

Since 1940

WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative*

June 2026

NEWS

OCONTO ELECTRIC
CEC
COOPERATIVE

SAVOR

JUNE'S DAIRY DAYS

SHINE ON

LOW- TO NO-COST WAYS
TO SAVE ENERGY

KIDS AND CRITTERS



NEW POWER PARTNERSHIP: Dairyland to Serve Oconto Electric Cooperative

As of June 1, 2026, Dairyland Power Cooperative (La Crosse, Wis.) will be OEC’s wholesale power provider.

“I was honored to attend Oconto Electric Cooperative’s Annual Meeting in April,” Dairyland President & CEO Brent Ridge said. “Dairyland is excited to expand our ability to provide safe, reliable and cost-effective electricity to Wisconsin’s electric cooperatives. You are at the heart of our local communities and we value your membership.”

For 85 years, Dairyland has provided wholesale power to electric cooperatives and municipal utilities in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois. Dairyland is one of more than 60 generation and transmission (G&T) cooperatives in the United States, meaning that they produce or contract for electricity from power plants and send it to the consumers who use the power (i.e., Oconto Electric Cooperative and its members). Dairyland is a member of Touchstone Energy Cooperatives and currently provides power for approximately 800,000 people in the Upper Midwest.

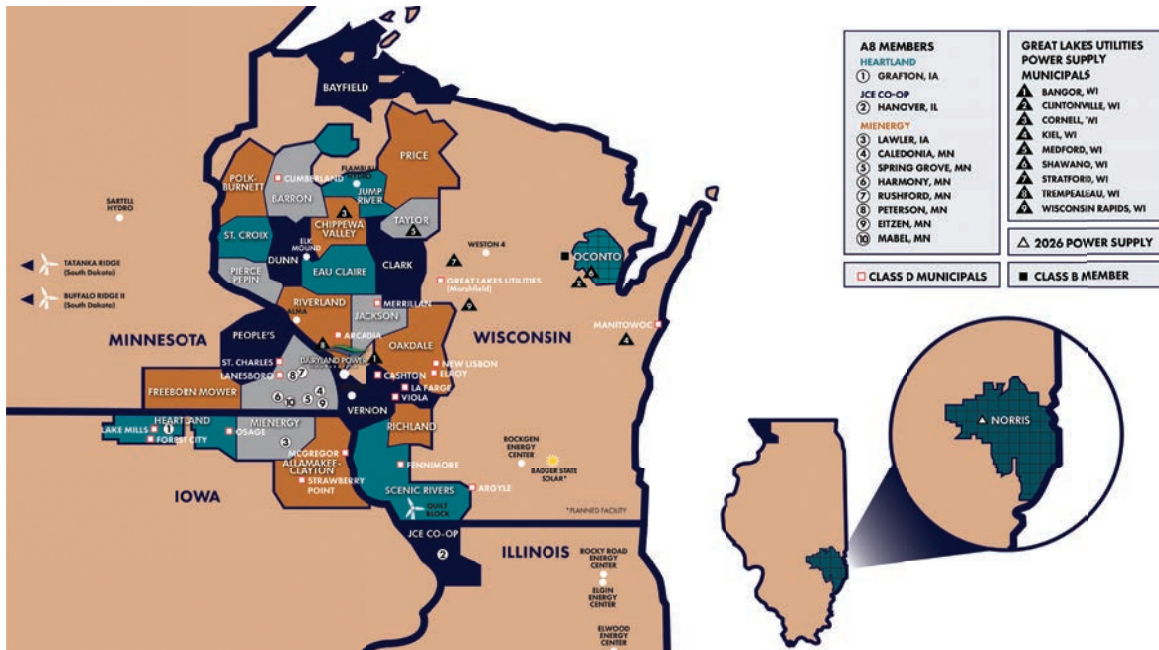
Through targeted infrastructure investments and a balanced energy portfolio, Dairyland embraces an all-of-the-above strategy to maintain dependable baseload generation and leverage more than \$600 million in grants for investments in renewable resources and transmission infrastructure. Electricity comes from a variety of sources, including natural gas, coal, hydro, solar, wind and biogas.

Dairyland is also exploring emerging technologies, including long-duration energy storage and small modular nuclear reactors, recognizing their potential role in a future energy mix that is emissions-free, reliable and resilient. They are participating in one of the region’s largest transmission expansions through projects in the Midcontinent Independent System Operator’s (MISO) Long-Range Transmission Plan. These investments will help strengthen regional grid reliability, support rural economic growth and enable greater access to diverse and low-cost energy resources for decades.

