



# Oneida-Madison Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## COOPERATIVE NEWS

### Roy Named 2026 Student Scholarship Awardee

Student scholarship winner Thomas Roy joined OMEC and the New York State Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NYSRECA) in Washington, D.C. this April to advocate for the needs of electric cooperatives across the country.

Alongside his peers from across New York, Thomas had the opportunity to meet with congressional leaders, learn firsthand about the legislative process, and gain valuable insight into advocacy work on behalf of rural communities. He also had time to explore some of our nation’s most iconic landmarks, including monuments, museums, and even the Library of Congress.

Thomas, the son of Kathy and Dennis Roy of Hamilton, is a junior at Hamilton Central School. A standout student-

athlete who participates in three varsity sports, he is also deeply involved in both his school and local community.

We’re incredibly proud of Thomas and all he has accomplished. While we may be a little biased, we have a feeling this is just the beginning for him!

Left: Thomas Roy and Congressman, John Mannion outside Mannion’s office



### Notes & Information

Normal Office Hours are as follows: **7:30am-4pm**

**Monday-Friday**  
Office Location:  
**6630 State Rt 20**  
**Bouckville, NY 13310**

Call **(315) 893-1851** 24 hours a day for assistance with power outages and/or emergencies

### Your Board of Directors

**Rudy Brouillette,**  
President

**John Lehr**  
Vice President

**Dan Saulsgiver**  
Secretary/Treasurer

**Scott Bugbee**  
Director

**Seth Howard**  
Director

**James Nassimos**  
Director

**Kurt Peavey**  
Director

**Save the Date**  
The office will be closed for the following holidays:

**Independence Day**  
Friday, July 3, 2026  
**Labor Day**  
Monday, Sept 7, 2026

## OMEC's Line Extension Policy Changes

OMEC's Board of Directors recently approved updates to the Cooperative's line extension policies. Historically, line extension policies were designed during a period when expanding electric service across rural areas benefited the entire Cooperative through system growth and increased membership. Today, most new extensions primarily benefit an individual property owner or project rather than the membership as a whole.

The revised policies are intended to modernize how projects are estimated and managed by aligning costs directly with the actual cost of construction, including labor, materials, equipment, and site-specific conditions. OMEC remains a not-for-profit cooperative, and members are charged only **the actual costs required to provide service**, not a marked-up rate designed for profit. The goal is to reduce the amount of private construction costs that are

*Your map location, found on your billing statement, may be found somewhere in this newsletter. If you find **your own**, contact our office by August 3, 2026, and your account will be credited \$10!*

For the most up-to-date information on outages, contests, rebates, and more, like and follow us on Facebook!



Don't have social media? Check out our website at <https://oneidamadison.coop>

subsidized by the general membership.

Whether you are building a new home, garage, or expanding your business, OMEC remains committed to helping guide our members through the process from start to finish, working together to bring reliable electric service to your project.

If you have any questions about a potential line extension, please contact the office at 315-893-1851 or [office@oneidamadison.com](mailto:office@oneidamadison.com).



# Understanding OMEC's Updated Line Extension Policies



OMEC's line extension policies were recently updated to better reflect today's construction costs, system requirements, and the unique needs of each project ensuring the process is fair, transparent, and sustainable for all members.

What's Changing		The Details	
<p><b>THEN</b> When policies were created</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Focus on expanding service and growing membership</li> <li> New extensions benefited the membership as a whole</li> <li> Costs spread across a rapidly growing membership base</li> </ul>	<p><b>NOW</b> Today's reality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Mature service territory with limited opportunities for broad expansion</li> <li> Extensions often benefit a single property or project</li> <li> Costs should be assigned fairly—not subsidized by the membership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Cost-Based Estimates</b> Estimates are based on the actual anticipated cost to construct your service including labor, materials, equipment, engineering, and overhead.</li> <li> <b>Not For Profit</b> OMEC does not profit from line extensions. You pay what it actually costs to build your service.</li> <li> <b>Project-Specific Design</b> Each project is designed and estimated based on actual site conditions. We no longer use "per-foot" pricing or verbal estimates as official pricing.</li> <li> <b>Reconcile to Actual Cost</b> Estimates are based on the best information available. Once construction is complete, the project is reconciled to actual cost.</li> </ul>	

### WHAT IMPACTS THE COST OF A LINE EXTENSION?

No two projects are the same. Many factors can affect the final cost of construction.

TERRAIN	DISTANCE	EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS	SITE ACCESS	ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS	SERVICE SIZE AND TYPE

### HOW THE PROCESS WORKS

- REQUEST**  
You contact OMEC about your project.
- DESIGN & ESTIMATE**  
We design the project and provide a written estimate.
- AGREEMENT & DEPOSIT**  
You review and sign the estimate agreement and provide the required deposit.
- CONSTRUCTION**  
OMEC builds the line extension according to design and approved standards.
- RECONCILE TO ACTUAL COST**  
We compare estimated costs to actual costs.
- FINAL BILLING & ENERGIZATION**  
Any balance is billed before the service is energized.

