



MAY 2022

COOPERATIVE NEWS

A Message from General Manager & CEO Brian Bell to our Members:

We here at Oneida-Madison Electric Cooperative take immense pride in maintaining your electric distribution system. Preventative maintenance, line relocations, pole replacements and right-of-way tree clearance all ensure that we provide our membership with safe, reliable electricity.

However, sometimes Mother Nature has different ideas. Early Tuesday morning, April 19th, central New York experienced a significant snowstorm causing widespread outages throughout the state. We estimated at the peak of the storm, approximately 75% of our members were in the dark. Our line crew responded swiftly and worked tirelessly throughout the next few days to restore power as quickly as possible in a safe manner.

Our office staff diligently answered hundreds of phone calls and emails, all while relaying critical outage information to our line crew.

I am extremely proud of how our staff managed the storm and restored power in record time!

In every cloud, or in this case, snowstorm, there is a silver lining. Our silver lining this time was you! Our members' feedback was both supportive and critical. We reaffirmed that our members are caring and appreciative of the hard work, long hours, and dangerous nature of the service we provide. We also learned there are areas in which we need to improve. You let us know that it can be very frustrating to get a constant busy signal on our phones. We learned that reporting an outage online may not be the easiest, but most of all, we learned that our members want transparency, information, and timely updates.

I want our membership to know that **"We hear You!!"** We are devoting our efforts to improve in those areas. Our website has already had a major overhaul, we have created an official Facebook page that we encourage all of our members to like and follow, and we are working toward improving our phone system. As always, we strive to put our members needs first and foremost as we continue to provide you with safe, affordable electricity and maintain an open line of communication to YOUR Electric Cooperative.

Sincerely and appreciatively,

Brian Bell, General Manager & CEO



Pictured above: Line Foreman, Barry Tallman

Notes & Information

Normal Office Hours are as follows:

7:30am-4pm, Monday-Friday

Office Location: 6630 State Rt 20

P.O. Box 27, 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

Tom Stone, Vice President

Dan Saulsgiver, Secretary/
Treasurer

Seth Howard

John Lehr

James Nassimos

Kurt Peavey

Photo Contest

**ENTRY FORMS, RULES,
AND GENERAL
INFORMATION
AVAILABLE ON OUR
WEBSITE:**

**ONEIDA-
MADISON.COOP/NEWS**



1ST ANNUAL MEMBER PHOTO CONTEST

Oneida-Madison Electric Co-op is looking for entries for our 2022 photo contest. Winners will be featured in our 2023 calendar!

The contest is open until August 1, 2022. We are looking for photos that represent life in our service area- whether they are action shots or landscape views. Entrants must be Oneida-Madison Co-op members. All photos must be the original work of the entrant and taken within the co-op's service territory.



**GIVE US YOUR BEST
SHOT!!**

**HAVE YOUR PHOTO
FEATURED IN OUR
2023 CALENDAR!**

**CALENDARS WILL
BE AVAILABLE AT
OUR ANNUAL
MEETING!**

**ANY OMEC MEMBER
OR CHILD OF A
MEMBER MAY
ENTER!**

ONEIDA-MADISON ELECTRIC CO-OP

6630 State Rt. 20
P.O. Box 27
Bouckville, NY 13310

315-893-1851

oneida-madison.coop

Understanding Your Bill: PPA Charge

The PPA, or Purchased Power Agreement, helps OMEC manage the unpredictable cost of wholesale energy.

OMEC has a long-term contract with NYPA, or New York Power Authority, to provide an allotment of fixed-cost energy. Energy purchased above that allotment is at a wholesale market rate. These costs can vary greatly depending on the market.

OMEC absorbs the high market costs and periodically adjusts the PPA rate to help level out those high energy costs before its passed down to it's members.

As of February 28, 2022, the Board of Directors increased members' PPA charge from 1¢ per kilowatt hour to 2¢ per kilowatt hour due to the rising costs of energy throughout the nation.