Beyond operations, Dairyland advocates for electric cooperatives at the state and federal levels. From cybersecurity and infrastructure resilience to permitting reform and rural energy investment, they have a government relations team that works with the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association (WECA) and National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) to engage policymakers across party lines. This helps ensure cooperative voices are heard and rural communities are not left behind.

Like OEC, Dairyland invests in its people and communities through charitable contributions, economic development initiatives, scholarships and community-focused service projects.

These efforts support local growth, create jobs, promote continuous learning and reflect the Cooperative Principle of Concern for Community.



Dairyland Power Cooperative’s system map highlights the diverse generation, transmission, and member service areas across Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Illinois.

TEACHING SAFETY. TRAINING FOR EMERGENCIES. PROTECTING LIVES.

Electricity powers our lives in ways we rarely stop to consider. It lights our homes, fuels our technology, and keeps our communities moving. Yet, as essential as it is, electricity remains one of the most dangerous forces we encounter—largely because it cannot be seen, smelled, heard, or tasted.

That invisible nature is exactly why education and awareness are so critical—especially for young people.

Bringing Safety to the Classroom That's why Oconto Electric Cooperative (OEC) continues to bring electrical safety education directly into local schools. This year, 300 students in fourth grade participated in these engaging, 45-minute sessions designed to teach a life-saving message: always treat electricity with respect.

Rather than relying on lectures alone, OEC's team brought learning to life through interactive displays. Students witnessed firsthand what happens when everyday objects—like kites, ladders, tree branches, or farm equipment—come into contact with power lines. These visual demonstrations left a lasting impression, reinforcing how quickly a routine activity can turn dangerous.

We also educated over 200 first graders with a series of short safety videos that teaches kids about hidden electrical dangers around the home, outlet safety, outdoor safety and lightning safety.

By the end of each session, students leave not only informed but empowered. Each child receives safety materials to take home, encouraging conversations with family members so that the message extends beyond the classroom.

Safety Beyond the Classroom Behind the scenes, linemen train to ensure they are prepared for emergencies in the field. One of the most critical exercises is pole-top rescue training, where crews practice responding to a scenario in which a fellow lineman becomes incapacitated high above the ground.

During these drills, team members must act quickly



A classroom safety demonstration in action—students watching as OEC staff illustrate the dangers of contact with power lines.

and precisely—assessing hazards such as energized wires, coordinating emergency response, and safely lowering an unconscious worker to the ground. It's a complex, high-stakes skill-set that requires both physical ability and calm decision-making under pressure. Though such incidents are rare, preparation is everything.

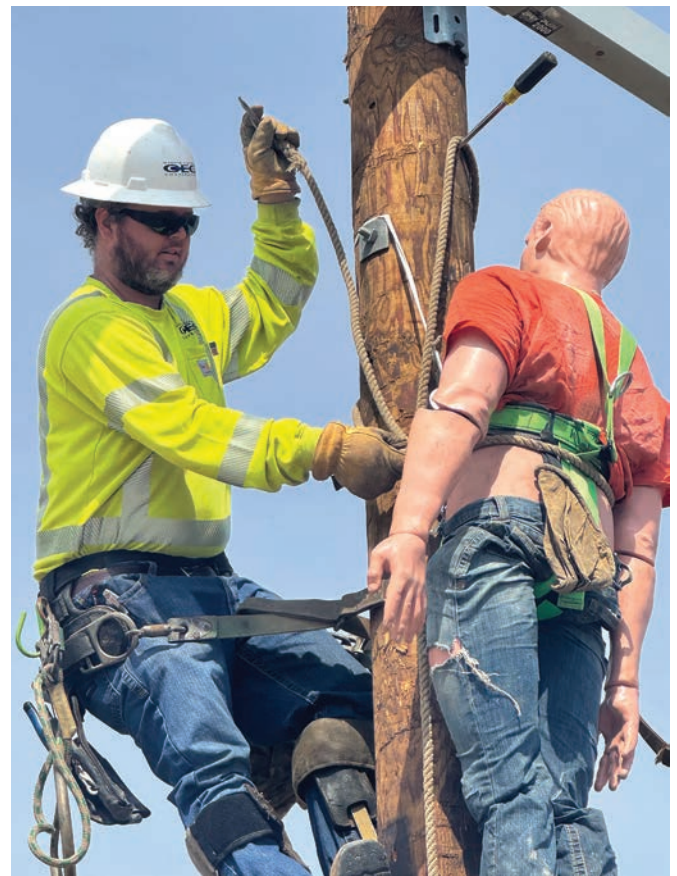
Training for the Moments That Matter Most

OEC linemen are trained in CPR, first aid and how to use an AED, ensuring they can provide immediate care until first responders arrive. These exercises are essential to maintaining a culture where safety comes first.