### DEPOSITS

A deposit is required before construction begins. The amount is based on the estimated cost of your project.

= **Deposit Required = Project Estimate**

### TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

The updated policies create a clearer, more consistent process for members built on fairness and transparency.

<b>FAIR TO ALL MEMBERS</b>	<b>CLEAR PROCESS</b>	<b>GREATER TRANSPARENCY</b>	<b>SUSTAINABLE FOR THE FUTURE</b>
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**QUESTIONS?**  
We're here to help. Contact OMEC to discuss your project or review the updated policies.

OMEC is committed to providing safe, reliable electric service today and for generations to come.  
*Thank you for being a valued member.*

## The Importance of Vegetation Management

### Have a Question about Trees?

Send an email to: [trees@oneidamadison.com](mailto:trees@oneidamadison.com)

Please include *at least 3 photos* of the trees/powerlines in question as well as a detailed description of the problem and location.

This allows us to triage and work on the most severe cases first.

Please remember that while our crew can and will cut trees that pose a danger to electric infrastructure and reliability, we are first and foremost a utility, not a vegetation management organization. If your trees are outside of the right-of-way, we recommend hiring a local tree service to assist you.

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There's something timeless about trees. They ground us. They remind us of where we've been, and they stretch toward what's ahead. Here in our community, we take pride in the natural beauty that surrounds us; the shade on a summer afternoon, the colors that mark the changing seasons, the quiet strength of something that grows slowly but endures.

At the same time, we share another responsibility, one that's just as essential to our daily lives. The responsibility to keep the lights on, to power our homes and businesses, to make sure that when you flip a switch, the energy you depend on is there.

That's why OMEC works every day to strike a careful balance between preserving the beauty we cherish and delivering the reliable electricity you expect.

One of the most important ways we do that is through regular tree trimming.

Now, it may not always be obvious, but keeping lines clear of overgrown vegetation plays a major role in preventing power outages. We've all seen what can happen when severe weather rolls in—strong winds, heavy ice or sudden storms can bring down branches and, with them, power lines and poles. In fact, more than half of all power outages can be traced back to trees and vegetation coming into contact with electrical infrastructure.

That's why you may notice crews from OMEC or our trusted contractors working in neighborhoods throughout the year. Our crews are highly trained and certified, following the latest industry standards to ensure the job is done safely and effectively. Their work might seem routine, but it's anything but—it's a proactive step that helps prevent problems before they start.

And it's not just good practice—it's required. Electric utilities across the country are obligated to manage vegetation near power lines.

Scheduled trimming helps remove dead or weakened limbs and keeps fast-growing trees from becoming hazards.

It's about staying one step ahead, especially as we prepare for the increasing frequency and intensity of severe weather events. But beyond reliability and efficiency, there's another reason this work matters: safety.



Electricity is a powerful force, and when trees grow too close to power lines, that power can become dangerous. Branches that touch lines—or even come close—can carry electrical current. Children climbing trees in their own yards may not realize the risk. And during storms, fallen trees can create hazardous conditions not only for families but also for our lineworkers working to restore service.

There's also a financial reality we can't ignore. Preventative maintenance—like tree trimming—is far more cost-effective than repairing widespread damage after an outage. Left unchecked, overgrown vegetation can lead to more frequent disruptions and higher costs for everyone. A thoughtful, strategic vegetation management program helps keep those costs down for our members. You can help, too. When planting new trees, consider their mature height and distance from nearby power lines. Trees that grow up to 40 feet should be planted at least 25 feet away from overhead lines. Larger trees—those that exceed 40 feet—should be planted at least 50 feet away. If you're landscaping near pad-mounted transformers, keep shrubs at least 10 feet from the front and 4 feet from the sides to allow safe access.

At the end of the day, we all want the same thing: a community that's safe, resilient, and beautiful. At OMEC we're proud to be part of that effort. Our roots run deep here, just like the trees we work to care for.

## Connect, Learn, and be Empowered: Introducing Our New Website!

We're excited to announce the launch of our brand-new website, designed with YOU, our valued member, in mind!

We heard your feedback and understood the need for a website that empowers you and simplifies your experience. This redesign is all about putting you at the center, making it easier to find the information and resources you need, connect with staff members, and maximize your membership benefits.

### So, what's new?

**Find What You Need, Fast:** No more endless searching. We've implemented a powerful search engine that allows you to quickly find the information you're looking for, be it membership details, upcoming events, or helpful articles.

