



DISTRICT MEETINGS CONDUCTED

2023 ANNUAL MEETING WILL HOST AN ELECTION

Oconto Electric Cooperative has seven director districts, with one director on the board representing each district. Directors' terms are for three years, so each year either two or three directors' terms expire. At the district meetings, members are able to nominate candidates for election for the board terms that are expiring.

Tuesday, January 3, District 6 meeting was held at the Lena High School. Incumbent director Dan Kanack was the only person nominated to fill the position of director. Kanack's nomination will be approved at the April 1 annual meeting by a voice vote.

Wednesday, January 4, District 4 meeting was held at

St. John's Lutheran Church in Little Suamico. Incumbent director Doug Allen was nominated, along with new nominee Jan Stranz. Both nominees will be placed on the ballot for general election at the annual meeting. (905100)

Each member shall be entitled to one (1) vote. Two or more persons holding a marital property interest, a joint interest, or a tenancy in common membership shall jointly be entitled to one (1) vote.

Please look inside the March issue of *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News* for the Annual Meeting reports and a write-up on each of the candidates up for election. Members will receive their official notice in the mail mid-March.

Do you want help cleaning up your paper clutter ?

Simply sign up for paperless billing through SmartHub.



While you're there, check out the other great benefits SmartHub has to offer:

- Pay your bill online
- Check your usage
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Sign up for SmartHub online. It's Oconto Electric's FREE and mobile online payment system. Click on the signup link and follow the prompts to create your user name and password.

Questions? Call 800-472-8410 or visit us at www.ocontoelectric.com.

CALLING ALL PHOTOGRAPHERS

We're looking for pictures of rural Wisconsin for our 2024 calendar!

Oconto Electric Cooperative is holding a Member Photo Contest. Winning photos will appear in OEC's 2024 calendar. Photos may also be used in future newsletters or cooperative publications.

Photo Contest Criteria:

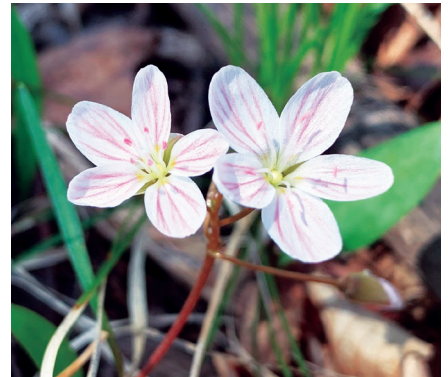
- Photos must be taken within the Oconto Electric Cooperative service area.
- Photos should capture scenic life in rural Wisconsin (seasons, wildlife, landscape, etc.).
- Photos must be horizontal (landscape).
- Photos can be in color or black and white.
- Photos **MUST BE DIGITAL** and at least 300 dpi.

*Entry forms can be downloaded from
www.ocontoelectric.com.*

Email all photos to kjagiello@oconotoelectric.com

Photo Contest Rules and Details:

- Contest will run through September 10, 2023; however, submitted photos can be taken outside of this date range.
- Three (3) photos per member will be accepted.
- All OEC members 18 years old and over are eligible to submit photos.
- An OEC member under the age of 18 years old is eligible to participate, but must submit a parent/guardian form with entry.
- A completed entry form must accompany each photo.
- Member must own rights to photo.
- OEC employees will choose winning photos.





5 Ways to Save During Winter

Winter weather typically means increased energy use at home. Keep your bills in check with these tips to save energy—and money!

Mind the thermostat. If you have a traditional heating and cooling system, set the thermostat to 68 degrees or lower. Consider a smart or programmable thermostat for additional savings.

Get cozy. Add layers of clothing for additional warmth, and snuggle up under your favorite heavyweight blanket.

Don't block the heat. If your air vents or heating elements (like radiators) are blocked by furniture or rugs, your home isn't being adequately heated.

Take advantage of sunlight. Open window coverings during the day to let natural sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night to block the chilly night air.

