

# OUR HISTORY, OUR FUTURE

## Looking back provides the path forward



“Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” Yet sometimes remembering our history with the goal of repeating it can actually be a good thing. As the nation’s 30,000 cooperatives celebrate National Co-op Month this October, it is a great time to take a look back—and a look forward.

Take the history of your electric co-op. Oconto Electric Cooperative was founded when neighbors worked together to bring electricity to our rural community. Big investor-owned power companies thought they couldn’t generate enough profit so they bypassed rural areas. Back then, there were frequent meetings among neighbors to discuss the formation of the cooperative. Once established, annual meetings were the “must attend” event of the year. The co-op—on behalf of the



The first OEC board of directors elected on February 1, 1937. Back row L to R: John E. Magnin, Ormer G. Virtues, William C. Wilke, John H. Bartz, Rev. E. A. Wians. Front row L to R: Rev. Otto W. Schreiber, Oscar Gilbertson, Charles Koslowsky, William L. Pracknow.

member-owners—committed to provide the community with electricity.

Fast forward to today—and tomorrow. OEC currently serves 9,600 members. We have returned \$15,000,000 in

capital credits to our members since 1962.

We understand the spirit that helped create this co-op must be continually nurtured. While times and technology will continue to change, our commitment to you will not.

Although we started out to provide electricity, our impact (with your support) has grown.

As we continue to look toward the future, you can be confident that OEC will commit to explore new ways to help our members and our community. (36500)

Over the years, as we’ve listened to you and your fellow co-op member-owners, we know that we have to keep pace as technology and consumer tastes evolve. As always, we welcome your participation as we plan for the future.



**To celebrate  
National Co-op Month,  
there are a few things going on  
at the office October 23–31**

A gift will be available for every member who comes into the office.

Cookies and refreshments will be served in the lobby.

### CO-OP MONTH WORD SEARCH

Did you know October is National Co-op Month? Co-ops are different types of businesses because they are not-for-profit and are owned by the members they serve — including you! Use the word bank to find the words associated with co-ops in the puzzle below.

F P W U V P C G C V E T S O Q  
 Q M R A E S O F S V S I R S O  
 N N D I G R Y Y I D E F E M D  
 Y P O D N C F T Y D R O B F E  
 C T R I I C A U U Y U R M H M  
 F B I R T R I C N I M P E J O  
 S X L N E A A P M I K R M E C  
 W X A P U T P Q L T Q O X Y R  
 G G O T I M P I A E B F L K A  
 Y O G O F J M N C M S T V T C  
 C B N V A T N O Q I M O Z E Y  
 H T N O M P O O C Z T N S P W  
 C O O P E R A T I O N R J F K  
 N G G K N L J J V D P X A A U  
 O O P R D I W D D L P X G P E

**Word Bank**

PRINCIPLES  
COOP MONTH  
PARTICIPATION  
MEMBERS  
DEMOCRACY

COOPERATION  
NOT-FOR-PROFIT  
COOPERATIVE  
EDUCATION  
COMMUNITY



# MAKING PAYMENTS SHOULDN'T BE A HASSLE

WAYS TO PAY YOUR OEC BILL	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	COST OF PAYMENT
<b>SMARTHUB</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay your bill</li> <li>• Store payment information</li> <li>• View usage/payment history</li> <li>• Report an outage</li> <li>• Contact our office</li> <li>• Select paperless option</li> <li>• Available 24/7</li> </ul>	<b>FREE</b>
<b>Automatic Bill Payment System</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payments can be deducted from your checking or savings account</li> <li>• Payments can be deducted from a debit or credit card (Visa, Mastercard, Discover)</li> <li>• Automatically withdrawn from your account the third of every month. (If the third falls on a weekend it will be withdrawn on the following Monday. This is not considered past due)</li> <li>• Statement will still be mailed or you can choose paperless option</li> </ul>	<b>FREE</b>
<b>Secured Payment by Phone</b> Through bank account or credit card	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call 1-855-356-6335</li> <li>• Use your OEC Account Number</li> <li>• Available 24/7</li> </ul>	<b>FREE</b>
<b>By Mail</b> To PO Box 168, Oconto Falls, WI 54154	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With check or money order</li> </ul>	<b>Postage</b>
<b>Night Deposit</b> 7479 REA Road, Oconto Falls, WI 54154	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Located at the main entrance of OEC office building</li> <li>• Very secure and payments in the night deposit are processed the next business day</li> <li>• Cash, check, money order</li> </ul>	<b>FREE</b>
<b>In Person</b> At our office, Mon.-Fri. 7:30 AM - 4 PM 7479 REA Road, Oconto Falls, WI 54154 RadioShack, Mon-Fri: 9 AM – 7 PM, Sat: 9 AM – 2 PM 323 E. Highland Dr., Oconto Falls, WI 54154	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through cashier</li> <li>• Cash, check, money order, credit/debit card accepted</li> </ul>	<b>FREE</b>

## The Center of Customer Engagement

SmartHub provides convenient account access and two-way communication to OEC online or via your mobile device. Manage payments, notify customer service for account and service issues, check your usage and receive special messaging from OEC all at the touch of a button.

- Bill reminders
- Safe and secure
- Contact customer service
- Bill payment
- Service usage details
- Free

### Account Management at your Fingertips

Check Usage

Pay Bill

Report Service Issues

Secure

Customer Service

### Safe & Secure

SmartHub provides a safe and secure environment for bill payments and transaction between OEC and your financial institution.

### How do I get SmartHub?

From your device or computer, go to [www.ocontoelectric.com](http://www.ocontoelectric.com).  
Click on the SmartHub icon.