While crews hope they never need to use these skills in real-life emergencies, the training provides them with confidence.

A Community Effort At its core, OEC's safety outreach is about more than education—it's about protecting lives. By teaching children, training crews, and engaging the broader community, we are building a culture where awareness and caution go hand in hand.

Because when it comes to electricity, knowledge isn't just power—it's protection.



Linemen performing pole-top rescue training, demonstrating teamwork and (165301) emergency response in action.



PROTECT. INSPIRE. EMPOWER.

Commitment to Community through OEC's Employee Charity

Oconto Electric Cooperative is committed to the communities we serve. We support local schools, community organizations and agencies through donations and programs that OEC offers. Many OEC employees are active with local groups and organizations, which enrich the cooperative's relationship with the people and communities we serve.

Our employees are dedicated to co-op principle number seven: commitment to community. Our employees have distributed \$226,500 to local charities and organizations since 2004. Employees organize several fundraising efforts throughout the year with funds being awarded in late fall. Funds raised in 2026 will be shared between three charities this year.

Suring Fire Department

Monies raised this year will be used for the purchase of a battery powered ventilation fan. The purpose of the equipment is critical for removing smoke and fumes from structures where ventilation is essential for crew safety and effectiveness. This new equipment will replace an old one that is outdated and replacing parts are increasingly difficult to find.

Coleman Equestrian Team

The Coleman Equestrian Team is a dedicated, self-funded club made up of passionate middle and high school athletes who train year-round alongside their equine partners.



Employee Charity Oconto Electric Cooperative

Through countless hours of practice, commitment, and teamwork, these riders develop the skills necessary to compete at equestrian competitions.

Donations play a vital role in making these opportunities possible. Contributions help cover essential expenses such as competition entry fees, horse stalls, travel, lodging, and meals—ensuring that every rider has the chance to participate, grow, and succeed both in and out of the arena.

Oconto Unified School District - After School Club

The After School Club provides students with a safe, structured, and engaging environment during the critical hours immediately following the school day—when many students might otherwise lack supervision. Through a combination of guided activities, enrichment opportunities, and positive adult mentorship, the program helps strengthen protective factors that support long-term student success and contribute to a healthier, more connected community.

Funding for the program supports essential components such as activities, transportation, and program materials. These resources enable the After School Club to deliver meaningful experiences that promote student (325000) well-being, foster connections, and encourage personal growth.



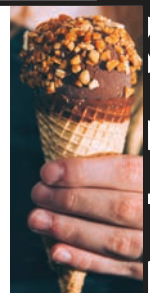
HELP SUPPORT OUR 2026 EMPLOYEE CHARITIES

Basket Raffle: June 15-26 in the OEC Lobby

June is National Dairy Month!

Thank you dairy farmers.

Help us celebrate! Stop in at OEC's office June 15-19 for an ice cream treat.



Introducing District 3 Director

Chad Fradette brings a strong sense of community, leadership, and experience to Oconto Electric Cooperative. A 17-year resident of the Town of Chase, small business owner, and father of three, Chad understands how important reliable, affordable energy is to local families and businesses.



With more than 25 years of leadership experience, Chad has served in numerous board and public service roles, building a reputation for collaboration and strategic thinking. As the owner of Evergreen Consultants, he has worked extensively across Wisconsin and the Midwest, helping clients navigate complex environmental and regulatory challenges. His work with state officials on energy and environmental issues provides valuable insight into the evolving landscape of the utility industry.

Chad understands the challenges electric cooperatives face today—from integrating renewable energy to modernizing infrastructure—and believes strong governance is key to meeting those demands. With a long history of community involvement and a passion for public service, he is dedicated to helping ensure Oconto Electric Cooperative continues to serve its members effectively now and into the future.

Due to the open director position in district 3, the Oconto Electric Cooperative Board of Directors filled the vacancy with a qualified District 3 member for the remainder of the term. Members were notified by postcard, and after reviewing applications and conducting interviews, a new director was appointed.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

During these warm summer months, a smart thermostat can help keep your home comfortable while reducing cooling costs. Smart thermostats learn your routine and automatically raise the temperature when you're away and cool things down before you return, avoiding unnecessary energy use. You can also adjust settings remotely from your phone, so you're never cooling an empty house. Setting your thermostat a few degrees higher while you're away or asleep can lead to significant savings. Many smart thermostats provide reports and tips, helping you fine-tune your energy use and stay cool while keeping your electric bill in check.

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.



Ryan Miller, CEO

Katie Jagiello, Communications and Marketing

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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