



# DON'T FALL VICTIM TO UTILITY SCAMS



**Chris Tackmann**  
General Manager/CEO

Every day, millions of Americans are targeted by scammers through phone calls, emails, text messages, online, or in person. Scammers' tactics can change daily, which is why it's important for consumers to stay on top of the latest scam reports from local and national news outlets, as well as your local utility companies.

Just last month, several Oakdale Electric Cooperative (OEC) members were targeted through a phone scam where the scammers demanded immediate payment and threatened to shut off power if the money was not received. Remember, OEC will never call you and demand immediate payment without notice.

We want you to be aware of two trending scam tactics. One is the overpayment trick, where a scammer contacts you and claims that you have overpaid your utility bill. The scammer will say they need your personal banking information to deposit the credit back to your checking account. If you make an overpayment on your energy bill, OEC will automatically apply the credit to your account, which will carry over to your next billing cycle.

Another trending scam is smishing (short for SMS phishing). Many consumers know to watch out for suspicious emails, but we tend to trust text messages sent to our phones. Always question suspicious texts, especially from someone claiming to represent a utility. OEC will

only send you important updates via text if you've signed up through SmartHub.

Here are a few reminders on how to take control of the situation when you've been targeted by a scammer:

- **Take your time.** Utility scammers try to create a sense of urgency so that you'll act fast and hand over personal information, especially over the phone. Take a moment to think about the situation before acting.
- **Be suspicious.** Scammers typically request immediate payments through prepaid debit cards or third-party apps. Unusual requests like this should raise red flags. Remember, if the request seems strange and out of the ordinary, you're likely being targeted by a scammer.
- **Confirm before you act.** If you're contacted by someone claiming to represent OEC or another utility but you're unsure, just hang up the phone and call the utility directly. You can reach us at 800-241-2468 to verify the situation.

Our increasingly connected world provides scammers with more opportunities to connect with unsuspecting consumers. Be vigilant, and please report any utility scams to OEC so we can let others in our community know. Together, we can help prevent our friends and neighbors from being victimized.

## Oakdale Electric Policy Updates

- #1.09 - Cooperative Administered Dispute Resolution (New)
- #1.02 - Directors Conflict of Interest (Updated)

# ARRIS SULLIVAN NAMED SELFLESS SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENT

**A**rris Sullivan, Camp Douglas, was selected as Oakdale Electric Cooperative's Selfless Service Award recipient. The compassion Arris has for her community has not gone unnoticed. She received multiple nominations for this award, which is given to an individual who engages in community volunteerism, performing valuable services that benefit and improve quality of life within the communities served by the cooperative.

"I've never met a more selfless person, who is constantly giving to her community," stated nominator, Audrey Traver.

Arris' love for flowers extends beyond her own yard, and into the downtown planters for the communities of Hustler and New Lisbon. She adds beauty and color for all community members to enjoy throughout the different seasons.

Arris serves as a trained hospice volunteer for Tomah Health. Additionally, she volunteers to deliver

**Aris believes in the importance of not only attending local community events, but actively participating.**

meals and groceries, as well as great conversation, to those in need. She lends her skills to the public library, voting polls, and even transports animals from local shelters to veterinarian appointments. Arris is actively involved with her church, and currently serves as sexton for the township of Fountain.

It's a priority of Arris' to support local businesses, but also to share their information with those she meets. Case in point, when General Manager/CEO Chris Tackmann and PR/Communications Specialist Deana Protz met with Arris to present her with the award, she treated them with fresh coffeecake from Jossabeen Sweets Bakery. She then shared that The Body Shop serves up fantastic burgers, and Silver Star Health is the place to go to order natural and organic foods prepared fresh daily. All three businesses are located just down the road in the city of New Lisbon.

Arris believes in the importance of not only attending local community events, but actively participating. You'll spot Arris proudly behind the wheel of her classic white corvette, escorting the New Lisbon citizen of the year, an award she received in 2019, in the annual Wa Du Shuda Days parade. It doesn't get any more hands-on than that!

As a thank you to Arris for her selfless service, Oakdale Electric Cooperative gifted her with a plaque and a \$250 donation. We couldn't agree more with Audrey when she stated, "Arris is so very deserving of this award!"



**Do you know an individual  
who puts service to  
others before service to  
themselves?**

**If so, nominate them for a  
Selfless Service Award!**

Oakdale Electric Cooperative members and non-members residing within the communities served may nominate for and/or receive this award.

Submit a completed Nomination Form by the upcoming deadline: December 15.

Each winner receives a \$250 gift card and plaque!

Visit [www.oakdalerec.com](http://www.oakdalerec.com) to complete the nomination form or contact Deana Protz at 608-372-8831 or [dprotz@oakdalerec.com](mailto:dprotz@oakdalerec.com) for more information.



Sara Moseley, Warrens  
Selfless Service Award  
March 2021





## CO-OP SEEKS MEMBER FEEDBACK IN SATISFACTION SURVEY

Oakdale Electric Cooperative will be conducting a member satisfaction survey to explore your views on co-op programs and services. Random co-op members will be selected to complete an anonymous survey questionnaire by telephone or e-mail.

The survey will take place during the week of **September 13, 2021** and will take approximately 11 minutes to complete.

Your input is valuable and will help the co-op provide the best possible service and plan for the future. We hope that you take the time to answer the questions in an effort to provide Oakdale Electric Cooperative employees and directors a better understanding of how well we are meeting your expectations.




### PLEASE NOTE

Our pay by phone number has changed to **1-833-526-0923.**

#### Chris Tackmann, General Manager/CEO


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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.