



# Osceola Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

*The power of human connections®*



June 2024

## CONTACT US

### Office:

1102 Egret Drive  
Sibley, IA 51249

### Office Hours:

Monday-Friday  
7:30 am to 4:00 pm

### Phone:

Local: 712-754-2519  
Toll Free: 888-754-2519

On evenings, weekends or holidays an answering service will accept power outage or emergency type calls only.

### Online:

osceolaelectric.com

## FIND YOUR ACCOUNT NUMBER

Three account numbers are hidden within the newsletter. Notify us if you find your number and we'll credit your account \$5. Confirm your account number on the top of your statement. Account numbers must be yours to claim.

## OEC RECIPES

Submit your favorite Summer Vegetable Recipe for consideration to be printed in our August Newsletter. Submission deadline is July 20. Printed recipes are

In observance of  
Independence Day  
Osceola Electric  
will be closed  
July 4.

# 2024 Scholarship Winners!



Natasha Bremer



Karissa Hulstein



Owen Hayenga-Johnson



Cambrie Krikke



Vance Hayenga-Johnson

Osceola Electric Cooperative takes great pride in helping develop rural leaders in our region. We offer scholarships to recognize academic and community achievements made by young people in the communities we serve.

We were pleased to grant five scholarships to children of our members. Recipients were selected on the basis of academic record, potential to succeed, leadership and participation in the school and community activities, honors, work experience, and statement of education and career goals. The scholarships must be used for continued education at a two-year or four-year college, university, or vocational/technical school.

Thank you to all the student applicants and our scholarship judges!

## Congratulations to the entire class of 2024!

Best wishes as you continue your education or enter the work force!



## Change Habits to BEAT THE PEAK

You can beat the peak (and save money!) by decreasing your power use when energy demand and prices are at their highest. Here are a few tips to help you get started:

### Laundry for Less:

Full loads mean fewer cycles, and washers and dryers run in the late evenings add less heat and humidity to the home. Energy can cost less outside of peak hours.



### Cool Off/Calm Down:

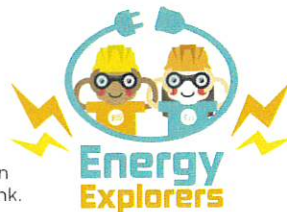
Turn off unnecessary lighting and electronics that generate heat, resist the urge to turn down the thermostat and remember, lower fan settings use less energy.



### Countertop Convenience:

Range or oven cooking can really warm up a kitchen. Microwaves, convection ovens, induction cooktops, Crock-Pot® and toaster ovens put more cooking heat where you need it.

## WATER SAFETY FILL-IN-THE-BLANK



Summer means fun in the sun and spending time in the water to cool off. But remember, electricity and water never mix! Read the safety tips below and fill in the blanks with the correct choice from the word bank.

