



# PLANS FOR THE NEW YEAR



**Oakdale Electric Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



**Chris Tackmann,**  
General Manager  
& CEO

**H**appy New Year. I hope you and your family had a wonderful holiday season and I wish you the very best in 2024. I would like to highlight a few of the key projects that your

board of directors approved at their last board meeting when they discussed our 2024 workplan and budget.

**Renewables:** Oakdale Electric Cooperative (OEC) continues to support renewable energy with our community solar garden and helping members connect their own member solar projects to our grid. Our two solar garden projects constructed in 2023 are on-line. One of them is a 1.5-megawatt (MW) system and the other is a 3.0 MW system. In 2024, we will not be building anything new; however, we decided to work with other Wisconsin cooperatives to leverage grants and purchases so that we can build a 4.0 MW system in 2025.

**Electric Rates:** Last October we had an increase in the residential

facility charge. Currently, we are not expecting to have to raise rates in 2024. However, as costs continue to increase, we will need to continue to evaluate. If changes have to be made, we will notify members in advance.

**Technology Updates:** In 2024, we plan to start the upgrade of our end-of-life load management system with a newer system that will complement our automated metering system. This upgrade was originally planned for 2023; however, we delayed it as this will take a few years to fully implement the new system. There are many benefits to upgrading our load management system including the ability to implement new control strategies to help with newer rate designs.

We are also continuing to administer new hardware on our distribution lines to help monitor and restore outages and voltage information remotely.

**Electric Vehicles:** We are expecting to create a special electric vehicle charging rate for our members to use when charging their vehicle at home. Originally this was planned for 2023; however, due to continued changes in

the industry, we decided to move this project into 2024. We are also looking to install more commercial charges in our service territory to ensure accessibility throughout rural areas.

**Construction:** Supply-chain issues were prevalent again last year. Although 2024 is looking better, there are still constraints and pricing increases, especially on transformers. Lead times and costs continue to rise.

In 2024, construction will start on two new substations in the Clearfield and Oakdale areas to increase power delivery and reliability. Major construction will take place in Mauston, Lyndon Station, North Tomah, Warrens, and Oakdale. There are many smaller areas that we will also be working on to reduce the likelihood of outages during major storm events.

Every decision made at OEC is thoroughly planned out with all members' best interests in mind. If you have questions or concerns, please contact us at [info@oakdalerec.com](mailto:info@oakdalerec.com) or 608-372-4131.

Again, on behalf of everyone at OEC, I would like to wish you a Happy New Year.

Don't forget to recycle your holiday lights at the co-op! Collection basket is in place through February 1, 2024.

Our office will be closed Monday, January 15

# ARE YOU INTERESTED IN SERVING AS A DIRECTOR FOR YOUR CO-OP?

The following districts are up for re-election in 2024:

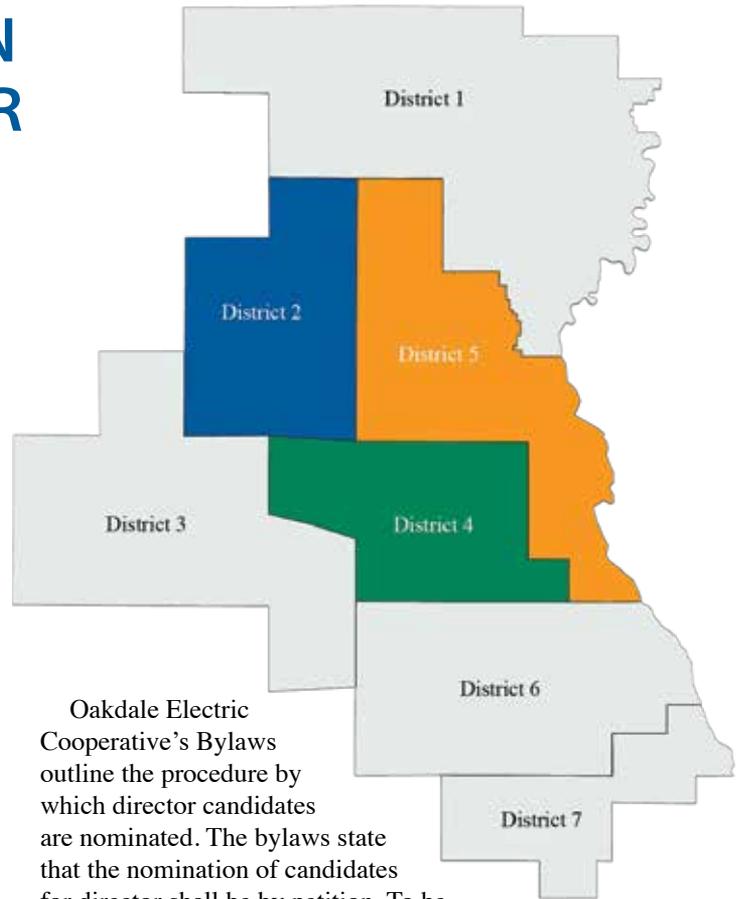
**District 2:** Knapp, Bear Bluff, Lincoln, Scott, La Grange, Byron

