



SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Available through Oconto Electric Cooperative

Would you like to learn how to apply for a scholarship to apply towards a post-secondary education? Oconto Electric Cooperative has two scholarship opportunities available. Scholarships are funded directly through the Federated Youth Foundation by unclaimed capital credits. A volunteer, member-appointed scholarship committee will review and select scholarship recipients.

#1: Youth Scholarship

Oconto Electric Cooperative is offering twelve, \$2,500 scholarships to graduating seniors who plan to continue their education beyond high school in an accredited college or technical school.

#2: Lineworker Scholarship

Oconto Electric Cooperative is also offering one \$2,500 scholarship to a graduating senior who is attending Northeast Wisconsin Technical College in the Electrical Power Distribution program. (102501)

Eligibility

Any graduating high school senior 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.) Scholarship awards will be paid out upon entry into the second full-time semester of post high school education.

Application

Scholarship applications are available from local high school guidance counselors, online at www.ocontoelectric.com, or call OEC at 800-472-8410 to have an application mailed.

Deadline

Completed scholarship applications should be at OEC's office no later than Friday, February 12, 2021.

Recipients will be asked to attend the cooperative's Annual Meeting on March 20, 2021, to receive recognition from the membership.

Questions?

Information can be found at www.ocontoelectric.com. If you have questions, you can also call OEC at 800-472-8410 or email bfripton@ocontoelectric.com.



STAYING SAFE AFTER AN ACCIDENT:

Know what to do around utility equipment

With winter right around the corner, now is the time to revisit accident safety with the drivers in your home. Do you all know what you should do if your vehicle comes in contact with a pad-mount transformer (or “green box”) or other utility equipment or lines?

First, assess the situation. If your car is not smoking or on fire, stay in your vehicle. That is the safest place for you to be while you wait for help, and the utility to de-energize the power lines. Stepping out of your vehicle while touching it at the same time, or trying to walk or run to safety, can cause serious burn injuries or death.

If you are in a multiple-car accident, yell to others (from the safety of your car) to warn them not to leave their vehicle. Also warn those who might stop to help to not approach the scene.

Call 911 to report the accident location and clearly state to the dispatcher that electrical equipment or lines are involved.

If you see smoke or fire, try to stay calm. Make a clear jump, without holding on to the vehicle, and hop or shuffle (with your feet together) at least 30 feet from the vehicle. Just like any downed power lines, any damaged utility equipment such as pad-mounted transformers or cabinets that house electrical equipment can send electrical current through the pavement or ground.

Walking across the energized ground or touching an energized vehicle and the ground at the same time, a phenomenon known as step potential can occur. Step potential is the voltage difference between the two feet of a person near an energized, grounded object. A person on the ground is subjected to the risk of injury during an electrical fault by simply attempting to move away from the grounding point, in this case the car in the accident.

DO NOT go near or touch electrical equipment.

DO NOT move a downed wire or broken piece of equipment with your hand or other object.

Keep in mind that there can still be damage to equipment, even if you don’t see anything. Even if metal boxes look intact or appear to have minimal damage, please report the incident to your electrical provider. If the impact dislodges the equipment inside the “green box” it is possible the ground could become energized. This makes for a very dangerous situation.

This winter, if you are plowing and accidentally clip a transformer or any other electrical equipment, please make sure to report it to your utility. This helps keep everyone safe.

If you are in an accident involving electrical equipment, stay calm, call 911, stay in your vehicle, and warn others to stay away. If your car is on fire, jump clear of the vehicle with both feet together and hop or shuffle at least 30 feet away.

Let’s make it a safe winter season here in Wisconsin!

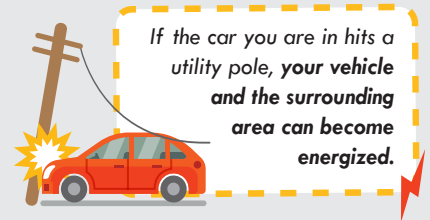


License to Live To learn more about what to do you if you should ever find yourself in an accident involving power equipment, watch the short video “License to Live,” a project sponsored by Wisconsin’s electric cooperatives and developed by electric co-op employees and WECA in conjunction with the Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange and Safe Electricity. You can view the video at <https://safeelectricity.org/license-to-live/>.

KNOW WHAT TO DO



if in an Auto Accident with Power Lines



Even if you do not touch lines or equipment, you can still be killed or seriously injured.



1. Do NOT leave the car, and warn others to stay away.

2. Call 911 to have the utility notified.



3. Wait until a utility professional has told you it is safe.



The **only** reason to exit the vehicle is **if it’s on fire.**

If the car is on fire, jump clear of the vehicle: **with feet together, and without touching the car and the ground at the same time.**



Continue to **hop away** with your feet together as far as you can.



