



# April 2024

## Newsletter

### 85th ANNUAL MEETING

#### Okanagan County Electric Cooperative Inc. Official Notice of the Annual Meeting of Members

Pursuant to the provision of the By-Laws, notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of Members of Okanagan County Electric Cooperative will be held Monday, April 15, 2024.

**Where:** "The Barn" 51 N Highway 20 Winthrop, WA

**When:** Monday, April 15, 2024 at 7:00pm

Staff will be onsite to assist members with setting up their new SmartHub online accounts. Members must bring their own smart phone or tablet with email and internet access for staff to assist them.

American Legion Auxiliary #120 will be serving pie afterwards.

---

## WANT TO BUDGET THIS YEAR?

Did you know that OCEC offers a Budget payment program to members who have at least one year of billing history on their account?

A traditional Budget Plan begins in June of each year and bills a "set" dollar amount each month to the customer. This amount is determined by looking at the members previous year's billing history average and whether the account is carrying a balance or a credit. Budget amounts are reviewed each May and the next year's Budget amount is set at that time. **OCEC sends a notice on the May Billing Statements** to participating members to inform members of their new Budget billing amount for the year.

- Budget accounts allow member to plan for energy expenses.
- Budget accounts allow a balance to be carried without penalties (as long as the payment is made on time every month).
- Auto payments and paperless billing can be set up for accounts through SmartHub.
- Tenants must have a good payment history and receive permission from landlords before OCEC will allow a Budget program.

It is important to remember that the Budget amount must be paid by the last day of every month to continue to be on a Budget Plan. If a payment is not received on or before the due date the account is automatically removed from the Budget plan and all past due balances will be considered due immediately.

Contact OCEC before May 1st if you would like to sign up.

---

**Board of Directors:** **Alaina Burtenshaw** [aburtenshaw@ocec.coop](mailto:aburtenshaw@ocec.coop) | **Alan Watson** [awatson@ocec.coop](mailto:awatson@ocec.coop)  
**Dale Sekijima** [dsekijima@ocec.coop](mailto:dsekijima@ocec.coop) | **John Rogers** [jrogers@ocec.coop](mailto:jrogers@ocec.coop) |  
**Michael Murray** [mmurray@ocec.coop](mailto:mmurray@ocec.coop) | **Rick Johnson** [rjohnson@ocec.coop](mailto:rjohnson@ocec.coop) |  
| **Travis Thornton** [tthornton@ocec.coop](mailto:tthornton@ocec.coop)

# OCEI WELCOMES NEW EMPLOYEE

Okanogan County Energy is pleased to welcome new propane technician Arcenio Paz to the team. Arcenio has lived and worked in the Methow Valley for the past 19 years. Many of you recognize Arcenio's face, he has worked as a painter and is a small business owner in both Winthrop and Twisp. Arcenio and his wife live in Twisp with their three children.



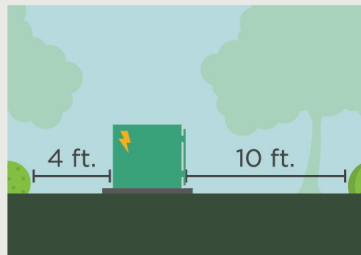
## 3 Ways to Help Limit Tree Trimming

Did you know electric utilities are required to trim trees and other types of vegetation that grow too close to overhead power lines? We know you love your trees, and we will do everything we can to avoid trimming them. Here's how you can help:

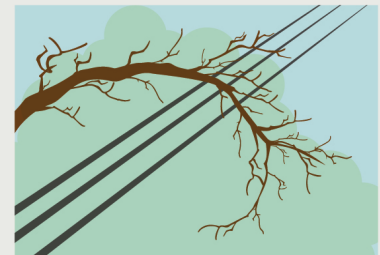
**1. Plant trees in the right place.** Trees that will be <40 ft. should be planted at least 25 ft. away from power lines (>40ft. should be at least 50 ft. away).



**2. Don't block pad-mounted transformers.** Plant shrubs at least 10 ft. away from transformer doors and 4 ft. from transformer sides.



**3. Report dangerous branches.** If you spot a tree or branch that is dangerously close to power lines, please let us know.



**Trimming improves safety for all.  
Let's work together to enjoy the beauty of trees and reliable electricity.**

**Our mailing address is:** PO Box 69, Winthrop, WA 98862  
**Contact us:** Toll Free: (888) 710-2228 | Local: (509) 996-2228  
Email: [info@ocec.coop](mailto:info@ocec.coop) | Web: [www.ocec.coop](http://www.ocec.coop)