*Psst! Check your work in the answer key.*

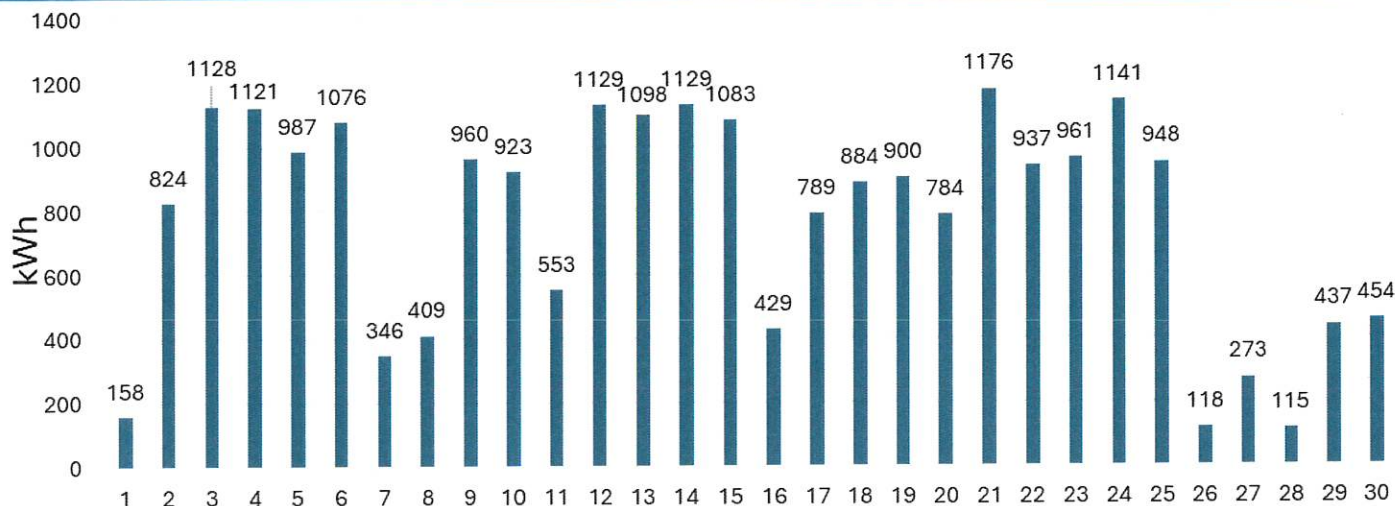
1. When possible, use \_\_\_\_\_ operated or rechargeable devices when you're near water sources like a swimming pool.
2. If you hear \_\_\_\_\_ while swimming, go inside until storms have passed.
3. Never bring \_\_\_\_\_ devices near a swimming pool or other body of water. Devices should be kept at least 10 feet away from water sources.
4. All outdoor electrical outlets should be covered and kept \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Never handle electrical devices if you are \_\_\_\_\_ from swimming or other water activities.

### WORD BANK

thunder wet battery dry electrical

*Answer key: 1) battery 2) thunder 3) electrical 4) dry 5) wet*

## March 2024 Solar Park Production



## Operating Statistics for April 2024

	2023	2024
Billed consumers, farm .....	1,147	1,156
Billed consumers, non-farm and others.....	121	122
Kilowatts sold, farm.....	2,344,084	2,311,345
Kilowatts sold, non-farm and others.....	3,074,439	4,952,372
Average consumption, farm .....	2,044	1,999
Average consumption, non-farm and others .....	25,409	40,593
Average statement, farm.....	\$229.68	\$241.48
Average statement, non-farm and others.....	\$2,404.51	\$3,403.23
Total minimum bills.....	24	23
Outage time per consumer—minutes.....	0	0
Energy efficiency added per KWH .....		0.00022
Annual meeting date.....	March 2025	



## Concern for Community

Osceola Electric Cooperative doubled contributions to worthy causes across the county through participation in CoBank's Sharing Success program. CoBank is a national non-profit bank owned by the rural American cooperatives it services. Twelve years ago CoBank established the Sharing Success program to match donations made by their customer-owners. Each customer may apply for up to four matching grants.

This year OEC Board of Directors selected the Osceola County Fair Board, Osceola County Ag Pavilion, Osceola County Fire Departments, and the Sibley-Ocheyedan Booster Club to be recipients of the matching funds.

Osceola County remains a great place to live and work thanks to these wonderful residents and organizations!



## Nominate a Local Volunteer by June 30!

Do you know someone in our community who deserves to be recognized for making a difference? Nominate them for the Shine the Light contest by June 30 and they could win \$3,000 for their local charity or nonprofit.

"We're really excited to participate in this statewide effort to celebrate our cooperative commitment to community," remarked General Manager, Jeff TenNapel "There are so many incredible volunteers throughout our service area who deserve to be recognized."

Sponsored by the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa, this is the fourth year of the Shine the Light contest, which celebrates the people who make our communities better. Three winners will be announced in September and each will receive a \$3,000 donation for their charity or nonprofit. The winners will also be featured in the September issue of *Iowa Electric*

*Cooperative Living* magazine and on social media.

### How to Nominate

Member-consumers and employees of Iowa's electric cooperatives are eligible to nominate local volunteers. If you receive electricity from Osceola Electric Cooperative, you're a co-op member-consumer and we encourage you to nominate someone who is making a positive impact in the community. The volunteer being nominated does not need to be a co-op member-consumer. Minors may be nominated with consent from their parents or legal guardians.

