

Stay at least 50 feet away and do not lean on or touch anything, including fences or guardrails.



Learn more at:  Safe Electricity.org®

DAVE STUTZMAN, ONE SELFLESS SQUIRREL

At Oakdale Electric Cooperative (OEC), squirrels sometimes wreak havoc on our power grid; however, the Tomah Squirrels branch of the North American Squirrel Association (n.a.s.a.) brings opportunities to surrounding communities. Tomah Squirrels volunteers help the physically challenged, veterans, and elderly with outdoor activities that range from hunting and fishing to building an all-abilities playground. While n.a.s.a. is based out of Holmen, the Tomah branch commenced because of one special and selfless lead squirrel.

Elected n.a.s.a. President and OEC member Dave Stutzman was honored at the annual Tomah Squirrels fundraising banquet in March when Communications Specialist Jackie McGlin presented Dave with the Selfless Service Award. Through working closely with Anita Leis, who nominated Dave, and current Tomah Squirrels Chairman Dan Boehm, the surprise came to fruition with heartfelt tears and a standing ovation to honor Dave's selfless dedication to n.a.s.a. and the Tomah Squirrels.

Since Dave and his wife, Laurie, moved to the area in 1984, Dave has been a recognized face and name in Tomah. He was a ninth-grade Earth Science teacher at Tomah High School for 17 years before retiring from teaching and getting elected to the Tomah School Board. From there he got elected vice president and then president of the school board before resigning in 2009 to apply for a position within the school again. Dave held the position of director of buildings and grounds for the Tomah Area School District for 11 years until retirement in 2020.

Prior to Dave's involvement with n.a.s.a., he volunteered for the Boys' & Girls' Brigade in Neenah. The Christian youth organization teaches servant leadership with hands-on learning while building character and instilling youth with wholesome values. Dave became involved at a young age as he went through the programs the Boys'

& Girls' Brigade offers. He reflected on this by stating, "The Brigade was extremely valuable to me, so I stayed and volunteered for 31 years. That's where my whole philosophy comes from with volunteering."

Following his move to Tomah, Dave eventually couldn't make the drive across the state to volunteer with the Boys' & Girls' Brigade and found himself attending the n.a.s.a. second annual fundraising banquet where he had his first exposure to the organization.



OEC Communications Specialist Jackie McGlin and Dave Stutzman embracing a hug after surprising him at the annual Tomah Squirrels banquet in March.

After going several years and getting more involved, a friend encouraged him to start a branch in Tomah, which began in 2016. He explained, "After not volunteering for the brigade anymore, n.a.s.a. came along and filled that void."

The Tomah branch, better known as the Tomah Squirrels, started off with a core group of 8–12 volunteers. Over time, through word of mouth, that number grew to over 170 volunteers, and continues to grow thanks to the dedicated volunteers who keep driving the mission forward. Although the goal is to help people get outdoors, it goes beyond the mission because many of the volunteers get more out of it than the people being served.

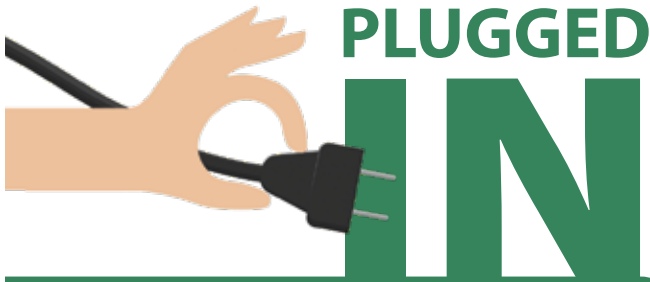
"I find that the volunteers, me

included, get a feeling of rejuvenation after helping others," said Stutzman. "You feel illuminated, and it affects your emotional well-being for weeks or months after," he added.

Tomah Squirrels volunteers assist the community in various fashions like equine-assisted therapies, building an all-abilities playground, taking disabled individuals hunting or fishing, providing holiday light tours and pontoon rides to nursing home residents, and more.

"I hope one day someone will do that for me if I'm in a nursing home so I can still enjoy the outdoors," Dave added.

From volunteering for 31 years with an organization that helped shape him, to leading Tomah Squirrels to where it is today, though he may be a little nutty, Dave is the face of servant leadership and volunteerism. He concluded with, "Everyone thanks us for helping them, but it's really all the volunteers and donors who make this mission possible."



Generators – what to know before purchasing one.

When it comes to installing a standby home generator in the event of a power interruption, proper installation and safety are most important. Choosing the right generator as well as having the proper equipment installed is something only a professional should handle. Hiring a licensed master electrician to install the proper equipment is essential in making sure that the safety of our line workers and public is achieved, as well as mitigating the risk of damaging your home.

A generator that is improperly installed can cause back feed, which is when the generator sends power back through the transformer onto the cooperative's lines. If the proper equipment isn't in place, a situation can be created, causing the line to be energized to its full potential of 7200 volts. In turn, a scenario is then created which can be very dangerous, if not even fatal, for an employee of Oakdale Electric working to restore your power, or a member of the public who comes into contact with a downed power line.

Ensuring everyone returns home safely every day is a safety protocol here at Oakdale Electric and with your help of properly installing a generator, you help us achieve this standard as well.

We ask that members with generators contact our office at 1-800-241-2468 so we can note this for safety purposes.



Matt Riggs
Staking Services Director

2024 YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



PARTICIPATE
in fun, hands-on, educational activities.



DISCOVER
your leadership skills, and the purpose/value of cooperatives.



EXPERIENCE
a traditional college environment.

July 16 – 18 | UW-Stout

For students entering their senior year in fall of 2024

Students parent(s)/legal guardian must be an active OEC member. All costs covered by OEC, including transportation to and from UW-Stout.

Scholarships available after attending YLC.

Deadline to sign up is May 28, 2024

Interested? Here's how to apply...
Contact your school counselor or Jackie McGlin at 608-372-8826 or email jmcglin@oakdalerec.com.

Scan For
More Info



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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.