

Spare Change Changes Lives

It's the little things that count in life. Being kind to your neighbors, returning a lost wallet, picking up after yourself while enjoying the great outdoors. While each action might not amount to much on its own, if everyone does a little, we see a big impact in our community.

Oakdale Electric Cooperative's Operation Round Up® program is your way to do that little something that counts in life.

Six bucks isn't a lot of money—it's about what you would pay for a meal at a fast food restaurant. But \$6 equals the average amount folks who support our Operation Round Up® program give every year, all through spare change.

Members—people like you who receive electricity from the co-op—agree to round up their monthly electric bills to the next whole dollar amount. Let's say your bill is \$82.90. It would be rounded up to \$83, with a dime going to Operation Round Up®. The extra pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters then flow into a fund managed by a board of volunteer members that assists

worthy local organizations as well as fellow members who've fallen on hard times.

Sure, donating \$6 over the course of a year may seem like a little thing. But if you put all of that money together—well, things start to get exciting. Roughly 875 members of Oakdale Electric Cooperative are chipping in to support Operation Round Up®, and that number grows every month. Good thing, too, because the need has never been greater.

Last year we distributed funds to food pantries, fire departments, cancer benefits, house fire victims, shelters, and more. Since we launched Operation Round Up® in 2002, we've given community groups and folks in need more than \$45,000. That's something we should all be proud of—your assistance is changing lives in our community.

It's the little things that count in life. About 250 local electric co-ops nationwide currently run Operation Round Up® programs. All told, consumers at these co-ops have raised more than \$100 million since the idea was started by South Carolina's Palmetto Electric Cooperative in 1989.

Local Level Giving

Are you still on the fence about whether or not to participate?

“We understand that our members' purse strings are pulled at in many directions, but they can rest assured knowing their Operation Round Up® donation is going



Above: Couleecap – Dana Casberg, Stephanie Rahr.

Left: Faith In Action – Michael Bonello, Jan Jenkins, Todd Ramlet, Barb Sullivan, Joan Hanson, Jennifer Mubarak, Sue Geurkink.



Above: Neighbor for Neighbor Food Pantry – Deana Protz, MaryBeth Jacob.
Right: Toys for Joy – Cindy Gruen.



directly to the causes in need,” stated Deana Protz, communication & PR specialist for Oakdale Electric Cooperative. “What makes this program different is that **100 percent** of the funds received go right back into the communities served.”

One of the agencies that recently received a donation was Faith In Action Volunteers of Monroe County, whose mission is to help elderly and disabled people maintain their independence. Their 30 weekly volunteers assist residents of Monroe County with services including transportation to medical appointments, grocery shopping/delivery services, friendly visits, minor home modifications, assisting with errands, escorting people on errands, and seasonal yard work. With a staff of just one, the group depends on collaborations for success. Faith In Action works hand in hand with local organizations, churches, family referrals, and social service agencies for the needs of their 130 care receivers.

“We rely heavily on every dollar raised and donation given as it allows us to continue to work towards our mission. Thank you to the supporting Operation Round Up® members. Your generosity is making a positive difference in our community,” shared Jennifer Mubarak, Faith in Action executive director.

If you’re one of the members who make Operation Round Up® possible, thank you. If you haven’t heard about the program before and would like to participate, visit our website at www.oakdalerec.com, call us at 800-241-2468, or fill out the form at right and mail in with your next payment. Together, we can use a little pocket change to change our community. ■

SIGN UP TO ROUND UP

Members who choose to participate in Oakdale Electric Cooperative’s Operation Round Up® Program can take satisfaction in knowing that the small amount of change they give each month brings about big change in their communities.

Name _____

Address _____

Account No. _____

Phone No. _____

Signature _____



I understand that by signing and returning this form, my bill will be rounded up to the nearest dollar each month and that unless I call in to have that changed, this will happen until I no longer receive power from Oakdale Electric Cooperative.

Return this form to
Oakdale Electric Cooperative,
P.O. Box 128, Oakdale WI 54649

Five Tips for Space Heater Safety



By April Lollar, APR, CCC

As temperatures drop this winter, many will look for supplemental heating sources for their homes. Space heaters can be a good alternative for those who want to warm one area of their home without turning up the thermostat on the central heating system. However, space heaters are also responsible for 32 percent of house fires, according to the National Fire Protection Association. If you are planning to use a space heater in your home this winter, review these tips from Oakdale Electric Cooperative to keep you, your family, and your property safe.

Materials – What are the components of your space heater made of? Parts like metal grating can be hot to the touch and may burn anyone who gets too close. Make sure you purchase a heater that is cool to the touch and has guards over the coils just in case little fingers get too close.

Placement – While it can be tempting to place a small heater on a shelf so it is not in the way of pets and children, it is safest to leave the heater on a level floor on a nonflammable surface. Keeping the space heater on the floor can keep it from falling over, preventing fire hazards. Also, remember that space heaters and

bathrooms are not a good combination, unless the heater is designed for bathroom use. Moisture can damage the heater.

The most important rule about space heater placement is the three-foot rule. Whether you are using the heater in the bedroom, living room, or kitchen, space heaters should always be kept three feet away from flammable materials. They should also be kept out of the way of children and pets.

Special Features – Does your space heater have an auto shutoff function if tipped over? Auto shutoff can be a lifesaver. If you currently own a space heater without auto shutoff, consider purchasing a heater with this important safety feature.

Cords – You should never use an extension cord when plugging in a space heater as it can cause overheating. The space heater should be plugged directly into a wall outlet, and it should be the only thing plugged in to the wall outlet. Also make sure cords aren't in a high-traffic area so they are not a tripping hazard.

Use – Never leave a heater unattended while in use. If you are leaving your home or going to bed, make sure to unplug the heater.

Following these tips as well as the manufacturer's instructions can keep you safe this winter. ■

HOME ELECTRICAL SAFETY INSPECTION



Always remember to use caution when you're near electricity! Ask an adult to help you complete the inspection below for your home. If you find any hazards, check "Needs Work" and ask an adult to fix them.

	True	Needs Work
1. Electric outlets are not overloaded.		
2. Electric cords do not run under rugs or furniture legs.		
3. No electric cords are worn or frayed.		
4. Electric appliances are kept away from water.		
5. There is a fire extinguisher in the house.		
6. Electric heaters are far away from flammable objects.		
7. Power tools are stored in clean, dry areas.		
8. All smoke detectors are properly working.		
9. There are safety plug covers on outlets that are not in use.		
10. There are no trees near the house that interfere with power lines.		

Turkey Talk

Oakdale Electric Cooperative's First Turkey Giveaway Draws Huge Response

Thank you to all members who entered Oakdale Electric Cooperative's **1st Annual 5 Days of Turkey Giveaways!** We received an amazing 350 total entry submissions! With such a great response from members, the drawing will return next year. This year's winners included:



Gary Pierce picks up his family's winning turkey!

Day 1: Ethel Degner, Wonewoc

Day 2: Nancy Hansen, Tomah

Day 3: Liz Pierce, Camp Douglas

Day 4: Jennifer Schwartz, Tomah

Day 5: Eugene Kuehner, New Lisbon



Oakdale Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



Bruce Ardelt, General Manager
Deana Protz, Editor

P.O. Box 128, Oakdale WI 54649
(608) 372-4131 • (800) 241-2468
info@oakdalerec.com

Office Hours: Mon.–Fri. 7:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

24-Hour Emergency Power Restoration: (800) 927-6151

Toll-free online bill payment: 866-392-4307

FAX Number: (608) 372-5173

Diggers Hotline: For underground cable locates and power line clearance information, call (800) 242-8511.