

Since 1940

WISCONSIN ENERGY *Cooperative* NEWS

October 2026

OCNTO ELECTRIC
CEE
COOPERATIVE

DYNAMIC DAIRY

CO-OP MONTH AND COW LESSONS

PORK RECIPES

KIDS AND CRITTERS



STRONG MEMBER SATISFACTION REFLECTS OEC'S COMMITMENT TO SERVICE

Oconto Electric Cooperative completed its member-wide customer satisfaction survey, where over 5,000 members were asked to participate. The member responses were sent to the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI®), a company that measures customer satisfaction across multiple industries throughout the entire United States. For 2026, Oconto Electric Cooperative received an ACSI score of 84 on a 100-point scale. Oconto Electric Cooperative's score is higher when compared to publicly measured electric investor-owned utility scores, cooperative utility scores, municipal utility scores reported in the syndicated 2026 ACSI Energy Utility Study and places Oconto Electric Cooperative 12 points higher than the average electric investor-owned utility score of 72, as well as 10 points higher than the municipal utilities score of 74, per the industry ratings.

For more information, please visit <https://theacsi.org/industries/energy/energy-utilities/>.



Compared to publicly measured energy utilities in the ACSI® survey of customers rating their own energy utility. Results based on data provided by Oconto Electric Cooperative, collected between May 4-June 15, 2026. ACSI did not regulate the survey administration or sample size. ACSI and its logo are registered trademarks of the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. For more about the ACSI, visit www.theacsi.org.

Co-op Month: Celebrating Our Members

When you hear the word cooperative, what comes to mind? As your local electric cooperative, we hope you think of Oconto Electric Cooperative and the commitment we make every day to serve our members and communities.

October is National Co-op Month, a time to celebrate the cooperative difference and recognize the people who make it all possible: our members. Unlike traditional businesses that are driven by investors or shareholders, cooperatives are guided by the members they serve. This unique business model keeps our focus on providing reliable service, investing locally, and creating long-term value for our communities.

This year, we have another reason to celebrate. Thanks to feedback from our recent member satisfaction survey, OEC was honored with a customer satisfaction award. This

recognition reflects the trust and support of our members and reinforces our commitment to meeting your needs.

The cooperative difference can be seen in both the big moments and the small ones. It is the lineworkers working safely and efficiently to restore power after a storm. It is the employees answering questions and providing assistance when members call. It is the staff volunteering at local events and the board members, your neighbors, helping guide decisions that shape the future of the cooperative.

As we celebrate National Co-op Month, we extend our sincere thanks to our members. Your membership is what makes our mission possible and keeps us focused on serving the people and communities that matter most. Together, we are stronger, and together, we continue to power the cooperative spirit.



HELP US CELEBRATE NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH!

Stop in October 19-23 for popcorn and a gift.

Lobby Hours: 9 AM - 3 PM

CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY, ONE TREE AT A TIME

One of the things that makes northeastern Wisconsin so special is the beauty that surrounds us. Towering trees line our roads, shade our homes, and provide habitat for countless birds and wildlife. They are part of what makes our community feel like home.

At Oconto Electric Cooperative, we value that natural beauty just as much as our members do. That's why we work hard to strike a careful balance between preserving our environment and providing the reliable electric service our members depend on every day.

One of the ways we do that is through our right-of-way management program.

In recent years, a growing challenge has emerged across our area. The emerald ash borer, an invasive beetle that attacks and kills ash trees, has left a significant mark on Wisconsin's landscape. First detected in the state in 2008 and confirmed in Oconto County in 2020, the insect continues to threaten thousands of ash trees throughout our service territory.

As these trees die, they become increasingly brittle and unpredictable. During high winds, ice storms, or severe weather, dead ash trees can break or topple without warning, creating hazards for homes, roadways, and power lines.

Because we care deeply about our members and the communities we serve, OEC is taking a proactive approach.

In areas where ash trees are heavily concentrated near our power lines, crews are working to remove or top trees before they become a larger risk. While these efforts may not always be visually appealing at first glance, they are an important investment in protecting the electric system and reducing future outages.

Safety Comes First

Safety is always our top priority. (231304) By addressing hazardous trees before they fail, we can help prevent accidents and maintain a safer environment for everyone.

Keeping the Lights On

When storms move through our area, fallen trees are one of the leading causes of power outages. Proactive trimming and vegetation management help reduce the likelihood of branches and trees coming into contact with power lines.

While no system is completely storm-proof, keeping our right-of-way clear helps improve reliability and allows our crews to restore service more quickly when outages do occur.

Managing Costs Responsibly

As a not-for-profit cooperative, OEC is focused on serving members, not generating profits. Preventing damage before it happens is often far less expensive than repairing broken poles, replacing damaged equipment, or responding to widespread outages.

Proactive right-of-way management helps control costs while supporting the reliable electric service our members



Dead ash tree located within the right-of-way that poses a risk of causing a power outage and requires removal.

expect and deserve.

