

OEC Unveils Redesigned Website



Preview on a tablet.

Preview on mobile device.

We have redesigned our website with a cleaner and more inviting design. The website is better organized and easier to navigate. It now includes a search bar. All the content from the previous website and new content have been added to better serve our members.

With more people engaging in their mobile devices and tablets we focused on the site being able to work on those devices, making our website convenient for our members. The content you see on your computer is the same on

the mobile site, but now in a more readable format.

Our home page features links to current information, including press releases and our monthly *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News* stories.

Our site still offers you the option to pay online, view your usage, report an outage, and contact our office through SmartHub.

If you haven't been to our website recently, (813800) check us out at www.ocontoelectric.com. ■

Training is Designed to Keep Employees Safe

Practice makes perfect! For our linemen there can be no slip-ups or negligence. When working with electricity, mistakes can be anything from a flash burn to electrocution, and possible death.

OEC holds 10 safety trainings each year through Dairyland Power Cooperative. A representative from Dairyland comes to OEC and meets with all the employees. During the first session a topic is covered that applies to all employees. Topics can be anything from proper back care and lifting, fire extinguisher training, blood borne pathogens, to dehydration and hypothermia. All employees are recertified every two years in first aid/CPR.

After the all employee session, training is focused on the linemen. They are reminded on how to work safely, smart, and efficiently. Their training can consist of arc flash assessment, what OSHA expects for clothing, insect bites, poison ivy care, pole top safety, pole top rescue, and bucket rescue. They will review any close calls or near misses that have happened throughout other co-ops, bringing awareness to our linemen that their work can be dangerous. Every month truck/equipment inspections are performed. First-aid kits are inspected twice a year.

OEC belongs to the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program (RESAP). It is a service of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and strives to promote the highest standards of safety among electric cooperatives. RESAP not only engages in working safely but it also keeps them up to date on new safety policies. Being a RESAP member also saves the co-op on insurance premiums, saving thousands of dollars per year. OEC is one of nine Wisconsin co-ops participating in the RESAP program. ■



OEC line crews practice pole top rescue as part of their June safety training. Above is apprentice lineman Tyler Schroeder. Below is lineman Scott Bancroft.



OEC lineman Ben Wilcox practices rescuing himself from the truck bucket.



CHANGE YOUR HABITS

No-Cost

- Turn off lights when you leave a room
- Use sunlight for light or heat whenever practical
- Match pot size to burner size and cover with a lid
- Set hot water heater no higher than 120° F
- Laundry clothes in cold or warm water
- Use Energy Star qualified computer sleep feature
- Turn off electronics and unplug chargers when not in use
- Use window blinds or shades to keep out cold or heat
- Fully load dishwashers, clothes washers, and dryers
- Adjust your thermostat when leaving home for an extended time

Low-Cost

- Replace burned out bulbs with Compact Fluorescent Lamp bulbs
- Replace furnace and air conditioning filters monthly
- Caulk between window/door frames and walls
- Weather strip between doors and frames
- Add storm windows or use plastic film kits to improve single-pane windows.
- Purchase an insulating blanket for the hot water heater
- Install motion sensors, dimmers, and timers for indoor and outdoor lighting
- Plant trees to shelter your home from the elements
- Install ceiling fans to reduce air conditioning costs
- Fix leaky faucets

New Purchases

- Upgrade to a high-efficiency furnace/air conditioner or heat pump
- Install a programmable thermostat
- Install double-pane windows with low e-coatings to reflect thermal radiation
- Completely convert to compact and other fluorescent light bulbs
- Purchase an energy-efficient refrigerator
- Purchase a dishwasher that saves water and energy
- Purchase a clothes washer that saves water and energy
- Purchase a clothes dryer with moisture sensor
- Select efficient home office equipment and electronics
- Insulate attic, exterior walls, basement, and crawl spaces

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COLLEGE CAMPUS AND DORM ELECTRICAL SAFETY

According to the National Fire Protection Association, firefighters respond to an average of 3,810 fires at college residence halls and Greek housing each year. Help prevent electrical fires with these tips from ESFI:

- Do not overload extension cords, power strips or outlets.
- Do not connect multiple extension cords together.
- Extension cords should never be used on a permanent basis.
- Do not place cords under doors or carpets, and do not pinch them with furniture.
- Use light bulbs with correct wattage for lamps.
- Never remove the ground pin (the third prong) to make a three-prong plug fit a two-prong outlet.
- Check that all electrical items, including extension cords, are certified by a nationally recognized independent testing laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL), Intertek (ETL), or Canadian Standards Association (CSA).
- Irons, hairdryers, curling irons and straighteners should never be left unattended, and should be unplugged when not in use.

Beware of the following warning signs that could indicate an electrical hazard:

- Power outages—circuit breakers that frequently trip or fuses that often need replacement
- Dim and/or flickering lights
- Arcs and sparks—flashes of light or showers of sparks anywhere in your electrical system
- Sizzles and buzzes—unusual sounds from your electrical system
- Overheating—overheated wires can give off an odor of hot insulation; switch plates or receptacle covers that are hot to the touch or discolored from heat buildup
- Electrical shocks—any shock, even a mild tingle, may be warning of an electrical danger

If you observe any of these signs, notify your resident director.



For more electrical safety tips, visit www.esfi.org.



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 July account numbers belonged to Ann Dudzik, Krakow, and Elmer Whiting, Oconto.

OEC Insight



John Havemier Recently Recognized for 25 Years of Service

John Havemier was just a teenager when he started working at OEC in 1989 as a groundsman. In August of 1993, John enrolled in the five-year lineman apprenticeship program, and has been a journey level lineman since 1998.

When John isn't at work he enjoys hunting, fishing, and camping with his wife and two daughters. ■



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