

# OEC Employees Raise \$10,000 for three local schools

During January, Oconto Electric Cooperative (OEC) employees donated a total of \$10,000 to three local schools to use in their Tech Ed Departments. OEC employees have chosen a charity to support each year since 2004.

In 2014 all the local schools were given the opportunity to apply for funding for their Tech Ed Departments. The application asked them to list the classes that their Tech Ed Department offered, indicate how many students participate in at least one Tech Ed class, and give a detailed explanation of how they would spend the money to improve their department.

OEC employees worked all year to raise the money. The events that raised the largest amount of money include the annual employee golf outing, and a raffle and bake sale that are held at the OEC Member Appreciation Picnic in August.

CoBank, a co-op lender, donated \$5,000 to match the employee efforts. In support of our charity efforts OEC would like to thank Witt's Piggly Wiggly in Oconto Falls for continued support for discounting the items

needed for the Bag Lunch. (500902)

Lena High School was awarded \$5,000. The school will be using its funding to aid in purchasing a CNC Laser Engraver. Students will be able to make nameplates and plaques, do community service projects, and prototype projects on this machine.

Coleman High School was awarded \$2,500. This school will be using its money toward purchasing an Arc Voltage Height Control for the CNC Plasma Table for the metal working class. This will automate the height control, which will save students time and frustration when cutting out their projects, while reducing the waste of materials.

Gillett High School was awarded \$2,500. This school's money has gone toward software for its computer machining class. The software will allow students to make digital prototypes versus drawing and manually constructing the project. This allows students to learn, practice, and gain beneficial skills that may someday benefit their future pursuits in CNC operations or programming. ■



Lena tech ed teacher Michael O'Brien accepts the \$5,000 check from OEC CEO Byron Nolde. Also present in the photo is Lena District Administrator & Elementary Principal David Honish, Middle School/High School Principal Ben Pytleski, and OEC employees Brenda Friction, Kriss Krause, and Steve Stackhouse.



*Coleman tech ed teacher Derek Tate works with eighth-grade students on the CNC Plasma Table.*



*Derek Tate accepts a check from OEC employee Karen Freidman. Also present is OEC employee Amy Winkler and Coleman High School Principal Doug Polomis.*



*OEC's RadioShack manager Robin Banaszynski presents a check to Gillett tech ed teacher Adam Erickson. Also present is Tech Ed teacher Preston Zimmerman (first person on the left) and tech ed students.*



*Lena students work on their electric car for the Electrathon Competition this spring.*



*Gillett students show off their products that were designed on a computer, then uploaded to a CNC machine for production.*



# Teaching Kids about Electrical Safety

One of parents' highest priorities is to protect their children. One way to do this is by teaching them about safety around electricity in their own home.

Safe Electricity, a program of the Energy Education Council, recommends that parents start teaching kids at an early age about electrical safety. Important lessons include:

**Water and electricity do not mix.**

Children should never play with or use electronics around water. Make sure ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) are installed anywhere electricity and water could meet to help prevent shocks. GFCIs detect and prevent dangerous situations where an electric shock could occur.

**The only objects that go into outlets are electric plugs.** Sticking other items in an electric socket can lead to an electric shock or death. In fact, the National Fire Protection Association estimates that a yearly average of 2,400 children suffer severe shock from electrical outlets and that six to 12 of these shocks are fatal. As a parent, you can help prevent this by having tamper resistant outlets (TROs) installed. A TRO has a shutter system that



only accepts electric plugs. Another option is to use simple outlet plugs; however, these can be easily removed.

**Similarly, never stick fingers or objects into toasters or any other electrical appliance.**

**Electric cords should be left alone.** A curious child may put a cord into his or her mouth and could potentially suffer an electric burn. Additionally, kids should be taught to never pull a plug out of the socket by the cord. This could damage the cord. It is a good idea to leave cords out of sight so children are not tempted to play with them.

**Electronics and their accessories have to be handled with care.** Encourage younger children to ask for help when they want to use an electronic device.

**Know how to call for help in an emergency.** It's a good idea to include utility emergency numbers with other posted emergency phone numbers and instruct children how to call for help in an emergency.

For more information on keeping your children safe around electricity, visit [safeelectricity.org](http://safeelectricity.org). ■

## A Lineman's Gear

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

Hard Hat  
 Insulated Gloves  
 Equipment Belt  
 Gaffs  
 Hot Stick  
 Safety Strap

Ditty Bag  
 Pully Block  
 Hand Line  
 Tool Pouch  
 Boots  
 (1105200)



For our members who follow us on Facebook, you may have noticed that we have started TBT (throw back Thursday) photos. This photo is from the 1950s, and it shows OEC general manager and employees picking up appliances at the Oconto Falls train station. OEC sold appliances from 1951–1999. Notice how the trucks say “eat butter” and “drink milk”. This was the co-op’s way of supporting our local dairy industry. If you would like to see more photos, Like us on Facebook.

# Safety Matters

**W**hen it comes to electricity, you can never be too safe! OEC would like to remind you of the importance of outdoor electrical safety and about potential electrical hazards that can be easily avoided. When electricity is not taken seriously it can cause electrical shock, electrocution, burns, and is sometimes deadly.

Overhead power lines should never be touched with a part of your body or any objects. If you see a downed power line, remove yourself from the area. Don't touch the line or anything that is in contact with it. Immediately call OEC and give us an accurate location of the downed line.

Obey warning signs such as "Danger: High Voltage" because all electrical equipment can be dangerous. Never climb utility poles, guy wires (these are the wires that keep a pole standing), towers, or substations. Never climb trees that are near a power line. You may think you are safe, but your movement can move a branch that could come in contact with the power line.

Keep away from transformer cabinets. They are dark green in color and usually mounted on a concrete slab. This kind of transformer is used for underground power lines. If you see that a cabinet door is open or a lock has been tampered with or left unlocked, please contact OEC. Never attempt to open or close the door or lock. Don't allow children to play on or around them as well. Before digging, call Diggers Hotline at 811 and request that they come to your property to locate underground lines. This is a free service.

Cutting or pruning trees near power lines is not recommended. Serious injuries can occur. Hire a certified tree-trimming contractor to do the trimming for you.

Stay clear of objects tangled in a power line. Never try to remove the object (kite, tree limb, etc.) from the power line. Contact OEC and we will make sure that it is safely removed.

OEC cares about the safety of our members. We are always happy to answer any questions you may have. ■



*Transformer cabinets are harmless when left alone. Children should not play on or around them. No one except trained OEC personnel should open the cabinets.*

## Important Dates to Remember

**April 3**  
OEC Offices Closed for Good Friday

**April 11**  
OEC's 78th Annual Meeting

**August 1**  
Member Appreciation Picnic

### 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 February account numbers belonged to Delima Maedke, Coleman, and Craig Adelbush, Shawano.

**OCONTO ELECTRIC**  
  
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