



A Storm is Always Ready

ARE YOU?



When Mother Nature threatens a severe storm, be ready by having an emergency kit on hand.

YOUR KIT SHOULD INCLUDE:



Bottles of water	Flashlights
Nonperishable food	Batteries
Portable phone charger	Can opener



First-aid supplies	Pain reliever
Hand sanitizer	Warm clothing
Prescriptions	Blankets



Battery-operated radio	Money
Toys, books and games	Baby supplies
Important documents	Pet supplies

Once your kit is assembled, check it a few times a year to make sure batteries are fresh and that no one has borrowed a necessary item.

Learn more at:



WINTER STORM PREPARATION

Chris Tackmann, General Manager & CEO

The employees here at Oakdale Electric Cooperative do everything we can to prevent and minimize outages. We have an aggressive vegetation management program to reduce the possibility of trees falling on lines, we have converted lines from overhead to underground in repeat outage areas, and we have installed advanced monitoring equipment in the field to help pinpoint the exact location of the outage. However, sometimes nature has different plans for our service area.

Winter storms often bring the risk of power outages due to heavy snow, ice accumulation, and strong winds that can damage power lines and equipment. Being prepared for such events is essential to ensure the safety and comfort of our members. One of the primary steps in winter storm power outage preparedness is to create an emergency kit. Review the infographic for essential items to include in your kit. Having these supplies readily available can make a significant difference during an outage, providing light, warmth, and sustenance until power is restored.

Another crucial aspect of preparedness is understanding how to safely use alternative heating sources. While generators, fireplaces, and space heaters can provide much-needed warmth during a power outage, they also pose potential hazards such as carbon monoxide exposure or fire risks. It is imperative to read and follow the manufacturer's instructions for these devices, ensure proper ventilation, and place them away from flammable materials. Educating family members on the safe use of alternative heating sources is essential to prevent accidents and injuries.

Staying informed and having a communication plan in place is vital during a winter storm power outage. Monitoring weather updates and notifications from the co-op can provide valuable information about the expected duration of the outage and when it's safe to resume normal activities. Establishing a communication plan with family, friends, and neighbors ensures that everyone is accounted for and can offer support if needed.

By taking these precautionary measures, individuals can navigate winter storm power outages with greater resilience and minimize the potential risks associated with extended periods without electricity.

In the case of an extended winter power outage, follow Oakdale Electric Cooperative on Facebook and website at www.oakdalerec.coop for the most up-to-date information.

TWO BIRDS OF A FEATHER MAKING COMMUNITIES BETTER

For the first time since the award's inception in 2021, two individuals were awarded the Selfless Service Award at once. You may have seen these names within communities around Juneau County, and they are a joint force to be reckoned with. Acknowledged for their commitment to their community, Oakdale Electric Cooperative members Carol Wagenson and Nancy Walker were both awarded the Selfless Service Award in December 2023.

Carol is the face of Wagenson Auction Service, LLC and an agent for First Choice Realty, Inc., but her community involvement reaches much further. Carol has served on the board of directors for New Lisbon School District and Lynxx Networks in Camp Douglas. She is an active volunteer for the Juneau County Fair and holds a director position on the fair board. When the Lone Rock School in New Lisbon needed money to remodel the historic schoolhouse, Carol assisted in raising funds for the renovations. This past year, her care for community was evident in the year-end thank you party and auction Carol and Butch hosted for those who assisted them



Carol Wagenson and Nancy Walker

with the auction business, real estate business and the farm, with all proceeds donated to the Riverside Park Holiday Lights and the New Lisbon and Camp Douglas food pantries.

Nancy has been a devoted teacher for New Lisbon School District and currently sits on the school board since she retired from full-time teaching. However, Nancy still offers tutoring at her Open Door Learning Center in Hustler, an old bank that she and her husband, Dann, remodeled to provide this service for community youth and parents. Another Walker project was renovating an old chapel into a venue called Tranquil Gardens Chapel and Celebration Venue, Hustler. Most recently, Nancy and other dedicated community volunteers took over the volunteer-driven Community Closet Resale Shop in New Lisbon and will continue to give thousands of dollars back into the community. When she's not busy volunteering or tutoring, Nancy and Dann assist Carol with her auction business.

When you put Carol Wagenson and Nancy Walker together, they create an energy that lights a path wherever they go. The two joined the Sunshine Movement to carry on the tradition of lights at New Lisbon's Riverside Park during the holidays. Together, they are committee members and volunteers for Wa Du Shuda Days Festival in July at Riverside Park in New Lisbon. Both being avid horsewomen, Carol and Nancy relish the opportunity to volunteer at the Midwest Horse Fair that takes place in Madison.

As the saying goes, "birds of a feather flock together," public-spirited Carol and Nancy make their communities better. Oakdale Electric Cooperative's Board Chairman and friend of Carol and Nancy, Rick Barrett, reflected as they received their awards: "These two do a tremendous job of taking care of their community; we are lucky to have them."



