

# OEC Current

**Otsego Electric  
Cooperative, Inc.**A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## End of Year Recap—CEO's Message

We have all faced unique and trying times this year. However, we are beaming with pride with how much we accomplished this year. Even with the pandemic, our electric and internet companies continued to grow. OEConnect connected over 1,500 members since the beginning of the pandemic in spite of equipment delays and significant personal risks for our installers! We installed services for health care workers, students, teachers, and teleworkers all over the county. Who knew that 'Zooming' would have new meaning and become such an essential part of our daily jobs? We also enabled new telemedicine connections between health care professionals and their patients as well.

On a more personal level, we were able to connect people to help alleviate some of the emotional suffering and loneliness that we were all feeling. We were able to email, call on our phone service, or use a video calling service to see and hear our family members for holidays, anniversaries, birthdays, or just check in on to see if our friends and families were ok. We are gratified to be able to provide this kind of service to all of you! It is an honor and a privilege to be in such a position and we take it very seriously. OEConnect's fast and reliable internet service arrived just in time for many and we were shocked how fast this service went from being a 'nice thing to have' for some to an absolutely essential service for all. We see it as part of our mission as a cooperative to bring this service to as many more people as we can. Otsego Electric's origins were based in filling a similar gap in rural service. None of this would be possible without electricity so it is noteworthy that we were able to bring electric service to about 60 new locations this year, which is even more than the last few years. We are looking forward to continuing to grow in the future as more people realize what great qualities of life we have out here in these hills! I hope you all have blessed holidays and here's to a healthy 2021.

– *Tim Johnson, CEO*

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Energy bills can increase during winter for a variety of reasons, like houseguests, more time spent at home, and shorter days and longer nights. Small actions, like turning down your thermostat, replacing old bulbs with LEDs and washing clothes in cold water can help you save.



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## Board of Directors

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

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

## OEConnect

We are still offering internet services to all members of the co-op. Our wait times have been reduced significantly now that we have caught up from the pandemic. We are offering three different packages starting at \$49.95 a month for speeds up to 100 MBPS, \$59.95 a month for speeds up to 250 MBPS and \$79.95 for speeds up to 1 GBPS. We are also currently offering a new modem called a "Gigaspire." This device offers enhanced user experience such as Wifi6 which is stronger, more reliable, and is the newest version of Wi-Fi. This will be the basis for the Smart Home of the future. This new upgrade also comes with a feature whereby you can download an app and control your home Wi-Fi system from your phone. The app helps you change passwords and enables Parental Controls such as setting what times certain devices can be on and blocking certain websites. You will also get enhanced Network Security for your home. Due to the premium features that this added service provides, there will be a \$10.00 a month added charge on any plan that you select. If you would like additional information on this new device, please contact our office. We are encouraging all who have not contacted us to reach out to our office now so we can get you connected to our fast and reliable OEConnect internet service soon.

## Beneficial Electrification

OEC and all rural electric cooperatives were created to bring electricity to areas that existing utilities would not build to because the companies saw little profit in building to sparsely populated areas. Electrification improved the quality of life of rural New Yorkers. Now our electric system will help members and our communities again through an evolving concept called "beneficial electrification." Beneficial electrification is the term used to describe the process of replacing fossil fuel use with electricity in a way that reduces overall carbon emissions and energy costs. OEC is uniquely positioned to accommodate this transition as we supply clean renewable energy from hydropower for almost all of our needs.

We have promoted the use of electric hot water heaters and load control devices for many years here at OEC. These water heaters are more efficient, cleaner, safer, healthier, and easier to manage. Converting to electricity is not just good for the member, it's good for the cooperative in building our load. We also have recently begun a program of incentives for installation of whole home heat pump systems. We are ready for Air Source and Ground Source Heat Pumps and Electric Vehicles. These technologies reduce carbon footprints and clean up our air. Beneficial electrification is something you will hear more about in the future in many energy policy discussions.

## Smart Hub

Have you tried using your smartphone to pay your electric bill?

Our Smart Hub phone app is an easy and convenient way to manage your account, pay your bills and view your statements. Visit [www.smarthubapp.com](http://www.smarthubapp.com) to find out more. If you would like help setting it up please call the office and we can help.



*From all the employees and Board members at Otsego Electric Cooperative, we would like to wish you Happy Holidays!*