Go to [www.iowaShineTheLight.com](http://www.iowaShineTheLight.com) by June 30 to make a nomination and to review the contest rules. Nominators will need to provide basic contact information and answer this question in 500 words or less: *How has your nominee made a difference in the commu-*



*nity and how might their local charity/nonprofit use the \$2,500 donation?*

Help us shine the light on our community volunteers; make a nomination by June 30!



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Did you know ceiling fans can help you save energy? Ceiling fans create a windchill effect on your skin to make you feel a few degrees cooler. Raise the thermostat a few degrees and turn on fans to reduce air conditioning costs.

Set fan blades to rotate counterclockwise during summer months and clockwise during winter months. Remember, ceiling fans cool people but don't actually lower the indoor temperature. Turn them off when you leave the room.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)

## Energy Scams Unmasked

Consumers with water, gas and electricity connections have long been targets for utility scams. But in today's digital world, every swipe and click increases the risk of potential scams.

Scammers are more sophisticated than ever before, and they understand our increasing reliance on technology. With their sharpened digital knives, scammers have adapted their tactics to trick unsuspecting consumers through a variety of methods.

Osceola Electric Cooperative wants to help you avoid energy scams, whether a financial loss or leak of your personal information. This month, we'd like to share updates on some of the latest utility scams, as well as tips to help you stay safe from even the craftiest scammers.

### Recent Utility Scams

Scammers typically disguise themselves—either physically or digitally—as utility employees or representatives to steal consumers' money or personal information. A common trick is to claim a consumer's bill is past due and threaten to disconnect service if payment isn't received immediately. Scammers approach consumers through a variety of means, including phone calls, text messages, **45414** emails and even in-person visits. However, the digital line of attack is increasingly more common.

For example, new capabilities disguising caller ID or "spoofing" can make the

phone number you see on caller ID appear to be from a trusted source. Spoofing makes it easier for scammers to deceive you because it's more difficult to immediately verify the call. **30225** Another recent scam uses fraudulent websites that are identical to a utility payment webpage—and what's worse, these pages are often promoted on search engines to trick consumers into clicking and making a payment.

Another recent scam involves phone calls, text messages or emails claiming you overpaid your electric bill and will receive a cash or banking refund. This offer may seem too good to be true, and it is—it's likely a scam aimed to steal your personal information. **40953**

### Spotting a Scam

There are several red flags you can watch for to identify an energy scam.

Scammers often use high-pressure tactics to create a sense of urgency, like claiming your electricity or other services will be disconnected if a payment isn't made immediately.

Additionally, scammers may ask for unusual payment methods such as gift cards or cryptocurrency. If someone is pushing for an unusual payment method, it's likely a scam.

You've probably noticed that many digital scams, like emails or text messages, include poor grammar, spelling errors and odd email addresses. These are red flags, so when you see these dodgy forms of communication, consider it a potential scam.

### Avoiding Scams

Whether in-person, over the phone or online, always be suspicious of an unknown individual claiming to be an OEC employee requesting banking or other personal information.

If you're ever in doubt about a potential energy scam, just give us a quick call at 712-754-2519 so we can assist. Osceola Electric Cooperative wants to help protect you and our community against utility frauds, and by notifying us about potential scams, you can create the first line of defense. We encourage you to report any potential scams so we can spread the word and prevent others in our community from falling victim.

### SIGNS OF AN

## ENERGY SCAM

#### High-Pressure Tactics

Scammers will pressure you, creating a sense of urgency. Claims that your power will be disconnected without immediate payment are common with utility scams.

#### Sketchy Payment Methods

Scammers may ask for unusual payment methods like gift cards or cryptocurrency. In these cases, it's likely a scam.

#### Dodgy Communication

Whether an email, text message or letter, utility scams typically include poor grammar, spelling errors or unusual email addresses. These are common warning signs of a scam.



Plans are underway for the Osceola Electric Cooperative Member Appreciation Meal. Mark your calendars for August 27 and watch for more details to come.