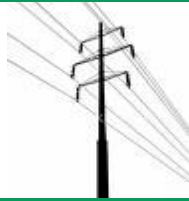




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CATSKILL HI-LINE

Bi-Monthly Newsletter

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March / April 2023



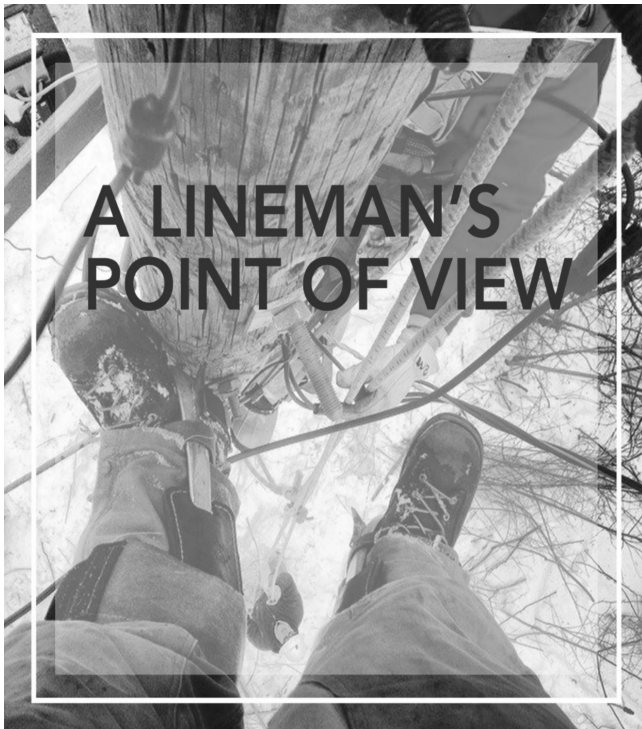
April 10, 2023 is Co-op Lineworker Appreciation Day

Please join us in
thanking our
lineworkers for all
their hard work!

WHEN THE LIGHTS
GO OUT
SO DO THEY
#thankalineman

When the weather causes an outage, lineworkers respond to restore power as safely and quickly as possible. Even in normal conditions lineworkers maintain the safety and reliability of our electrical infrastructure.

Line Crew and Tree Crew members are at the heart of our safe and reliable service to members. We thank our DCEC dedicated crews for all that they do!



Message from the desk of CEO John Gasstrom

Is it spring yet? What happened with that groundhog anyway? We officially welcome the spring season on March 20th this year, but perhaps this quote says it best:

“The first day of spring is one thing, and the first spring day is another. The difference between them is sometimes as great as a month.”

— Henry Van Dyke, Fisherman’s Luck



Pictured (left to right) CEO John Gasstrom, Weather prognosticator Punxsutawney Phil

So far, this winter season, we have experienced milder than normal weather (knock on wood), which is great for our membership. This means that we’ve been able to meet most of our winter power needs with clean, renewable hydro power from Niagara Falls. This keeps power bills lower than when we need to buy large amounts of electricity from the open market.

As many of us know, March and April can bring late season snowstorms which can sometimes create trouble on our system. This is often due to the heavy and wet snow accumulating on the power lines and tree branches which can cause wires to “bounce” and trees and branches to come down. Many thanks to our dedicated line-workers who diligently work through all sorts of weather conditions to get your power back on when we do have problems. In the month of April, we celebrate our line-workers as NRECA (the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association) has recognized April 10th as national line worker appreciation day!

Over the Christmas holiday, a northeast storm just missed us to the north, but hit our neighbors in New England pretty hard. DCEC responded by sending line crews to Vermont to help the Vermont Electric Cooperative recover power for their members.

.....continued on Page 2

Powering Our Rural Communities

5 North Depot Street, PO Box 471, Delhi, NY 13753
Phone: 607-746-2341 or 866-436-1223

Fax: 607-746-7548
Pay-by-Phone 844-209-7162
OUTAGES: 607-746-9283

.....continued from Page 1

This is just one example of Cooperative Principle #6, "Cooperation Among Cooperatives."