### iOS Users

Available on the iPhone

Scan this QR code to access SmartHub in the Apple iTunes App Store.

### Android Users

Download for Android

Scan this QR code to access SmartHub in the Android market.



## THE ROAD TO SELF DISCOVERY

### Youth Tour reflections

For many teens, the Rural Electric Youth Tour is full of “firsts.” It may be the first time they left the state, flew on a plane, visited the nation’s capital, or have been away from their family for an extended period of time. They are seeing and experiencing the larger world through their own eyes, rather than through their parents’ perspective. That’s the most important first, as it’s truly a “leap” to their next phase and where their journey to adulthood begins.

In preparation for Youth Tour, teens learn about cooperatives, our history, and grassroots advocacy through provided material. Youth Tour sprang from a suggestion of then Senator Lyndon Johnson to a national gathering of co-ops. Johnson felt youth from rural areas would benefit by visiting Washington, D.C., to see firsthand how government works and gain a wider perspective through the experience. From this idea, Youth Tour evolved. High school students selected by their electric co-ops participate in a weeklong trip to the nation’s capital.

### Clean slate

The week is interspersed with visits to many D.C. monuments and sites, including Capitol Hill. Activities with Youth Tour delegations from across the country enable teens to meet a broad spectrum of co-op kids. Our program creates a safe space for teens to discover the adults they are striving to be. Teens leave behind their hometown identity and venture forward with a fresh slate. Students are encouraged to stretch themselves by talking to those they wouldn’t ordinarily interact with.

A highlight of Youth Tour includes a meeting with our congressional delegation. Teens learn firsthand that their elected officials work for their hometown community. Students often have the opportunity to discuss issues with legislators, and our chaperones are always impressed with the interactions and questions asked by our students. Youth



**WIN a WEEK-LONG TRIP to WASHINGTON DC!**

**YOUTH TOUR**

The ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

**Youth Tour**

**2018**

- \* Join hundreds of young people from across the country.
- \* Visit historic monuments and museums.
- \* Boost your community service and engagement.
- \* Meet with your U.S. Representatives and Senators.
- \* Meet and mingle with students from many states on Rural Electric Youth Day.

Tour culminates in a farewell evening featuring national co-op partner organizations from the financial and insurance sectors and NRECA International, an organization bringing electricity to rural areas in developing countries.

Nearly all teens who have participated in our Youth Tour program look back with fond memories of an educational, interesting, and eventful week. Many make lifelong friends. For a few, Youth Tour is a transformational experience. Parents remark how their child returned noticeably different—more mature, more confident with bigger goals and aspirations; they have a sense of purpose.

### Take the leap

Our teens are our future, and it’s looking brighter every day. We hope you will consider (952003) urging your teen to “take the leap” and join our next

Youth Tour delegation.

OEC is pleased to choose one delegate to represent our local co-op at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. The trip is hosted by NRECA and all expenses are paid by Oconto Electric, according to our cooperative principles to support youth and community.

Any current high school sophomore or junior whose parent or guardian is a residential member of Oconto Electric Cooperative is eligible. (Residential is defined as having the primary residence within OEC’s service territory.)

Applications can be found at [www.ocontoelectric.com](http://www.ocontoelectric.com) or picked up at the OEC office in Oconto Falls. Applications must be submitted on or before January 5, 2018. Applications received after January 5, 2018, will not be considered.



## Heating and Cooling Tips for Manufactured Homes

If you own a manufactured home, take measures to ensure you have an efficient heating and cooling system. You can also make simple improvements that save energy and make your home more comfortable.

### \$ Install ceiling fans

Install ceiling fans throughout your manufactured home. Ceiling fans are energy efficient and can be used to keep warm or cool air moving throughout your home. Be sure to turn them off when you're away. Remember, ceiling fans cool people, not rooms.



### \$ Option for smaller budgets

### \$\$ Option for flexible budgets

### \$\$ Efficient roof color

Choose a light-colored roof if you live in the southern part of the U.S. and a dark-colored roof if you live in the northern U.S.



### \$\$ Install a mini-split system

Eliminate unnecessary heating and cooling by installing a single zone strategy throughout your manufactured home. A zone system allows you to save energy by only heating or cooling rooms that are occupied.

ZONE 2

ZONE 1

### \$ Install awnings

Install awnings over windows to keep sunlight from overheating your home during the summer.



### \$\$ Add insulation

If you have a home that was manufactured before 1976, you could add insulation to your home's underbelly to reduce any heat loss.



Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy

# SAFETY FOR SENIORS AT HOME

**MainStreet Messenger allows seniors to be safe while being independent and living at home.**

- You're never really alone with this personal emergency response program
- Help is only moments away with push of a button
  - Installation within days
- Fall detection button available
- System available for those without a land-line phone

**PEACE OF MIND FOR ONLY A DOLLAR A DAY!**



**(920) 846-2816**

Serving parts of

Oconto, Marinette & Shawano Counties

[www.ocontoelectric.com](http://www.ocontoelectric.com)

## HIDDEN ACCOUNT NUMBERS

Oconto Electric Cooperative hides two account numbers in the local pages of the *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News* each month. If you spot your account number, call our office before you receive the next issue, and OEC will give you a \$15 credit on your electric bill or a \$25 credit if you have a load management receiver. The September account numbers belonged to Charles Detiege Jr., Little Suamico, and Leroy Konkle, Menasha.

**Byron C. Nolde, CEO**

7479 REA Road, P.O. Box 168, Oconto Falls, WI 54154

800-472-8410 • 920-846-2816

[www.ocontoelectric.com](http://www.ocontoelectric.com)

**Katie Jagiello, Editor**

