

Fun and Food

FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY



MEMBER APPRECIATION PICNIC

SATURDAY, AUGUST 4 @ 10 AM - 2 PM

Registration cards for door prizes will be inserted in the July electric bills

Brats, hot dogs, beans, chips, pickles, cheese curds, ice cream, cookies, soda, milk, and coffee

Door Prizes

Kid Activities

Safety Demo



Capital credit checks will be distributed for money accrued in 1998

2018 EMPLOYEE CHARITY BUCKET RAFFLE

Tickets are \$1 each or
6 for \$5
15 for \$10
40 for \$20

All proceeds will be donated to
Bridge the Gap, Inc.
and
Down Syndrome Association of Wisconsin



MY CO-OP



NEW POWER SUPPLIER IS PAVING THE WAY TO A CLEANER ENERGY FUTURE

After many years of purchasing wholesale power from Wisconsin Public Service Corp., Oconto Electric will be supplied by Minnesota Power beginning January 1, 2019.

Minnesota Power, which is headquartered in Duluth, is transforming the way it energizes communities and businesses

through a resource strategy called *Energy Forward*. It was founded as a hydroelectric utility in 1906 and grew to serve its unique customer mix with predominantly coal energy and is re-balancing its generation mix by bringing in more renewable power to customers while reducing its dependence on fossil fuel.

EnergyForward will bring Minnesota Power to an energy mix of one-third coal and two-thirds renewables and renewable-enabling natural gas.

Minnesota Power is doing its part to provide safe, reliable, and clean energy while helping to transform the way energy is produced, delivered, and used. *EnergyForward* is paving the way to a cleaner energy future. (652100)

“It was important to the board and myself to find a wholesale power provider that was planning for the future and the way we produce our electrical power. Minnesota Power exceeded our expectations of baseload renewable energy. They bring a solid baseload renewable generation with their Manitoba hydro contract out of Canada, along with their own hydro generation. I’m pleased this power will be available long into the future and will help keep our rates stable. A final note, Minnesota Power exceeds our state’s current renewable standard and continues to grow by leaps and bounds,” says Byron C. Nolde, CEO of Oconto Electric.



Minnesota Power’s Bison wind energy facility located near Center, North Dakota.

Five things to know about *EnergyForward*

Strengthens the reliability and resiliency of the energy grid.

Since 2009 *EnergyForward* has invested more than \$400 million to replace aging infrastructure, improve security, prepare for outages due to extreme weather, support the integration of more renewable resources, comply with federal standards, and add more lines to meet customer needs.

Adds renewable sources of energy.

Currently Minnesota Power generates about 25 percent of its electricity from renewable sources. By 2026 Minnesota Power hopes to be producing one-third of its power from wind, water, wood, and the sun.

WIND: The Bison Wind Energy Center in wind-rich North Dakota generates 500 megawatts of power, and Taconite Ridge Wind Energy Center, the first commercial wind energy center in northeastern Minnesota, generates 25 megawatts. Minnesota Power plans to add another 250 more megawatts of wind power by 2020.

HYDRO: Minnesota Power is the largest hydroelectricity producer in Minnesota. Beginning in 2020, it plans to move more than 350 megawatts of hydropower a year from Manitoba Hydro to its customers in Minnesota.

SOLAR: A 10-megawatt solar installation at Camp Ripley

is helping Minnesota Power meet the state mandate requiring utilities to produce 1.5 percent of their electricity from the sun by 2020. There are plans for another 10-megawatt solar facility to be operating in 2019. A community solar garden made up of a 1-megawatt array and a 40-kilowatt array is now online, too.

Reduces emissions and increases efficiency.

New emissions-control technology was installed and reduced overall emission at its power plants by 70 percent.

Cuts carbon dioxide emissions.

The company has removed 335 megawatts of coal-fired generation from its system, with two more coal units to be retired this year. One unit at Taconite Harbor Energy Center was retired in 2015 and the remaining two units were economically idled in 2016. Laskin Energy Center was converted from coal to natural gas in 2015. Natural gas has about half the emissions of coal.

Keeps electricity reliable and rates reasonable.

By using a balanced mix of renewable fuels, baseload coal, and natural gas to generate electricity it ensures that customers will have the power they need when they need it at a reasonable cost.

LOOKING FOR WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY AND MONEY?



Find out how **FOCUS ON ENERGY** can help you use energy smarter and make your home more energy efficient.