Another Cooperative Principle is "Concern for Community," and we see this put into practice many ways in the DCEC service area (and beyond). While DCEC supports community events and our employees are notably active in community service, recently we have seen New York State issue its "Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act" which called for the creation of a Climate Action Council and a scoping plan for how New York will reach its very ambitious (and nation leading) goals.

DCEC's mission is to provide safe, reliable, and cost-effective electric power to its membership. As a part of that, we also focus on the environmentally responsible delivery of power and the resilience of our power distribution system. This includes "keeping the lights on" for you as much as possible, and when we do experience service interruptions, getting the power back on as quickly as possible (while always maintaining a safe working environment for our employees).

In the coming months, DCEC will be looking into the way it implements its energy efficiency program, member-owned distributed generation (such as wind and solar) program, and the overall rate structure that is designed to cover the costs of building and maintaining the power distribution system that serves you, as well as the cost of the power we purchase and resell to you our members. And remember, DCEC is a not-for-profit cooperative, so that means that any revenues that are collected by the coop in excess of our costs are returned to you, the members, in the form of capital credits.

Cooperatively Yours,

John Gasstrom

DE 4-26-10A

KO 2-41-9

**WHEN YOU FIND YOURSELF
IN THE DARK, WE'VE GOT YOUR BACK.**



The Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act

On July 18, 2019, the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (Climate Act) was signed into law. New York State’s Climate Act is among the most ambitious climate laws in the nation and requires New York to reduce economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions 40 percent by 2030 and no less than 85 percent by 2050 from 1990 levels.¹ 2019’s Senate Bill 6599 (<https://legislation.nysenate.gov/pdf/bills/2019/s6599>) is the actual law that was passed.

This plan directed the formation of a 22 member Climate Action Council(CAC), which then developed a scoping plan in December 2022 which “outlines a variety of regulatory and legal changes, market mechanisms, and technologies essential to achieving the goals and requirements of the Climate Act.”² You can see the full 445 page Climate Scoping Plan at <https://climate.ny.gov/-/media/project/climate/files/NYS-Climate-Action-Council-Final-Scoping-Plan-2022.pdf>

We encourage our membership to review the scoping plan (an executive summary of the plan is also available at <https://climate.ny.gov/resources/scoping-plan>). Some key components of the plan include the state making adjustments to “consumer and community decision-making ... [such that] ... fossil fuel-emitting cars and appliances will no longer be sold after 2035.”³ Additionally, the pathways to implementation of this plan project that “wind, water, and sunlight will power most of New

York’s economy in 2050”⁴ and there will be “necessary methane emissions mitigation in waste and agriculture.”⁵ Direct impacts to DCEC’s infrastructure will result from the implementation of this plan, in order to ensure that we continue to deliver safe electric power reliably to our members’ homes, farms, and businesses.

Meeting these ambitious goals will require considerable upgrades to the DCEC electricity distribution system. Over the coming months and years, you will undoubtedly witness DCEC crews replacing wires, poles, and other infrastructure around our service territory to support the growth in electricity consumption and demand. DCEC will also be applying for state and federal grants to assist us in meeting the Climate Act goals. As a not-for-profit cooperative, DCEC must balance its costs with its revenue, and with increasing costs coming in the form of infrastructure improvements, gaining grant assistance through these programs could substantially offset the large capital costs associated with upgrading our system.

As always, DCEC will continue to monitor the programs and laws in New York State while we also make improvements to our system to ensure the reliable and responsible delivery of your electric power. Stayed tuned to this newsletter, as well as our website and social media channels, for future updates on DCEC’s activities, grant awards, and further discussion of the Climate Act.

1. <https://climate.ny.gov/resources/scoping-plan/>
2. <https://climate.ny.gov/-/media/project/climate/files/Chapter-1.-Executive-Summary.pdf>, page 4
3. <https://climate.ny.gov/-/media/project/climate/files/NYS-Climate-Action-Council-Final-Scoping-Plan-2022.pdf>, page 123
4. Ibid, page 123
5. Ibid, page 124

**DCEC’s 2023
Annual Meeting
will be on
September 15, 2023
at 4:30 pm in Delhi, NY**

AN 4-68-3

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Electric Co-ops Go the Extra Mile for You



Electric co-ops serve **8 consumers** per mile of power lines. Other electric utilities serve **32 consumers** per mile. Even though we serve fewer consumers along the lines, that won't stop us from going the extra mile for you, our members we're proud to serve.

