



“Preparation  
is the key to  
success.”

Alexander Graham Bell

OCONTO ELECTRIC  
**OEC**  
COOPERATIVE

## SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

### Available through Oconto Electric Cooperative

**W**ould you like to learn how to apply for a scholarship 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.

#### 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](http://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 Monday, February 14, 2022.

Recipients will be asked to attend the cooperative's Annual Meeting on April 9, 2022 to receive recognition from the membership.

#### Questions?

Information can be found at [www.ocontoelectric.com](http://www.ocontoelectric.com). If you have questions, you can also call OEC at 800-472-8410 or email [bfripton@ocontoelectric.com](mailto:bfripton@ocontoelectric.com).

## ARE PORTABLE SPACE HEATERS EFFICIENT FOR MY HOME?

Small space heaters are meant to do exactly as their name says: heat a small space. But unfortunately, many people use portable space heaters to heat their entire home, which can really take a toll on your energy bills. The truth is, whether you should use space heaters really depends on your home's efficiency and energy needs.

If you're using a space heater to compensate for problems in your home, like inadequate insulation, drafty windows and exterior doors, or an inefficient heating system, space heaters are not a practical solution. Your best bet is to improve the overall efficiency of your home. If you're on a tight budget, caulking and weather stripping around windows and exterior doors is a low-cost, easy way to save energy. Depending on the size of your home, adding insulation can be a great next step. Loose fill insulation typically costs \$1 to \$1.50 per square foot.

Taking these proactive energy-saving measures rather than relying on space heaters for supplemental warmth can reduce your heating and cooling bills for years to come.

Perhaps your home is energy efficient but you're cold-natured and want a specific room to be cozier than the rest. In this case, a space heater may work for your needs. Only use a space heater in small spaces that you're occupying and,

if possible, try to shut off other rooms to contain the warmth provided by the space heater. If you decide to use a space heater to heat a small area in your home, make sure the heater is properly sized for the space; most heaters include (1232303) a general sizing table.

A word about safety: the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates more than 25,000 residential fires are associated with the use of space heaters every year, resulting in more than 300 deaths. If you must use a space heater, purchase a newer model that includes the most current safety features and make sure it carries the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) label. Choose a thermostatically controlled heater to avoid energy waste and overheating, and place the heater on a level surface away from foot traffic when in use. Always keep children and pets away from space heaters.

Consider alternative ways to stay warm like extra layers of clothing or UL-approved electric blankets. If you have hardwood or tile floors, lay down area rugs to provide additional insulation (and appeal) and maintain warmth.

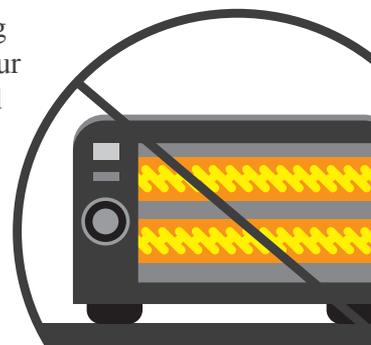
We know it's cold out there, but remember in addition to safety concerns, space heaters can greatly increase your energy bills if used improperly.



## TIPS TO DITCH THE SPACE HEATER

Space heaters are energy hogs, and older models can be extremely dangerous. This winter, ditch the space heater and try these alternative solutions to stay cozy.

- Use an electric blanket to keep warm during the night.
- Caulk and weatherstrip around all windows and doors to prevent heat loss.
- Consider adding insulation to your attic and around duct work.





## ICE ON POWER LINES IS A WEIGHTY SUBJECT



When it comes to getting electricity across power lines and into homes, ice can be a force to be reckoned with.



### ICE ON DISTRIBUTION LINES

Ice can quickly lead to broken power poles and other pole equipment. Ice can also make falling tree branches 30x heavier and more likely to break power lines.

### ON A 300-FOOT SPAN OF 1-INCH-THICK POWER LINES

- 1/2 inch of ice adds 2891 pounds of weight
- 1 inch of ice adds 749 pounds of weight
- 2 inches of ice adds 2,248 pounds of weight

### WHEN ICE MELTS

Melting ice can casue power outages. If ice on the bottom (neutral) line melts before the lines above, it can cause the lines to touch.

### OTHER FACTS

- Damage can begin when ice exceeds 1/4 of an inch
- 1/2 inch of ice can cause a line to sag up to 12 inches
- Pressure can also be caused by a broken tree limb
- Both ice and melting ice can cause power outages



Source: Jerri Imgarten-Whitley and Victory Electric Cooperative

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Maximize your heating system's performance by inspecting, cleaning or replacing air filters once a month or as needed to reduce energy costs and prevent potential damage to your system.

Make sure radiators, baseboard heaters and warm-air registers aren't blocked so air can flow freely.

Source: Dept. of Energy





Resolve to Save More and Spend Less by **monitoring your energy usage** through SmartHub.

**Usage Explorer**

Usage Explorer gives you a detailed look at your past and current usage, all in one place. View your usage and weather trends by month, day, or hour.

**Bill Comparison/Usage Comparison**

Usage Comparison lets you compare two bills worth of usage history side by side. View the differences between this month, last year, or other combinations to see how your bill varies each month.

**Average Usage**

Average Usage shows you what your typical or average usage is for your selected time period. For example, see your aver-

age usage on each day of the week (such as Tuesdays), over the course of a year. Or see your typical usage in each hour of the day over the course of two weeks. Discover when you can save the most on your utility bill.

Resolve to save more and spend less this New Year and sign up for SmartHub online. It's OEC's FREE and mobile online payment system. Visit [ocontoelectric.com](http://ocontoelectric.com) to sign up. Follow the prompts to create your user name and password. Questions? Call 920-846-8216.



**HIDDEN ACCOUNT NUMBERS**

Oconto Electric Cooperative hides two account numbers in the local pages of the *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News* each month. (88401) 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 Scott Scharenbrach, Little Suamico, and Chris Young, Pulaski.

**Byron C. Nolde, CEO**

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**Katie Jagiello, Editor**

