

OEC Current

Otsego Electric Cooperative
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Office Hours
7:30 – 4:00
Monday – Friday

Phone:
607-293-6622

Pay-by-Phone
1-844-963-2837
After Hours and Outages:
1-866-591-3192

Call **UDIG New York** before
you dig at **811** or
1-800-962-7962



New Year’s Day— January 1st—Office Closed

Martin Luther King Day—January 20th—Office Closed

President’s Day—February 17th—Office Closed

Winter Outages

The two early snowstorms have caused many outages in our system and much frustration with restoration times. We understand the frustration so we want to provide deeper explanation of the issues. We appreciate your comments and constructive criticism and rest assured, it does not go unnoticed by all of us here at OEC. Heavy wet snows create tremendous stress points on poles, wires, attachments and trees and limbs fall on wires and this causes fuses to blow. Our system has thousands of fuses that are placed for safety of the public and the system. OEC has 770 miles of right of way that is 30-foot wide. Almost all of the system is above ground and it runs through remote and heavily wooded areas. We do not provide service in villages or hamlets generally so the terrain is rugged and sometimes pole lines are offroad. OEC has pursued a program of moving off-road lines to roadways for over 20 years now. That helps with restoration but the system was built on the shortest distances between points so there are years of construction practices to overcome. OEC has recently been awarded two recent grants that will be focused on vegetation and system management. We will be addressing the spread of dead ash trees caused by the Emerald Ash Borer. We will also be using drones to analyze the biggest problem areas to target VM programs and system hardening. These grants will help us continue to enhance our vegetation management, system resiliency, and outage management practices. In the meantime, we strongly urge all members to make plans to adapt in the event of extended outages. Weather patterns will continue to create multi-day events. Please consider obtaining a generator and make an evacuation plan so you can stay warm when temperatures drop during our cold seasons.

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May Your Holidays Be Merry and Bright

This festive time of year brings joy and warmth, but as the weather gets cooler and we spend more time indoors, the holidays can also bring increased energy use and a higher risk of electrical and fire hazards.

As your local cooperative, our team at Otsego Electric cares about your wellbeing. This month, we would like to share a few practical tips to help you stay safe and efficient during the Holiday season.

As many of us enjoy decorating our homes for the holiday season, we need to ensure that we always check our electrical cords and light strands to make sure they aren't frayed or damaged. You should also always ensure that the lights you are going to use outside are rated for outdoor use.

Many households enjoy the use of holiday-scented candles as well!

Festive, candles can create fire hazards and should never be left unattended. One of the best and easiest ways to safeguard your home it to ensure you test your smoke alarms often. It only takes a few seconds but it can save lives, so please ensure you make this a regular habit!

With many spending more time indoors and with guests in our house, it really can make an impact on your energy use, but if we take a few small steps we can all remain efficient and keep our costs down!

Since heating and cooling make up the majority of home energy consumption, the thermostat is one of the best place for savings. Lowering it a few degrees, especially with extra people in the house, can help keep your costs down.

When decorating, consider using LED lights as they are more efficient and often last longer than traditional bulbs.

Meals together is one of the staples of our holiday celebrations. One way to help save in this area is to use smaller countertop appliances, such as air fryers, slow cookers and toaster ovens. These appliances consume a fraction of the energy used to heat an oven and can help keep your costs down. We hope each and every one of our members will consider implementing some of our tips and continue to look to us for more safety and efficiency tips!

—*From your friends at Otsego Electric, we hope your holiday season is merry and bright!*



Tips for a Safe and Efficient Holiday Season

This holiday season, keep energy savings and electrical safety in mind.

SAVE ENERGY

- Use smaller appliances like slow cookers instead of the oven.
- Lower the thermostat when hosting friends and family.
- Decorate with energy-saving LED lights.

PRIORITIZE SAFETY

- Never leave unattended candles burning.
- Ensure all smoke alarms are working.
- When decorating, inspect all light strands and cords for damage.



Payment Assistance & Community Resources

We understand that situations arise when it can be difficult to pay your bills, especially as costs rise with lower winter temperatures. If you need assistance paying your bills, there are programs, such as HEAP, that are available to assist you. In order to find out if you qualify, you can visit www.mybenefits.ny.gov or call one of the following numbers for assistance:

Otsego County Department of Social Services 607-547-1700
Chenango County Department of Social Services 607-337-1500
Madison County Department of Social Services 315-366-2211
Herkimer County Department of Social Services 315-867-1220
Opportunities for Otsego 607-433-8000
Catholic Charities 607-432-0061
Office for the Aging 607-547-4232