On a snowy Wednesday morning in January, a DCEC line crew rounded a bend in the road to discover a car on it's side over the bank. Without hesitation, Lineman Zach McNeilly jumped into action to check on the motorist, who was still trapped in the vehicle.

While Lineman Jim Greene radioed for help, McNeilly climbed atop the vehicle and was able to open the driver's side door and help the motorist escape the vehicle. No one was harmed, and the crew stayed with the motorist until other help arrived to assist.



LINWORKER TOUGH

I AM A
POLE-CLIMBING
NO-WHINING
POWER-RESTORING
ELEMENT-ENDURING
GRAVITY-DEFYING
ENERGY-SUPPLYING
LINWORKER

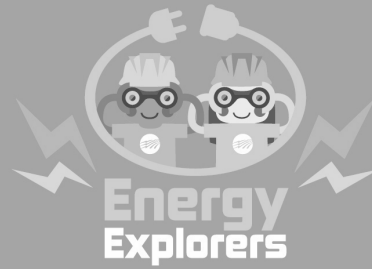
DO YOU KNOW ABOUT LINEWORKERS?

Every April, we celebrate lineworkers and the hard work they do to make sure we have electricity to power our lives.

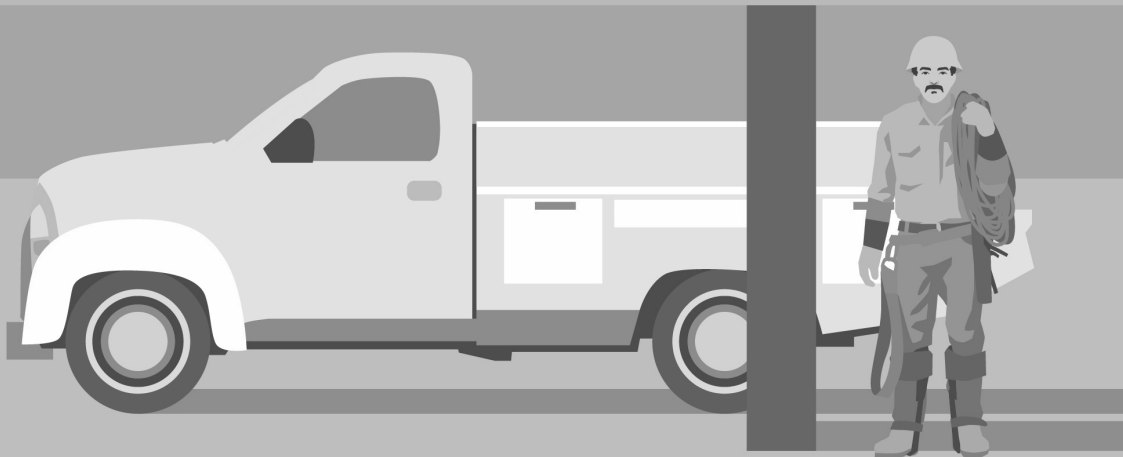
How much do you know about lineworkers?

Take the quiz below to find out!

(Use the answer key to check your work.)



1. Lineworkers have to wear a lot of gear to do their jobs. A lineworker's gear can weigh up to _____.
a. 15 pounds b. 50 pounds c. 80 pounds
2. Lineworkers maintain and repair electrical lines, but they do not install them.
a. True (no installation) b. False (They maintain, repair *and* install lines.)
3. There are approximately _____ lineworkers in the United States.
a. 50,000 b. 90,000 c. 120,000
4. Lineworkers must wear _____ clothing to protect them from a possible electric arc while working.
a. fire resistant b. extra thick c. leather or rubber
5. Lineworkers must wear special conductive boots when climbing a steel structure.
a. True b. False



Answer Key: 1) b. 50 pounds 2) b. False 3) c. 120,000 4) a. fire resistant 5) a. True

Choose The Right Trees For Energy Efficiency, Electrical Safety, Reliability And Environmental Benefits When Landscaping

Whether planting trees to celebrate Arbor Day, provide a wind break, reduce carbon in the environment or to beautify your landscape, Safe Electricity reminds everyone of the importance of planting tall-growing trees safely away from power lines. Seek help in choosing and placing trees and bushes that provide shade, color and screening that won't grow to interfere with the electric supply.

