



**Otsego Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



# THE OEC CURRENT

People You Can Count On

[www.otsegoec.coop](http://www.otsegoec.coop)

January/February 2018

## Happy New Year!

There is always something to look forward to with the start of a new year. We are hitting the ground running in 2018. We will be breaking ground on the Broadband Project starting from our Laurens substation. We will also be placing our communications shelters at our Laurens, Oaksville, and Richfield substations on January 11, 2018. This Broadband project will provide a direct benefit to our members and the community. We are looking at April, 2018 to start adding services.



In 2017, we gathered GPS data for over two-thirds of our system. Our data collection is going well and we should have our entire system finished by the middle of 2018. We still have the Towns of Cherry Valley, Middlefield, Springfield, and Westford to complete. This data collection is helping us get our system maps up to date and more accurate, allowing us to determine our pole attachments. This information will help us with outage restoration and planning for new services. Because we are doing it ourselves, it's helping us control the cost of the project.

We are continuing to emphasize right-of-way maintenance in 2018. We have to address more of the higher canopy trimming in order to minimize costly outages. Tree growth was very rapid in 2017. In January and February, we will be trimming trees in the Towns of Laurens and Otsego.

We are trying to control costs in many ways by working more efficiently, leveraging technology, and consolidating job duties. We have several financial hurdles to overcome. We pay a lot in property taxes and many of our other costs continue to rise while our sales of electricity has been staying about the same for several years. We added 75 new services in 2017 which is helpful and we see this as a positive trend. This is 35 more services than we added in 2016. We are constantly looking at ways to grow the cooperative and to operate more efficiently.

We will be focusing more on economic development in 2018. Rural life offers many positives like low crime, open spaces, diverse recreation, clean air and water and relatively low taxes. We believe we need to do a better job of promoting these benefits to attract and retain more people.

We are looking forward to the New Year, so, how do we serve you better in 2018? The same way many of us try to serve our families and our communities each day—by listening to you, our members, in our offices, on telephones, through social media exchanges and in our face-to-face meetings. We are always ready to listen so please contact us when you want to talk. When you have questions about energy efficiency, electrical service or any of our products or services, just ask us. When we know just what you want, you put us in a better position to deliver our services successfully. Drop in to see us, we're always glad to hear from you.

## Broadband Presentation!



We will be doing a public information meeting at the Laurens Central School on Saturday, January 20, 2018 at 2:00PM. We will be starting to build our Broadband project from our substation on County Route 10 in the Town of Laurens.

This meeting will be an opportunity for us to update you, our co-op members and the community on the status of the project. If you have questions about the project, we would like to see you there. We plan to hold other meetings at various locations around the county throughout 2018.

## Congratulations!

With deep appreciation for his 39 years of dedicated service, we hereby announce that Mr. Roger Erway has resigned from the Otsego Electric Cooperative Board of Directors. We thank Roger for his dedication to the members of OEC. Mr. Erway has been a Cooperative member for 47 years while operating a dairy farm on Cornish Hill Road in the Town of Middlefield with his wife Beverley and other family members. Roger has played an important role on the board as a strong voice for farmers and all small businesses served by OEC. The cooperative bylaws direct that this board position will not be filled, bringing the number of board members to seven. Thank you Roger and enjoy retirement!



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There is a service map location number in this newsletter. Your map location number is located on your bill. If you find your map location number in this newsletter, call the office within 15 days and your account will be credited \$25.

## Idle Service Fees

The Board of Directors adopted a policy change regarding seasonal meter disconnects. The policy change was made to allocate fixed costs more fairly to all members who benefit from operations when they need them. If the cooperative disconnects a meter, there will continue to be a \$25.66 monthly Idle Service Fee as long as the cooperative-owned equipment (meter, transformer, etc.) remains on site. The fee stops when the equipment is fully removed at your request. If you have an inactive service and you don't plan on reconnecting it, please contact us so we can make arrangements to retire it. We will be sending out letters in early 2018 to locations with inactive services reminding members that as long as there is cooperative equipment there, an idle service monthly fee of \$25.66 will be charged until the equipment is retired.

## Space Heater Safety

Did you know 32% of home heating fires are caused by space heaters? Follow these tips if you're using a space heater to warm things up:

- Don't leave your space heater unattended. Always unplug before you leave the house or go to bed.
- Don't use an extension cord to plug in your space heater. It can cause the heater to overheat and can be a tripping hazard.
- Don't place a space heater near furniture, curtains, clothing or bedding.
- Buy a unit with an automatic shutoff in case it tips over.



## SmartHub App

If you have not done so already, you can log into SmartHub and set up auto-pay, e-billing and text notifications. We also have a smart phone app available for your convenience. Please call the office or stop by if you would like assistance setting up your account.

To download the phone app visit:

<http://www.smarthubapp.com>



## FREE Trip!

**Do you have a High School Junior living in your home?**

There is an all-expense paid trip to the 2018 National Rural Electric Cooperative Legislative Conference in Washington D.C., available to a high school Junior who lives on the Otsego Electric Cooperative lines. This year's conference runs from April 8<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup>. This is a great way to build up a resume for your college applications and to get to know how our government works on a first-hand basis.

The conference is a national lobbying effort by our nation's rural electric cooperatives to inform our Congressmen and women about rural electric issues and other important topics affecting rural America. The student and chaperone will tour the Capitol area and accompany cooperative delegates on visits with U.S. Senators and Representatives from New York State.

The deadline to apply is getting close. Interested students can contact Mr. Allen at 607-293-6622.

*Applications are due by March 1, 2018.*



The Cooperative Office will be closed on Monday  
January 15, 2018  
for

***Martin Luther King Jr. Day***

*"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that." ~ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Looking for an easy way to make your home cozier? Try using an area rug to increase the insulation levels of your floors. Area rugs are stylish and can keep cool air from entering through your floors. Your toes will thank you!



## Otsego Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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Office Hours  
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Monday – Friday

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Outages:  
**1-866-591-3192**

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**1-800-962-7962**

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