According to the United States Congress Joint Economic Committee, "Measured from December 2019, before the pandemic disrupted global markets, energy prices are now 20 percent higher. Due to these high energy prices, researchers estimate that the average American household spent \$1,200 more on energy costs alone in 2021, compared to the previous year."

Your Board of Directors is doing everything they can to keep Member rates as low as possible while still maintaining the operating costs of your non-for-profit Cooperative!

*Your map location, found on your billing statement, may be found somewhere in this document!
If you find it, contact our office by July 1st and your account will be credited \$10!*

Celebrating Lineworker Appreciation Day!

April 11, 2022 was National Lineworker Appreciation Day and what better opportunity to thank our fellas for the work they do for us and our Cooperative.

No matter the weather, time of day, or time of year, these guys go out to fix whatever problems have arisen. Carrying up to 50 lbs. of equipment and gear, they climb poles that are 30-120 feet in the air, sometimes in the most treacherous of conditions, to keep our power on and maintain and repair our electric system.

Rated as one of the top ten most dangerous jobs in the United States, being a lineworker is not for the faint of heart. It takes years of training, education, dedication, and commitment. Our four linemen service over 260 miles across Madison and Oneida counties, working around the clock, and in all weather conditions to keep the lights on.

We appreciate them (and their families!) everyday! If you see a lineworker, make sure to thank them for their exceptional service to our membership and community. Afterall, lineworkers are the power behind your power!

Pictured from left to right: Apprentice Lineman, Ethan Johnson, 1st Class Lineman, Joe Wyman, Line Foreman, Barry Tallman, and 1st Class 2nd Grade Lineman, Dylan Clark.



Save the Date!

The Office will be closed for the following holidays:

Memorial Day: May 30th

Independence Day: July 4th

Labor Day: Sept 5th

Join us for our

Annual Meeting

at Madison

Central School, Friday,

October 7, 2022

Food! Music! Prizes!

Keep in touch!!

Check out our

new & improved

website at

Oneida-Madison.coop

For vital information, updates,
& news about

YOUR COOPERATIVE!

And don't forget to like and

follow us on facebook!





Don't Forget to Update Your Contact Information!

Did you recently move, change phone numbers or email addresses?

Please LET US KNOW!!

Even if you're no longer a member, we implore you to keep us informed of your most up-to-date contact information!

Sometimes we're trying to send you your Capital Credit Refunds and if we can't contact you to mail them to the proper address, they go into an uncollected fund!

Please call the office at (315) 893-1851 or email office@oneidamadison.com to contact one of our Member Service Representatives to update your info!

Capital Credits– All the FAQs You Need to Know!

What are Capital Credits?

Capital Credits represent each member's ownership of the Cooperative. They are the margins credited (or allocated) to the members of the Cooperative based on their purchases from the Cooperative the previous year. These margins are used by the Cooperative as capital to operate the business for a period of time.

What Capital Credits are NOT:

Capital Credits should not be confused with profits, which are a return on capital. Retirement of Capital Credits is a return of member-furnished capital. Cooperatives exist, not to make a profit, but to provide low-cost electricity.

What's the Difference Between Allocations and Retirement?

Allocations are made annually for each member, based on the amount you paid to the cooperative the previous year. An allocation is the amount set aside into a separate account to be used as operating capital for reliability improvements and maintenance over a period of years.

A retirement is the amount you receive back as a Capital Credit refund. It is a percentage of your total capital credit balance. The amount to retire is decided by the Board of Directors annually, based upon the financial condition of the cooperative.

Can I Use My Capital Credit Allocation to Pay My Bill?

No. Allocations are used as the operating capital of the cooperative. They are not available until a retirement is approved by the Board of Directors. They base their decision on the financial condition of the Cooperative.

Why Can't My Capital Credit Allocations be Refunded to Me All at Once?