**District 4:** Oakdale, Orange, Clearfield, Fountain, Lisbon

**District 5:** Kingston, Cutler, Necedah, Germantown, Marion

## Director Qualifications:

- You are a cooperative member residing primarily in districts 2, 4 or 5;
- You have not been employed or financially interested in a competing enterprise, or a business selling energy, supplies, or services to the cooperative;
- You have not been employed by the cooperative within the preceding five years;
- You have not been convicted of a felony in any jurisdiction at any time in the preceding seven years;
- You have not been an incumbent of or candidate for a partisan elective county, state or federal office in connection with which a salary is paid;
- You have not been a claimant against the cooperative within the preceding five years.



Oakdale Electric Cooperative's Bylaws outline the procedure by which director candidates are nominated. The bylaws state that the nomination of candidates for director shall be by petition. To be valid, a petition shall be signed by not less than 15 members and submitted by January 27, 2024.

If you are interested in running for a director's seat, contact Executive Assistant/HR Administrator Deana Protz at [dprotz@oakdalerec.com](mailto:dprotz@oakdalerec.com) or call 608-372-4131.



## UPCOMING 2024 CO-OP EVENTS

## SAVE THE DATES!

**April 27**

**89th Annual Meeting**

Tomah Recreation Park  
Registration 8 a.m.  
Business Meeting 9 – 10 a.m.

**October 12**

**Member Appreciation Day**

Oakdale Electric Cooperative  
Headquarters  
7:30 – 11 a.m.

Normal power line

Lines weighed down by ice

Top line melted after bottom line

## 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 much more likely to break power lines.

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

- 1/2 inch of ice adds 281 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 cause power outages. If ice on the bottom (neutral) line melts before the lines above, it can cause the lines to touch.

### OTHER ICE 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

**Safe Electricity.org**

Source: Jerri Ingarten-Whitley and Victory Electric Cooperative

## Watt's Your New Year's Resolution?

Don't set a resolution that is too high to reach. Instead, keep it simple and check off these easy-to-do tasks.

### Update Your Contact Information with Us

Visit [www.oakdalerec.coop](http://www.oakdalerec.coop), hover over the About Us dropdown menu, and click Update Contact Information at the bottom.

### Take Control of Your Energy Account, Signup for SmartHub

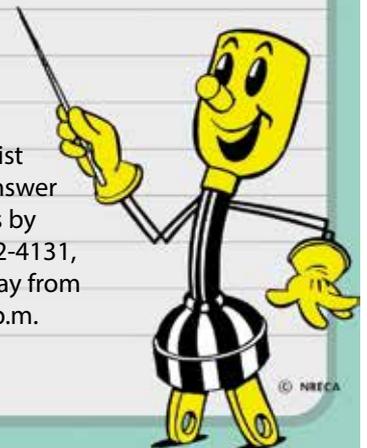
- Enroll in email or Text Alert Notifications
- Go Paperless
- Signup for Auto Pay
- Make a Payment & Review Account History
- Monitor Your Energy Usage

Mobile access is available to download for free on Apple and Android devices.

### Review Member Offerings at [www.oakdalerec.coop](http://www.oakdalerec.coop) under Energy Solutions

- 2024 Energy-Saving Incentives
- Focus on Energy Programs
- Load Management

A consumer service specialist can assist or answer your questions by calling 608-372-4131, Monday – Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.





## How can I take the chill out of my bill?

The winter months often bring increased reliance on electric heating, making it important to use these systems efficiently. Consider setting thermostats at moderate temperatures and add an extra layer to reduce the need for excessive heating. If using electric heaters, focus on heating specific rooms rather than the entire house, and be diligent about turning them off when not needed. For those relying on electric heat tape to prevent water lines from freezing, ensure it is used sparingly and only when necessary. Regularly inspect and insulate pipes to minimize the need for continuous heat tape usage. By adopting these practices, we not only conserve energy but also contribute to the reliability of our electrical infrastructure, especially during below-normal temperatures.



**Kurt Spolum**  
GIS/AMI Specialist



### Hilliker Tree Farm

- Tom B.
- Lori F.
- Betty C.
- Mark M.
- Adam K.

### Hoag Tree Company

- Ron P.
- Terry S.
- Trevor M.
- Shelby S.
- Shelby K.

### Van Ert Nursery + Christmas Trees

- Dena G.
- Carla H.
- Betty S.
- Nicole D.
- Suzanne W.

### Wagner Tree Farm

- Leo C.
- Kim F.
- Rynae S.
- Clifford B.
- Anneke V.

### Chris Tackmann, General Manager & CEO

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