



FACILITY CHARGE:

An equitable way to cover the cost of providing reliable electric service

Oakdale Electric Cooperative is minimally adjusting residential and small commercial facility charges for 2020 due to increased operating and maintenance costs, and in order to continue providing safe, reliable energy. A rate adjustment was planned to be implemented in May 2020; however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated economic impact, this plan was postponed.

When will this change go into effect?

The increase rate will take effect September 1, 2020, and will be reflected on the September bill mailed in early October 2020. Watch next month's issue of *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News* for more information. Adjusted facility charges will also be posted on our website, oakdalerec.com, in August.

What is the facility charge?

The facility charge is the monthly minimum needed to cover the costs of providing access to electricity, before any energy is used.

The cooperative incurs expenses such as poles, wire, fleet, labor, billing, interest, and overall depreciation in order to build and maintain our electric system and provide customer service. Oakdale Electric Cooperative serves approximately

6.45 electric meters per mile of line, which means there is a large amount of infrastructure required to bring power to each member. The facility charge helps cover these expenses and ensures that members have access to electricity when they need it.

I only use my service a few times out of the year. Do I still need to pay the facility charge?

The facility charge is required for all services, regardless of energy use. The fixed costs covered by the facility charge are incurred by the cooperative whether the service uses electricity or not.

Why is the rate increase necessary?

Oakdale Electric Cooperative's board of directors and staff work continuously to keep costs as low as possible, but as we analyze the costs to provide electric service along with our financial projections, the cooperative recognizes the need to adjust rates.

As a not-for-profit cooperative, electric rates are designed to cover the expenses associated with delivering reliable electric energy. Rates are adjusted only when absolutely necessary.

For information on your individual rate, or any additional questions, please feel free to contact our office at 608-372-4131.



BEE

the change

**When planting a
pollinator garden,
think like a BEE**



THE GARDENS ARE ABUZZ

Oakdale Electric Cooperative’s monarch waystations are abuzz with activity, and that includes the hardworking bumble bees. Last spring, two gardens were voluntarily built and planted on the south side of the co-op’s administration building to help conserve pollinators. The garden’s 96 native flowers are now established and thriving, and true to their deep roots, do not require much maintenance besides periodic weeding.

Stroll around the gardens in the morning, and you’ll see a multitude of bees moving pollen from one flower to the next. Bees are by far the most effective pollinators because they feed only on flowers. Flowers attract and reward bees for their pollination service. Bees gather two kinds of foods from flowers: sugar-rich nectar to fuel their flight and protein-rich pollen, or bee bread, to feed their young brood. Bees use their tongues to lap or lick up nectar from flowers. Bees are indeed busy little insects!

Enjoy the beauty of flowers in your backyard, or even in a container. A small garden can make a big difference. Just BEE sure to choose a variety of plants that will bloom, and provide necessary food, throughout the seasons. Learn more about creating pollinator-friendly gardens by thinking like a bee.

BEE SMART about sting safety



Guard your face and neck, the most common places for stings

Don’t attract bees—avoid wearing flowery perfumes or leaving sugary food

Scrape off a bee stinger with a dull object—don’t use tweezers

If a swarm attacks, retreat to a closed area rather than swatting bees off, “playing dead,” or diving into water

If you’ve previously experienced an allergic reaction to a bee sting, talk to your doctor about carrying an EpiPen

Source: CDC, Red Cross

Bee Native. Pollinators are “best” adapted to local, native plants, which often need less water than ornamentals.



Bee Sunny. Provide areas with sunny, bare soil that’s dry and well-drained, preferably with south-facing slopes.



Bee a little messy. Most of our native bee species (70%) nest underground so avoid using weed cloth or heavy mulch.

Bee Diverse. Plant a diversity of flowering species with abundant pollen and nectar and specific plants for feeding butterfly and moth caterpillars.

Bee Showy. Flowers should bloom in your garden throughout the growing season.



Bee Bountiful. Plant big patches of each plant species (better foraging efficiency).

Bee Patient. It takes time for native plants to grow and for pollinators to find your garden, especially if you live far from wild lands.

Bee Gentle. Most bees will avoid stinging and use that behavior only in self-defense. Male bees do not sting.

Bee Chemical Free. Pesticides and herbicides kill pollinators.



Bee Friendly. Create pollinator-friendly gardens at home, at schools, and in public parks. Help others learn more about pollinators and native plants.

Bee Aware. Observe pollinators when you walk outside. Notice which flowers attract bumble bees or solitary bees, and which attract butterflies.



Maintain a peaceful state of mind by enrolling in BUDGET BILLING.

Budget billing takes the guesswork out of paying your electric bills by providing you with the same monthly bill amount for one year. The monthly budget amount, recalculated annually, is based on the average monthly energy usage for your account during the previous 12 months.

Available to members in good credit standing only. Contact Sherry Anderson at 608-372-4131 or sanderson@oakdalerec.com to learn more.

Enjoy more sunsets by setting up AUTO PAY.

AutoPay will automatically deduct from your bank account or credit card on the due date shown on your bill.

To enroll in Auto Pay, log in to your SmartHub account by visiting oakdalerec.com. Click on the Billing & Payments tab and choose Auto Pay Program. Visit oakdalerec.com or call 608-372-4131 with any questions.

Oakdale Electric Cooperative is now using a true calendar month to bill members. Meter readings will be collected at the end of the month. Bills are sent out on or near the 5th of each month.

Oakdale Electric Policy Updates

- #20 Nepotism – updated
- #40 Meter Sockets, Poletops, Meterloops, Disc – updated
- #67 Retiring Employee Recognition – rescinded
- #68 Smoke Free Workplace – rescinded
- #69 Violence in Work Place – rescinded
- #71 Employee Recognition Program (Years of Service) – rescinded
- #73 Military Leave – rescinded
- #74 Commercial Driver's License – rescinded
- Electronic Board Communications – updated
- Privacy Principles for Member Information – updated

Member Appreciation Day

CANCELED

Our 2020 Member Appreciation Day has been canceled due to the ongoing threat of COVID-19.

We look forward to the time when we can safely gather to celebrate October Co-op Month together once again.

Stay safe, everyone!


Chris Tackmann, General Manager

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Deana Protz, 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.