PUT YOUR HOME TO THE TEST

Get a home energy assessment that will pinpoint exactly how to make your home more energy efficient. Save up to 30% of your energy costs when you make recommended improvements with our **Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® Program**. Save instantly on recommended improvements such as insulation & air sealing. focusenergy.com/wholehome



GO WITH THE FLOW

Even small changes can result in large savings. Focus on Energy offers FREE packs of energy and water-saving products such as showerheads and faucet aerators, which use less water without compromising quality, with the **Simple Energy Efficiency Program**. focusenergy.com/simple



FEEL THE DIFFERENCE

The **Home Performance Program** offers financial incentives on a variety of energy- and money-saving improvements, such as a new furnace, boiler, smart thermostat or water heater. Larger incentives may be available for income-qualified customers. focusenergy.com/heatingandcooling



PICK-UP PAY DAY

Recycling an old refrigerator or freezer will save you about \$150 per year in energy costs, you'll also be keeping harmful materials out of landfills. The **Appliance Recycling Program** offers FREE pick-up and cash back for each working refrigerator or freezer you recycle. focusenergy.com/fridge



WHAT'S THE ALTERNATIVE

Once you've made your home as energy efficient as possible, you may be ready to use alternative energy sources to power your home. Focus provides technical support and financial incentives through the **Home Performance Program** for installing solar electric or geothermal renewable energy systems. focusenergy.com/renewable



HOME SWEET HOME

Newly constructed homes aren't always built to be energy efficient. The **New Homes Program** puts you in touch with local builders and consultants who provide 3rd-party certification that your dream home is comfortable, durable, and meets high energy efficiency standards. focusenergy.com/new-home



SHOPPING MADE EFFICIENT

Visit our online appliance marketplace to compare benefits, features and pricing of appliances at participating retailers. focusenergy.com/appliancemarketplace



A smart thermostat is a wi-fi enabled device that "learns" your habits to help you manage home heating and cooling costs. Purchase a smart thermostat from a local retailer or a Trade Ally contractor. focusenergy.com/smart



BRIGHTEN YOUR DAY

Lighting accounts for 20 percent of the average home's electric bill. ENERGY STAR qualified light emitting diodes (LEDs) use up to 90% less energy and can last 25 times longer than incandescent bulbs. Save instantly at participating retailers on ENERGY STAR qualified LEDs through the **Lighting and Appliance Program**. focusenergy.com/lighting

FOR MORE INFORMATION, RESOURCES AND APPLICATIONS VISIT FOCUSONENERGY.COM/RESIDENTIAL OR CALL 800.762.7077

Saving Energy and Money For Wisconsin

Focus on Energy, Wisconsin utilities' statewide program for energy efficiency and renewable energy, helps eligible residents and businesses save energy and money while protecting the environment. Focus on Energy information, resources and financial incentives help to implement energy efficiency and renewable energy projects that otherwise would not be completed. ©2017 Wisconsin Focus on Energy

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focus on energysm

Partnering with Wisconsin utilities



CAPITAL CREDITS TO BE PAID

Capital credits are earned by every member based on how much power was consumed during the year. The money comes from margins that OEC generates from that year. Although the money is allocated to the members, the co-op's board of directors makes the decision when the money is to actually be paid out. Typically, OEC pays out capital credits for the oldest year, which is 20 years ago.

This year OEC will be paying out capital credits from 1998. If you have capital credits of less than \$25 you will receive a credit on your electric bill. If it is \$25 or more, you will receive a check in August. If you would like to pick up your check at the Member Appreciation Picnic on Saturday, August 4, you can do that. Any checks that are not picked up at the picnic will be mailed the following week.

SMARTHUB

An easy way to manage your energy bill

SmartHub means you have options when it comes to managing your energy bill at Oconto Electric Cooperative. Have you ever wondered when your highest electric usage takes place? Have you wondered why your energy bill is what it is? SmartHub helps you determine those answers. If you have not signed up, you're missing out on a lot of smart benefits including:

- Pay your energy bill online
- Set up your energy bill for automatic payments
- View your billing history
- View and manage your electric usage
- Identify ways to lower your energy bill
- And, even report an outage



Sign up for SmartHub online. It's OEC's FREE and mobile/online payment system that allows you to monitor your daily energy usage. (85100) Questions? Call, 920-846-2816, or visit us at www.ocontoelectric.com. Click on the manage your account link and follow the prompts to create your user name and password.

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 June account numbers belonged to Charles Monn, Gillett, and James Kuchenbecker, Pound.

Meet OEC's Energy Services Representative



Oconto Electric Cooperative has named Nicole Zaidel as its new energy services representative. She will be assisting members with understand-

ing their usage, identifying programs they might qualify for, and finding ways to reduce their energy costs.

Before joining OEC, Nicole worked for Focus on Energy just shy of six years. She primarily worked with agricultural, schools, and government entities, informing them of financial incentives and providing technical assistance with energy efficiency projects.

Nicole graduated in 2012 with a bachelor's degree in environmental engineering from Michigan Technological University in Houghton, Michigan.

Nicole lives in Lena with her husband and little boy. She loves spending time with her family, enjoys the outdoors, and likes to do crafts. She looks forward to getting to know the OEC members and continuing to share her talents within her own community.

HAPPY 4TH OF JULY

OEC's office and OEC's RadioShack store located on Highland Drive in Oconto Falls will be closed on Wednesday, July 4.

Byron C. Nolde, CEO

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Katie Jagiello, Editor