Oakdale Electric Cooperative Board Chairman Rick Barrett presented a check to support the New Lisbon Holiday Lights at Riverside Park. Pictured L-R: Carol Wagenson, Rick Barrett, and Nancy Walker.



MEMBERS SPREAD
KINDNESS THROUGH
OPERATION
ROUND UP



Above: Robin Hiles and Lillian with Jeremiah's Crossing.



Right: Pat Christensen and Tina Tompson with Mr. Ed's Thanksgiving Meal.



Left: Colleen Woggon and Faye Vega with Veterans Assistance Foundation.



The ORU board – Pat Christensen, Robin Hiles, Sandy Chroninger, Al Bernhardt, Tammy Burdick, Colleen Woggon, and Sue Rezin.

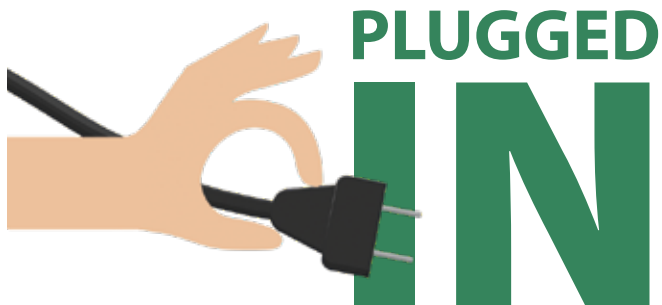
Random Acts of Kindness Day is a day to pay it forward to those around you and is observed on February 17. Approximately 90 percent of Oakdale Electric Cooperative members spread kindness every month by rounding up their bill through Operation Round Up. With the donation average of \$6 per year and at most 99 cents a month, Operation Round Up funds grow rapidly with multiple members' act of kindness.

Oakdale Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors approved enrolling all members into Operation Round Up in January 2023. Being the program is voluntary, members may choose to opt-out at any time. The executive decision to make this shift compiled a lot of small change to make an even bigger impact. The funds are held separately from any Oakdale Electric Cooperative funds and are administered by Operation Round Up's own member Board of

In 2023 alone, the Operation Round Up board donated \$80,600 back into communities throughout Jackson, Juneau, Monroe, Sauk, and Wood counties.

Trustees. In 2023 alone, the Operation Round Up board donated \$80,600 back into communities throughout Jackson, Juneau, Monroe, Sauk, and Wood counties. This would not be possible without our members' participation.

Application requests are reviewed quarterly for disbursement of funds. If you are part of a non-profit or organization that gives back to your community, we encourage you to apply for an Operation Round Up grant. Visit www.oakdalerec.coop/operation-round-up to view donation history or apply for a grant. Quarter two applications are due by May 1, 2024.

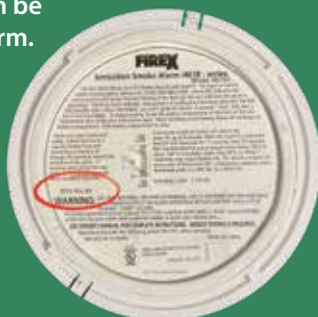


PLUGGED

IN

How do I know if my smoke alarm is expired?

Smoke alarms should be replaced 10 years from the manufacture date, which can be found on the back of the alarm. Alarms older than 10 years need to be replaced with a new unit. Combo smoke and carbon monoxide alarms should be replaced every 5–7 years, depending on the model.



There are two styles of smoke alarms.

- 1) Smoke alarms with non-replaceable 10-year batteries are designed to remain effective for up to 10 years. If the alarm chirps warning the battery is low, replace the entire smoke alarm.
- 2) Smoke alarms with any other type of battery need a new battery at least once a year. If the alarm chirps warning the battery is low, replace the battery.



Al Taylor
Energy Services Technician

Be sure to test your smoke alarms every month by pressing the test button.

Additional Resource: The National Fire Protection Association

EMPLOYEE SERVICE AWARDS

Employee service awards are a celebration of the hard work and dedication of cooperative employees reaching milestones in their years of service. Oakdale Electric Cooperative would not be operable without the dedication of its employees.



Andy Steele –
Field Engineer, 20 years



James Suzda – Energy
Services Technician, 20 years



Josh Von Haden –
Journeyman Lineman, 15 years



Sam Moseley – Warehouse
Materials Handler, 5 years



Ethan Thorson – Apprentice
Lineman, 5 years

Chris Tackmann, General Manager & CEO

P.O. Box 40, Oakdale, WI 54649
608-372-4131 • 800-241-2468

[f](#) [x](#) [i](#) [@](#) info@oakdalerec.com

Jackie McGlin, Editor



**Oakdale Electric
Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
24-Hour Emergency Power Restoration: 800-927-6151
Toll-free Online Bill Payment 833-526-0293

Diggers Hotline: For underground cable locates and power line clearance information, call 800-242-8511.