

Since 1940

WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* October 2025 NEWS

OCONTO ELECTRIC
CEC
COOPERATIVE

POWERING THE FUTURE

BE AWARE OF POTENTIAL ENERGY SCAMS

OCTOBER IS CO-OP MONTH

PORK RECIPES



IMPORTANT UPDATE: NEW SECURE PAYMENT PROCEDURES STARTING NOVEMBER 1

To better safeguard your personal and financial information, credit card companies and the Payment Card Industry (PCI) have introduced stricter security standards. In compliance with these regulations, Oconto Electric Cooperative (OEC) representatives will no longer be able to accept credit card, checking, or savings account information verbally over the phone starting November 1.

However, making payments by phone is still easy and secure. Simply call our PCI-compliant interactive voice response system at 1-855-953-3499 and follow the prompts:

To make a payment, select Option #1. The automated system will walk you through.

To update stored financial information, follow the appropriate prompts.

We understand this change may require some adjustment, but it's a necessary step to protect your information and ensure compliance with PCI standards.

Other Convenient Payment Options

You can continue to make secure credit card payments on our website or through SmartHub. Just click the SmartHub button at the top of our homepage or the "Pay Now" button: ocontoelectric.com

SmartHub also lets you:

- View your energy usage
- Set up or manage autopay
- Report issues or outages
- Notify us of account changes

Need Help?

If you have questions or need assistance with any of our secure payment methods, please contact us at 920-846-2816.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we work to keep your information safe.



Scan with your smartphone to download the SmartHub app.

HOW TO REGISTER FOR SMARTHUB ON YOUR SMARTPHONE

Step 1: On your mobile device, open the app store.

Step 2: Search for SmartHub and look for the SmartHub icon.

Step 3: Once the app installs, tap the **SmartHub icon** on your device to open the app.

Step 4: After SmartHub opens to the initial launch screen, tap the appropriate button to search by Name.

Step 5: Enter the name (Oconto Electric Cooperative) in the search bar and tap the Search button. Next, tap on our name in the search results.

Step 6: Tap the **Confirm** button to confirm your choice.

Step 7: From the SmartHub login screen, tap the link that says **Don't have an account? Register now.**

Step 8: Fill out the registration form completely. Tap the **Continue** button.

Step 9: On the security check screen, answer all of the security questions. Tap the **Register** button.

Step 10: You will receive a notification telling you that a verification email has been sent.

Step 11: Open the email and tap the **Verify Account** link to continue.

Step 12: Next you will set your **new password** on your account. Type your new password in twice and tap **Save.**

Step 13: Return to the log in screen on the app and use your email address and new password to log in for the first time.

Step 14: During the first log in, you may be asked to accept our Terms and Conditions. Tap the **Accept** button.

Step 15: If you would like to activate Paperless Billing move the **Activate Paperless Billing slider** to the right and tap **Save.**

Step 16: **Congratulations!** You have successfully installed the app and registered your SmartHub account!

OCTOBER IS COOPERATIVE MONTH: A TIME TO CELEBRATE AND REAFFIRM OUR PURPOSE

October marks National Cooperative Month, and for us, it's more than just a celebration—it's a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the values that guide everything we do. As your local electric cooperative, we exist to serve you—our members, our neighbors, and our communities. That purpose is what sets us apart. It's why we were founded, and it's what continues to drive every decision we make.

At the heart of our cooperative model is a simple but powerful idea: we are member-owned and locally controlled. This isn't just a tagline—it's the foundation of our business. Our members have a voice in how the co-op operates. You elect board members who live right here in our service area and understand the unique challenges and opportunities our communities face. Decisions aren't made in distant corporate boardrooms—they're made right here at home, by people who care about the same things you do.

This local accountability allows us to stay focused on

what matters most: delivering reliable, affordable electricity and providing real value to the people we serve. We're not driven by profits—we're driven by purpose.

One of the seven cooperative principles we hold dear is

"Concern for Community." It's not just a philosophy—it's a commitment. But our commitment doesn't end at the power lines. Co-ops were built to meet community needs, and that purpose extends well beyond delivering electricity. Whether we're supporting local schools, sponsoring youth programs, or partnering with volunteer organizations, we are always looking for ways to improve the quality

of life in the places we serve. Community support isn't an afterthought—it's part of our mission. Because when our community thrives, we all thrive.

So this October, as we celebrate Cooperative Month, we invite you to join us in reaffirming the values that make our cooperative strong. Thank you for being part of our mission—and for helping us build a brighter future, together.