Learn more at

Safe Electricity.org

TIME TO DITCH YOUR OLD SPACE HEATER?

If you can't remember when you purchased your space heater, it might be time to replace it. Just like the flip phones of yesteryear have progressed into today's modern cell phone, portable space heaters have come a long way too. Most of today's models have built-in safety features, such as non-exposed coils and sensors that detect overheating or touch, as well as an automatic shut-off feature in case it gets tipped over.

Regardless of whether your space heater is fresh out of the box or several years old, it should be used safely, since most home heating fire deaths (86%) involve using one, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). In fact, heating equipment is the second-leading cause of U.S. home fires, right behind cooking.

Along with using a unit that is in good working order, be sure to keep clothing, papers, rugs, and other flammable items at least 3 feet away from a space heater. More than half of the heating-related home fires start when items are too close to the heat source, according to the NFPA, including upholstered furniture, clothing, a mattress or bedding.

Safe Electricity and Oconto Electric Cooperative (890101) recommend these additional space heater safety tips:

1. Read all instructions and only use as recommended.
2. Do not leave a space heater unattended.
3. Plug it directly into an outlet; most power strips and extension cords are not equipped to handle the energy spikes caused by a space heater cycling on and off.
4. Unplug any other item from the outlet you are using; also try to use a dedicated circuit to avoid overload.
5. Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
6. Turn them off before you leave the room or go to sleep.
7. Do not use a heater in disrepair or with a frayed cord or damaged plug.
8. Place them on flat, level surfaces and never place on furniture, counters, or carpet, which can overheat.

Use a space heater with care. For additional safety tips, visit SafeElectricity.org.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Replace standard power strips with advanced power strips to save energy. Advanced power strips look like ordinary power strips, but they have built-in features that are designed to reduce the amount of energy used by standby electronics that consume energy even when they're not in use (also known as phantom load).

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) estimates that the average home loses \$200 annually to energy wasted by phantom load.

Source:
www.nrel.gov



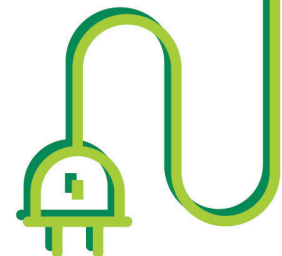
Resolutions You Can Afford to Keep!

It costs nothing to...

- Set the water heater temperature to 120 degrees.
- Run only full loads in the washer or dishwasher.
- Turn off lights when you leave the room.
- Unplug electronics and chargers not in use.
- Adjust your thermostat when going to bed or leaving the home.

Spend a few dollars to save a lot more...

- Get a water heater blanket.
- Use a programmable thermostat.
- Seal air leaks around windows, doors, plumbing, etc.
- Replace regular bulbs with LED light bulbs.
- Use a smart power trip for electronics.





BUSINESS SHOWCASE

NORTHWOODS POWER EQUIPMENT, L.L.C.

Northwoods Power Equipment was established in 2002 by owner Daniel Larson and is conveniently located on Hwy 141 in Stiles. Northwoods Power Equipment specializes in sales of Ariens, BearCat, Billygoat, Briggs & Stratton, DR Products, Gravely, Honda, Kawasaki, Kohler, Stihl, and Subaru. They service all makes and models.

Northwoods Power Equipment has many products to offer such as battery and gas-powered hedgers, chainsaws, chippers, choppers, edgers, lawn mowers, log splitters, portable generators, power rakes, pressure washers, snow blowers, string trimmers, oils, lubes, and so much more.

“Winter is the best time to bring in your lawnmowers, trimmers and cultivators for repairs and tuneups,” says Daniel. “Most people wait until spring and that is our busiest time of year which then puts us a few weeks out for servicing.”

Due to COVID-19 there has been a delay in getting parts and new equipment, so don't wait.

Daniel has been working on engines since he was a little boy. He went to school for auto body repair, worked various jobs, and decided that opening Northwoods Power Equipment was the right fit for him. Daniel has attended service schools for the brands he carries and continues to stay on top of the new trainings that are out there.

If you'd like to learn more, stop in person at 5290 Hwy 141, Lena, WI 54139, or visit their website at www.northwoods powerequipment.com,



Northwoods Power Equipment owner Daniel Larson (right) talks to a customer about the extensive selection of chainsaws on display.

or call at 920-834-5904. Hours are Monday – Friday 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m.–12 p.m., Sunday closed.

If you have suggestions for businesses that are on OEC's power lines, call Katie at 920-846-2816.

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 December account numbers belonged to Leslie Vorpahl, Oconto Falls, and Myrtle Haag, Lena.

Byron C. Nolde, CEO

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Katie Jagiello, Editor