Remember that capital credit funds are used for reliability improvements and

maintenance— and these are long-term investments. They help the cooperative remain financially sound, thereby ensuring a stable, reliable electric service for the benefit of the members we serve. The federal government and the Cooperative's other lenders require that a certain portion of the electric system be funded by member equity.

How are My Capital Credit Allocations Used Until I Receive Them?

Capital credit allocations are pooled together and used as operating capital so that we can serve our members with reliable power. These funds pay for a portion of the power reliability improvements and maintenance such as replacing power line or building substations.

When Do You Refund (or Retire) Capital Credits?

When the Board of Directors has determined the financial condition allows a retirement of capital credits, the Board can approve a portion of the capital credit funds to be retired (or refunded) to the membership.

How Will I Receive My Capital Credit Refund?

Capital Credits are applied to your electric bill if you are an active member. Checks are issued to inactive members.

What's the Last Year That the Board of Directors Retired the Capital Credits From?

2005!



Meet Our Employees: The OMEC Staff Dedicated to Serving You and Your Cooperative!

Here at OMEC we are devoted to serving you! With our eight full-time employees, we do our best to keep your lines up and running, and your bills paid and questions answered in a timely manner.

In the office, we have Amy Fitch, whose been an employee with OMEC for over 5 years. Amy, her husband, Matt, and their two children live in Bridgewater on their family dairy farm. Amy is knowledgeable, sharp, and a huge asset in keeping the daily affairs of OMEC running smoothly.

New to OMEC this January, is Member Service Representative, Vanessa Woodcock. Vanessa and her husband, Ken, along with their two kids, hail from the Erieville area. As a licensed notary with a background in accounting, Vanessa handles much of the billing and payments for OMEC.

Also new this January is Member Service Representative, Kyla Lawrence. Kyla, her boyfriend, Nick, and their two kids live in Madison. You may have seen Kyla out and about, reading your meter! As a jack-of-all-trades, so to speak, Kyla's position requires her to be inside and outside the office.

Pictured from left to right: Amy Fitch, Kyla Lawrence, and Vanessa Woodcock



Customer Charge Increase Begins May 28, 2022

On March 22, 2022, the Board of Directors voted unanimously to increase the customer charge.

The customer charge, also occasionally referred to as your "meter fee" is the monthly charge you get on your bill for each meter on your property. This charge covers a portion of your electric cooperative's fixed costs that it incurs to serve each member.

The last time the customer charge was increased was over a decade ago.

The Cooperative would like to avoid large rate increases, especially for those on a fixed income. Therefore our Board of Directors is continuously evaluating costs and rate adjustments to ensure that each member is receiving the best possible service at the least cost.

The table to the right shows the rate increase schedule.

We will continue to work hard to improve the quality of rural life by providing our Members with low cost, reliable electricity and related services in a safe manner.

Class	Current Customer Charge	Customer Charge beginning 5/28/22	Customer Charge beginning 8/28/22
Residential Farm			
Sm. Commercial	\$13	\$14	\$15
Lg. Commercial	\$15	\$20	\$25



TRADING POST

**Do you have goods or
services you're looking to
buy/sell/trade?
Advertise with us and let your fel-
low members know!!**

Only members of OMEC may submit ads. Ads must be submitted by July 15th, 2022 in order to be in the next newsletter. You can submit ads by mailing them to Oneida-Madison Electric Co-op, P.O. Box 27, Bouckville, NY 13310, or by emailing them to kyla@oneidamadison.com. All ads must be typed or printed clearly. Include your name and account number on all submissions. Ads are not allowed to be automatically repeated; they must be re-submitted for each issue. The

Co-op reserves the right to edit for content and/or space as necessary. Ads are published on a first-received basis and there is no guarantee your ad will appear.

Disclaimer– Items in the Trading Post are published at the request of our members. OMEC does not endorse, recommend, or assume any responsibility for the products advertised.

A16D-1-1-B-01