Trees that grow too close to electric lines can create shock and fire hazards as well as power outages. As part of the "Teach Learn Care TLC" campaign, parents and caregivers are urged to teach children never climb trees near power lines. The program also warns to never trim trees that are close to power lines – leave that to the professionals.

"Trees provide many aesthetic, environmental and economic benefits, including energy-efficient shade and cooling during hot summer months, or natural windbreaks against winter winds," says Erin Hollinshead, Safe Electricity Executive Director. "But everyone needs to be aware of the dangers and risks created when trees grow into power lines, and the importance of calling the utility or utility locator service before beginning any landscaping project."

"Landowners also need to understand utility line clearance practices and why they're important to safe and reliable electric service," adds Hollinshead.

Take the time to research tree selections by consulting your local arborist, tree nursery or utility – experts who can provide assistance in designing a beautiful, shade-filled yard with trees appropriate for each area of the landscape.

In addition, trees help combat the effects of pollution by absorbing carbon dioxide (CO₂). When trees grow, they take energy from the sun and combine it with carbon from the air to photosynthesize. They remove carbon from the air and sequester or store it in their biomass, or the wood, and in the ground. This makes trees a natural "carbon sink" or, a living source of carbon reduction. Some trees are better suited for this task than others and, according to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), tree species that grow quickly and live long are ideal carbon sinks.

Choosing the right tree for the right place is crucial, especially when it comes to power lines. Trees and wood conduct electricity and can create a safety hazard if grown close to electric lines.

Power outages or momentary interruptions can occur when branches come into contact with overhead lines. Electrical arcing and sparking from a wire to a nearby branch also can cause fires.

But a greater concern is the safety risk when children climb trees near power lines. Accidental contact of electric wires with a tree limb or playing and trimming around the tree can be fatal.

If you have trees that appear to be growing into power lines, contact your electric utility. Never try to prune them yourself. Utilities have or can recommend skilled professionals trained to safely prune and trim trees for electric line clearance.

To avoid future electrical hazards, safe planting tips to remember include:

- Consider mature height of trees. Never plant a tree that could grow to 25 feet or more near a power line. Tall growing trees should be planted a minimum of 20 feet away from power lines, and 50 feet away to avoid future pruning. A mature height of less than 15 feet is recommended for trees planted near power lines.
- Do not plant near underground utility services. Tree roots can grow to interfere with underground pipes, cables and wires. Future repairs to these facilities also could damage the health and beauty of nearby plants and trees.
- Keep areas around electric meters, transformers or other electrical equipment free of any vegetation that could limit utility service access.
- Before digging, call the local underground utility locator service to mark location of underground utilities so that accidental contact, damage and injuries can be avoided.

There are many beautiful varieties of trees, low-growing trees and shrubs that provide color, screening and shade, and enhance the quality of life in our communities and environment," says Hollinshead. "Consider the types of trees that co-exist well with power lines and the environment to avoid the need for trimming for line clearance."

ME 4-5-10



“A tree won’t stay small forever. Be aware of species selection and planting locations to prevent issues in the future.”

- *Gideon Frisbee,*
Technical Coordinator at
Delaware County Soil & Water
Conservation District (SWCD)

SAFETY TIP:

Members, please ALWAYS STAY AWAY FROM DOWNED POWER LINES and be alert to the possibility that tree limbs or debris may hide an electrical hazard. Treat all downed or hanging power lines as if they are energized and dangerous. Lines do not have to be arcing or sparking to be live. Warn others to stay away and contact DCEC.