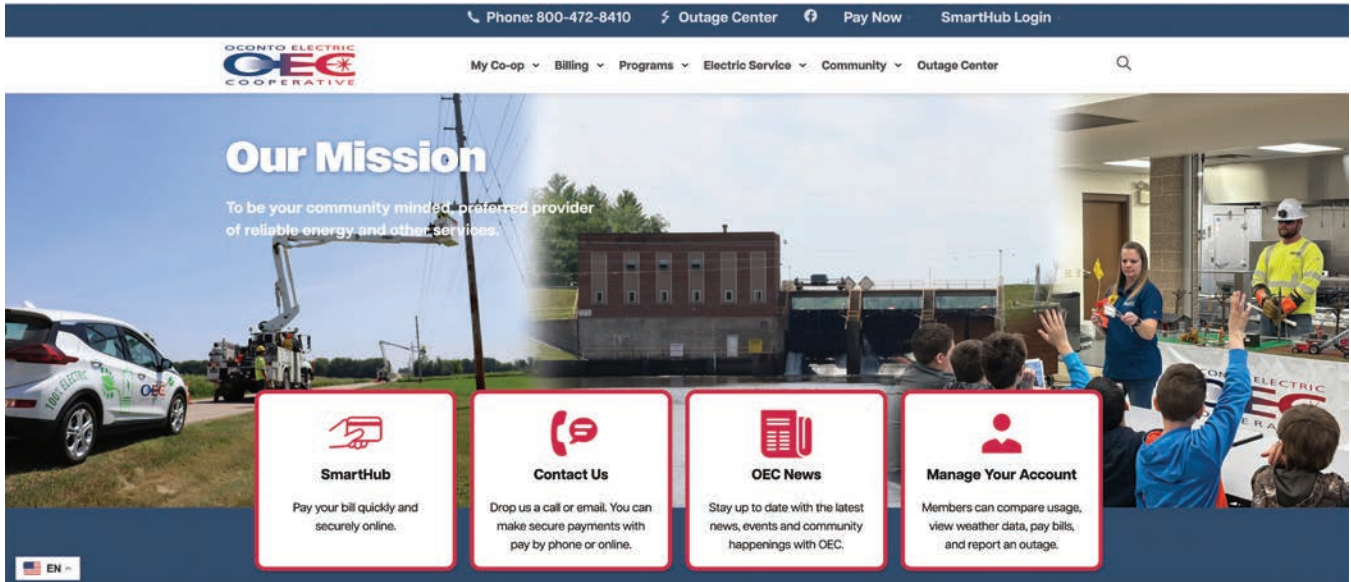
HELP US CELEBRATE NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH!

Stop in October 13-17 for popcorn,
2026 calendars and a gift.

Lobby Hours: 9 AM - 3 PM



CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE



In September, Oconto Electric Co-op proudly launched our newly redesigned website, offering members a fresh, modern experience tailored for ease of use and accessibility. The updated site features a clean, eye-catching design with larger font sizes, making navigation more comfortable for users of all ages. With a focus on user-friendliness, the layout has been streamlined to help visitors quickly find the information (942300) they need.

One of the standout additions is the real-time outage map, which allows members to view current service interruptions

and restoration updates at a glance. This feature enhances transparency and keeps the community informed during critical times. Additionally, the site now includes fillable web forms, making it easier than ever to submit service requests, update account information, or contact customer support directly online.

Overall, the redesign reflects our continued commitment to improving member engagement and delivering a more efficient digital experience. Visit our newly redesigned site at www.ocontoelectric.com.

BAG LUNCH TO GO FUNDRAISER

Wednesday, October 8

11 a.m. - 1 p.m. (or until we run out) at OEC's Office!

Pulled Pork Sandwich, BBQ Sauce, Chips, Homemade Cookie, Beverage.
Cost \$10 for the meal or \$5 per sandwich.



Employee Charity
Oconto Electric Cooperative

2025 CHARITIES

Lena Volunteer Fire Department
Oconto Area Humane Society
Oconto County School Supply Drive, Inc.
Shawano Menominee Resiliency Coalition





Oconto Electric linemen Maguire Girtz (left) and Jacob Strait helped Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative crews restore power after recent severe storms.

OEC crew responds to ROPE

Two Oconto Electrics Cooperative linemen responded to a call to assist Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative after two severe storms ripped through the cooperative's service territory on the afternoon of August 16.

ROPE, or Restoration of Power in an Emergency, is a very unique program of co-ops helping co-ops. When a major storm rolls through a cooperative's service territory and causes extensive damage to its distribution system, that co-op can call Dairyland Power Cooperative and activate the ROPE program. Dairyland Power will then find crews from other co-ops unaffected by the storm to help restore power to the co-op in need of assistance.

OEC has called for ROPE help in 2021, 2022, and 2024.

TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS

Do you know the warning signs of an energy scam? (988000) Scammers will often use high-pressure tactics that create a sense of urgency. They may also ask for unusual payment methods such as gift cards or cryptocurrency. Dodgy communication is typically associated with a scam, including poor grammar, spelling errors, or unusual email addresses. If you spot any of these warning signs, take a moment to pause and determine if it's legitimate or if it's a scam.



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 September account numbers belonged to Patricia Barret, Little Suamico and Donald and Marlene Spice, Abrams.



Ryan Miller, CEO

Katie Jagiello, Communications and Marketing

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

Hours of Operation: 7:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Hours of Lobby: 9:00 a.m.– 3 p.m. Friday

Non-emergencies: 920-846-2816

Emergencies & outages: Toll FREE 800-472-8410
24 hours a day, 7 days a week