**A Wealth of Knowledge:** Dive into our enhanced resources. The site is brimming with webforms for quick and easy communication, a searchable database for unclaimed capital credits, and the most up-to-date information available.

**Seamless on Any Device:** Our website is fully responsive, ensuring a smooth experience whether you're using a desktop, tablet, or smartphone.

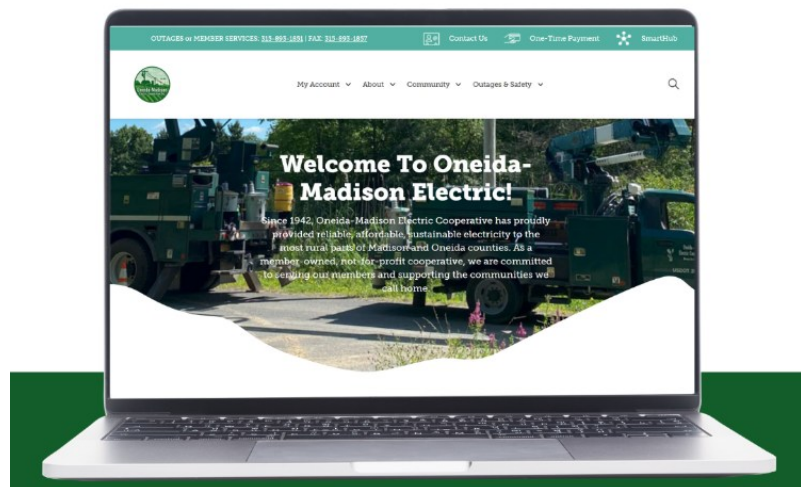
### Explore Your New Member Hub Today!

Head over to **oneida-madison.coop** and explore the all-new website. We're confident it will become your go-to resource for everything energy-related.

**Don't forget!** We're here to support you. If you have any questions or need assistance navigating the new website, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at **office@oneidamadison.com**

## We're Live!

Explore our Brand-New  
Website Today



## *At Home with Hazel*

*This is **Not** a Potato Salad. But it's not not a potato salad either. Served warm or at room temperature, this delicious side dish is the perfect combination of a BBQ staple and a fresh new twist.*

### Ingredients

- **3** pounds Ontario new or fingerling potatoes, halved lengthwise
- **2** bunches asparagus, trimmed then cut into 1- or 1½-inch pieces on the bias
- **½** red onion, diced
- **1** bunch fresh dill, chopped
- **⅓** cup mayonnaise
- **¼** cup Dijon mustard
- sprinkle kosher salt
- sprinkle black pepper
- drizzle extra virgin olive oil



### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 425°F with the rack in the top position. Place potatoes into a bowl. Drizzle with oil and a sprinkle of salt and pepper then toss to combine. Spill onto an unlined baking sheet. Transfer to oven and roast for 30 minutes, tossing them in the pan at the 15-minute mark.
2. Remove pan from oven. Toss potatoes on the sheet before adding asparagus, distributing it evenly over the potatoes. Return pan to oven and roast for an additional 5 minutes.
3. Transfer potatoes and asparagus into a large mixing bowl. Add onion, dill, mayonnaise and mustard. Toss gently to combine. Taste then season with additional salt, if desired. Serve immediately.





## Wattson's Window

“Life isn't fair.”

That was my mantra for a long time while living on the streets. Survival often meant fighting tooth and claw just to make it through another day. In many ways, that statement can feel true. But when it comes to being a member of our co-op, it couldn't be further from the reality.

Your Board of Directors and CEO, Brian Bell, take the Seven Cooperative Principles seriously, especially Principle #2: Democratic Member Control. Cooperatives are democratic organizations governed by their members, who actively participate in shaping policies and making decisions. Every member of the Board is someone you elected to represent the interests of the membership as a whole. When policies are created or updated, the

focus is always on fairness, equity, and what best serves the entire cooperative community.

As mentioned earlier in this newsletter, line extension policies have recently been updated. These changes are designed to ensure that the broader membership is not subsidizing individual projects. At the same time, it's important to remember that because we are a not-for-profit organization, members only ever pay the actual cost of an extension or new build- nothing more.

Reviewing policies, procedures, rules, and regulations for updates is something we do annually as one more way to better serve you.

In the coming weeks, you can expect to see information including guidance, best practices, and a checklist for charging EVs at home. Additionally, we hope you take a glance at the new and revised website which can be found at <https://oneida-madison.coop>. And as always, remember to like and follow our Facebook page for the most up-to-date information regarding outages, tips, information, and more.

You don't have to claw your way through life when you're a member of the cooperative. Many paws make for light work when we all contribute equitably and fairly. And if you've got questions, we've got answers— give us a call at 315-893-1851 or shoot over an email at [office@oneidamadison.com](mailto:office@oneidamadison.com)

Respectfully yours,

*Wattson*