WHY

WE TRIM TREES

The majority of power outages are caused by tree-related issues. It is our job to ensure trees, branches and limbs are a safe distance from power lines to avoid fire hazards and power interruptions.



SAFETY TIP:

Downed power lines can be deadly even if they look harmless. Stay away.



STORMS CAN CAUSE ICE ON POWER LINES

Melting ice can cause power outages. If ice on the bottom (neutral) line melts before the lines above, it can cause the lines to touch, resulting in a power outage.

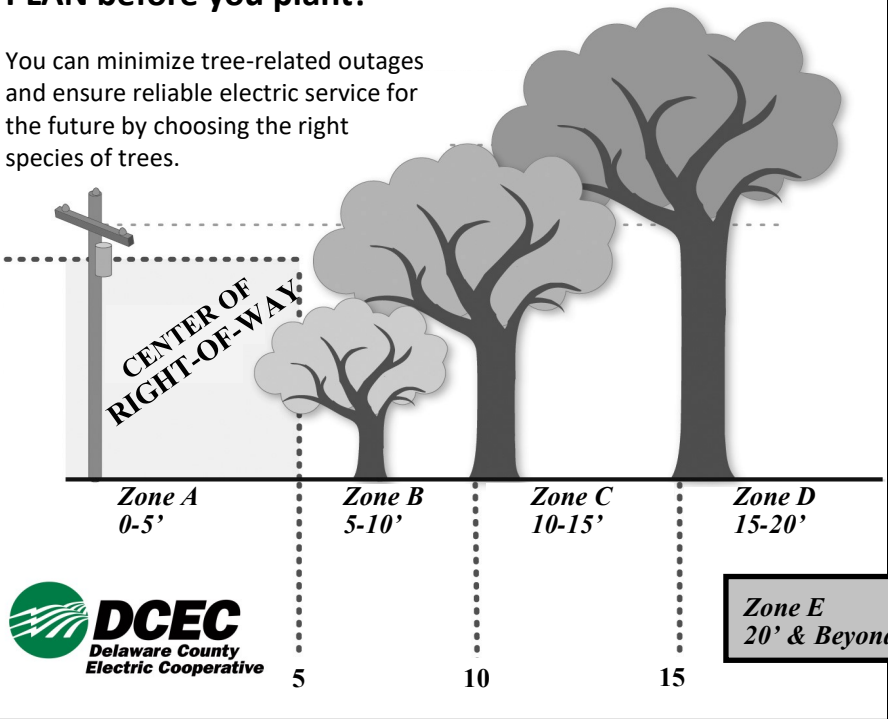




Planting Distances from the Center of Right-of-Way

PLAN before you plant!

You can minimize tree-related outages and ensure reliable electric service for the future by choosing the right species of trees.



The following tree species have weak wood and should always be planted at distances away from the pole line that exceed the mature height of the tree:

- Alder, Red
- Austrian Pine
- Basswood
- Boxelder
- Catalpa
- Poplar
- Silver Maple
- Tulip Tree (Yellow Poplar)
- Willows, including all sub-species



Call before you dig to locate underground utilities! Call UDig NY, by dialing 811 or 1-800-962-7962. Also, you must call DCEC at (607) 746-2341, because secondary lines are not listed with UDig New York.



Know what's below. Call before you dig.



TREE PLANTING GUIDE

<i>Zone</i>	<i>Distance from the Center of Right-of-Way</i>	<i>Max Mature Tree Height</i>	<i>Example of Acceptable Species for Zone</i>
ZONE A	0 to 5 feet	Zero – there is a no-planting zone within 5 feet of the center line of the right-of-way	Grass Sedum Dragon’s Blood Pachysandra Wildflower seed
ZONE B	5 to 10 feet	8 feet tall	Black Chokeberry, Blue Crop Blueberry, Jersey Blueberry, Silky Dogwood, Blue Ray Blueberry
ZONE C	10 to 15 feet	15 feet tall	Common Lilac, Elderberry, Rose of Sharon, Forsythia, Arrowwood
ZONE D	15 to 20 feet	30 feet tall	Arkansas Black Apple, Red Crabapple, Red Bud, Macoun Apple, White Flowering Dogwood, Cortland Apple, McIntosh Apple, American Hazelnut
ZONE E	20 feet and beyond	N/A	American Larch, Concolor/White Fir, Native Birch, Norway Spruce, Red Oak, Sugar Maple, White Pine, White Spruce, Fraser Fir, American Arborvitae, Wild Black Cherry, Catalpa, Colorado Blue Spruce, Douglas Fir, Paw Paw, Red Mulberry, Scotch Pine, White Walnut, Balsam Fir, Black Spruce