Investing in the Future

The trees in our communities are an important part of our shared landscape, and we recognize the value they bring. At the same time, we have a responsibility to maintain a safe and dependable electric system for the families, farms, businesses, and communities we serve.

By addressing the impacts of the emerald ash borer today, we're helping prepare for tomorrow's storms, protecting critical infrastructure, and ensuring reliable service for years to come.

Because at OEC, caring for our members means planning ahead, investing wisely, and doing everything we can to keep the lights on when you need them most.



A GIFT THAT CONTINUES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Meet Brick: A Four-Legged Partner in Healing

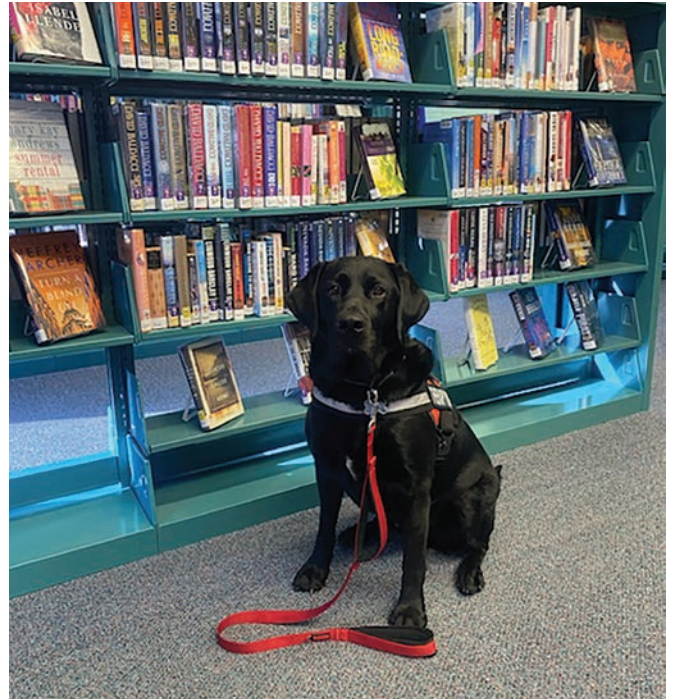
Community Change's support of Rainbow House has left a lasting impact, helping provide comfort and healing to individuals during some of the most difficult moments of their lives. In 2022, Community Change contributed \$500 to support the organization's therapy dog program. Today, that investment continues to make a meaningful difference through the work of Brick, a specially trained English Labrador serving survivors experiencing trauma and crisis.

Since joining the Rainbow House team, Brick has become much more than a therapy dog. He is a calming presence, a trusted companion, and a source of reassurance for people navigating challenging and overwhelming circumstances.

Recently, Brick completed Intensive Psychiatric Service Dog Training through Service Dog Training School International. His achievement included successfully passing a public access test and completing more than 120 hours of specialized obedience and task training. Through this extensive preparation, Brick learned a variety of skills designed to support individuals in crisis, including deep pressure therapy, tactile stimulation, crowd control assistance, and emotional support during stressful situations.

For survivors coping with trauma, a gentle nudge, a comforting presence, or simply having Brick nearby can help ease anxiety and create a greater sense of safety and connection. His ability to provide support without words offers comfort that is often difficult to find through traditional means alone.

The impact of Brick's work is felt every day at Rainbow House. Thanks to the generosity of Community Change and its commitment to supporting local organizations, survivors have access to an additional source of healing and hope. A relatively small investment has grown into something much



Brick, Rainbow House's specially trained English Labrador, provides comfort and support to survivors of domestic violence throughout Oconto County.

larger: a program that helps foster trust, promote emotional well-being, and remind people that they are not alone on their journey toward recovery.

As Brick continues his work, he stands as a wonderful example of how community support can create lasting change, one comforting paw at a time.

BAG LUNCH TO GO FUNDRAISER

Tuesday, November 3

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 \$7 per sandwich.

Money raised will go to the 2026 OEC Employee Charities.





OEC Earns Statewide Magazine Honors

Oconto Electric Cooperative recently earned three Awards of Excellence for its local pages in Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News, the voice of Wisconsin's rural electric cooperatives. The awards were presented during the 2026 Communications Power Conference, held in Madison on Sept. 2. Katie Jagiello serves as editor of the cooperative's local pages.

The cooperative earned first place in the Co-op News and Human Interest categories, and an Honorable Mention in Photography, for the 2024–2025 judging cycle.

"It is an honor to receive these awards. This recognition reflects the hard work and passion that go into sharing the stories of our co-op and the communities we serve. We hope our members enjoy the local pages and the opportunity to learn more about their cooperative and community."

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Don't let phantom energy haunt your electric bill this October. Many electronics continue using electricity even when they're turned off. TVs, gaming systems, coffee makers and phone chargers can quietly draw power around the clock. (588802) While each device uses only a small amount, the energy waste can add up over time. Before heading out for Halloween fun, unplug devices you don't use regularly or plug them into a smart power strip that automatically cuts power when equipment is off. It's a simple trick that can help keep phantom energy waste in check.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Energy

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