Block air leaks. Seal windows and exterior doors with caulk and weather stripping to improve indoor comfort and decrease the amount of energy used to heat your home.



SAFETY FOR SENIORS AT HOME

MainStreet Messenger is an emergency response service that helps make independent living a reality while giving peace of mind to the families whose loved ones prefer to stay in the comfortable surroundings of their own home.

- Help is only moments away with push of a button
- Fall detection button available
- Cellular option for those without a landline
- Installation within days

(920) 846-2816
www.ocontolectric.com

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Do you have a home office? Set equipment like printers and scanners to automatically switch to sleep or energy-saver mode when not in use. In addition to saving energy, the equipment will stay cooler, which will help extend its life.

Another way to save in the home office is to use energy efficient lamps for task lighting. Small lamps use less energy than whole-room lighting. (59901)



Play it Safe When Using Portable Generators

If you're planning to use a portable generator in the event of an outage, Oconto Electric Cooperative (OEC) reminds you to play it safe.

With proper use and maintenance, portable generators can provide great convenience during an outage. However, when generators are used incorrectly, they can be extremely hazardous. In a 2022 report, the Consumer Product Safety Commission estimated 85 U.S. consumers die every year from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning caused by gasoline-powered portable generators.

While generators provide convenience during power outages, they can quickly become hazardous—even deadly—if improperly operated. Before you operate a portable generator, be sure to thoroughly read the owner's manual for important safety information and tips.

OEC allows the use of member-owned GenerLink™ transfer switches. The GenerLink is a UL-listed, socket-mounted transfer switch that provides a safe and convenient way to connect portable generator power to your home in minutes. Installed behind your electric meter, the GenerLink delivers generator power directly to your breaker box, eliminating the hassle of running power cords through your home.

They come in two different sizes, 30 and 40 amp models. The size of your generator will dictate the size of the GenerLink model required (they fit most meter sockets). A GenerLink Transfer Switch can be purchased at Home Depot or online at www.generlink.com. When you have the transfer switch, contact OEC to complete the necessary paperwork and schedule an installation appointment. If you have questions, please give us a call at the office.

A temporary generator is powered by gasoline and should not be attached to a circuit breaker, fuse, or outlet. Before purchasing a generator you need to know the wattage required to run the appliances you will attach to the generator. You also need to know the surge power, which is the power it takes to turn an appliance on. Read and follow all instructions provided by the manufacturer.



Source: Honda

GENERATOR SAFETY TIPS THAT WILL GET YOU THROUGH A STORM AND MAYBE SAVE YOUR LIFE

- **DO** Install backup CO alarms.
- **DO** Keep children and pets away from portable generators at all times.
- **DO** Position generators at least 25 feet outside the home, away from doors, windows, and vents that can allow CO to enter the home.
- **DO** Ensure your generator is properly grounded. Use a portable ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to prevent electric shock injuries.
- **DO** Use three-pronged extension cords that are rated to handle the load of the generator. Inspect extension cords for cuts, frays, or other damage before use.
- **DON'T** Operate a generator inside your home or an enclosed (or partially enclosed) space. Generators produce high levels of CO, which can be deadly.
- **DON'T** Open windows or doors while the generator is running.
- **DON'T** Rely on generators as a full-time source of power. They should only be used temporarily or in emergency situations to power essential equipment or appliances.
- **DON'T** Overload generators. They should only be used to power essential equipment. Make sure your generator can handle the load of the items you plan to power.
- **DON'T** Connect generators directly into household wiring unless you have an appropriate transfer switch installed. If a generator is connected to a home's wiring without a transfer switch, power can backfeed along power lines and electrocute utility lineworkers making repairs.

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 January account numbers belonged to David & Andrea Schiebel, Abrams, and Gary Jenquine, Lena.

Byron C. Nolde, CEO

7479 REA Road, P.O. Box 168, Oconto Falls, WI 54154

800-472-8410 • 920-846-2816

www.ocontoelectric.com

Katie Jagiello, Editor