Annual Arbor Green Tree & Shrub Sales

The Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District (DCSWCD)

April 15, 2023—Tree and Shrub Handout at SWCD Office

**** The order deadline has passed, however, there will be some overstocked trees and shrubs available for purchase on the April 15 handout day**

For additional information please visit: www.dcswwcd.org

The Schoharie County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD)

March 31, 2023—Order Deadline

April 21—22, 2023—Tree and Shrub Handout at Cobleskill Fairgrounds

For an order form and additional information please visit: www.schohariesoilandwater.org/trees

KO 2-43-1A



CATSKILL HI-LINE is a Publication of the Delaware County Electric Cooperative, Inc. and is published bi-monthly for the membership. This newsletter has articles submitted by CEO John Gasstrom, Operations Manager Ryan Sullivan, Billing Specialist Rosemary Alwine, and Cooperative Services Administrator Janelle Linehan.

The information contained herein is designed to promote action and discussion among members. Statements published do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Cooperative. The information has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable, and the editor has exercised reasonable care to assure its accuracy.

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Reporting Outages

Members, please always report when you experience a power outage. There are some cases when a member has a single outage and we may not know unless you report the outage. Likewise, if an outage is widespread, the more members that report the outage, the more information this provides for our Line Crew to find the cause of the outage to restore power. Providing information such as where trees are down on the line or "hearing a pop" are helpful to relay to us to quickly diagnose and restore the outage.

To keep members in the know when there is an outage, we have been posting on our Facebook page and sharing to many local group pages with updates throughout the four counties we serve. We strive to get you information as it is discovered in the field so that our members know how long the outage may last for.

To report an outage, call **(607) 746-9283** or report online through **SmartHub**

Operations Update

Line crews are working on new member services for incoming members all over the service territory as well as pole replacements in Davenport, Harpersfield, and Kortright.

Right of way crews will be trimming trees and mowing in Andes on Holiday and Berry Brook. Asplundh has begun work for the Cooperative starting in Kortright near County Route 33 headed towards Doonans Corners.

Is Your Service Location Number in This Issue?

Your service location number begins with two letters and is located on your bill next to your account number. Keep your eyes peeled for the "hidden location number" in this newsletter! If you find the number, and it is your service location, call us at (607)746-2341 and you will receive a \$10 bill credit! You must call within 60 days of publication—there are FIVE numbers in this newsletter, go and find 'em! *Good luck!*

Third Party Notification

Every member has the right to designate a third party to be notified if the member's bill is not paid and if the member's service becomes subject to disconnection for nonpayment.

For example, a parent can designate an adult child as the third party to receive notifications. Third party notifications can be very helpful in situations where health troubles or other factors might make it difficult for the member to stay on top of bill payments.

DCEC is Committed to Helping Members During Financial Hardships

DCEC encourages members currently struggling to meet their monthly payment obligation to contact the local agencies listed below for payment assistance.

1. Contact DCEC's Billing Department to set up payment arrangements: 1-607-746-2341
2. Contact your local County Social Service program:
 - a. Delaware County 1-607-832-5300
 - b. Schoharie County: 1-518-295-8334
 - c. Otsego County: 1-607-547-4200
 - d. Delaware Opportunities provides assistance through certain agencies and can be reached at 1-607-746-1600
 - e. Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) Hotline: 1-800-342-3009

DCEC can provide supporting documentation regarding your account to these agencies that can assist in expediting your application.