

Powering Our Rural Communities

Director Elections & Bylaw Changes at the 2014 Annual Meeting



*Congressman Chris Gibson
addresses the DCEC member-
ship at the 2014 Annual Meeting*

The Cooperative will hold its Annual Meeting on Friday, September 19, 2014 in the Delaware Academy and Central School in Delhi. Members can enjoy a Brook's chicken barbeque dinner starting at 4:30 p.m. before the business meeting, which starts at 6:30 p.m. During this year's meeting, members will elect three members of the board of directors, one from each of the Northern, Central, and Southern regions. Members can still become candidates for the board of directors by filing a petition signed by 15 members by August 5,

2014. For more information about becoming a board member, please contact General Manager, Mark Schneider at (607) 746-9282.

Continued on Page 2...

\$500 1st Prize at Annual Meeting

The grand prize at this year's Annual Meeting will be \$500 in cash. You must be present to win, so be sure to attend the Annual Meeting on Friday, September 19, 2014!



Grant Application Submitted for Broadband Service

DCEC, along with partners Delhi Telephone Company (DTC) and Margaretville Telephone Company (MTC), submitted a grant application on June 16, 2014 to the State of New York. We expect grant awards to be made in September or October. If funded, our proposed project will build approximately 200 miles of new fiber optic lines and bring broadband service to an additional 1,120 members of the Cooperative. Based on proximity to existing telephone company infrastructure and responses to the Cooperative's broadband survey, the following towns have been targeted for Phase 1 of the broadband initiative: Jefferson (MTC), Harpersfield (MTC), Meredith (DTC), Kortright (DTC), Hamden (DTC), Colchester (MTC), and Andes (MTC). Members in Delhi (DTC) and Gilboa (MTC) are likely to receive fiber-based services from DTC or MTC through separately funded projects.

Continued on Page 2...

Members to Decide on \$2000 Donation

At the Annual Meeting on Friday, September 19, 2014, DCEC will be teaming up with CoBank, a provider of banking services, to give a \$2,000 donation to a single 501(c)(3) charitable organization to be selected by the members. Nominations for charities should be sent by co-op members or their children to Tara Rifembark by August 1 at tara.rifembark@dce.coop or by regular mail to the office of the Cooperative. To be nominated to receive the \$2,000 donation, a charity must be a 501(c)(3) organization and have a significant presence within the DCEC service territory. Nominated charities will appear in the special edition of the Catskill Hi-Line, which you will receive with your August bill. Members will vote on the "winning" charity at the Annual Meeting. Many thanks to CoBank for their \$1,000 matching grant in support of the total donation of \$2,000.

Renewable Energy Funding to Become Available to DCEC Members

New York's Public Service Commission made an announcement on May 8 that a new Clean Energy Fund is to be developed by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and the New York Power Authority (NYPA). This new Clean Energy Fund will include limited funds for members of rural electric cooperatives on a first-come first-serve basis. NYSERDA and NYPA are expected to announce program details on or after August 13. Until NYPA announces program details, the Cooperative will not know how these funds will be awarded or administered. However, we do anticipate a portion of the funds being available for residential installations of solar panels or small wind turbines less than 15 kW.

If you are considering making an investment in renewable energy at your home, please e-mail us at renewable@dce.coop to get on our e-mail list. As soon as NYSERDA makes program details available to us we will make that information available to you. Feel free to have your solar or wind vendor/installer sign up at renewable@dce.coop also.



**Can't Make the DCEC Annual
Meeting? Vote by Absentee
Ballot...**

**See page 3 for
More Details**

Planting & Trimming Trees Near the Cooperative Line

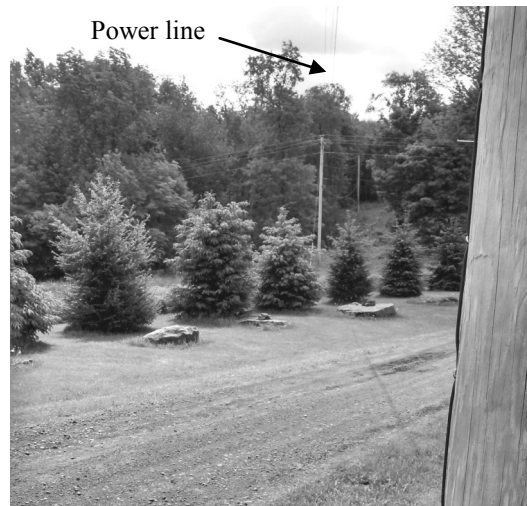
DCEC works very hard to keep the electric line right-of-ways cleared of trees and branches that can cause outages. Trees are the number one cause of outages in our very rural service territory. Our own tree crews and our contractor crews are constantly trimming and removing trees under our electric lines, in an ongoing effort to make your electric service as reliable as possible. We remove trees from the right-of-way, rather than trim them repeatedly over the years. However, we work with our members whenever we are able to without endangering the safety of our personnel or the reliability of the system.

Our members are responsible for making sure trees aren't growing into their secondary lines from the transformer pole to the house or to their meter pole. If limbs are getting close, contact us and we will make arrangements to trim the trees near your service wires when in the area. Never attempt to trim trees under or around our electric lines, doing so could put you at risk of deadly electrical shock.

Also, when planting trees you should plan ahead. A tiny tree today will eventually grow large enough to create safety hazards and possibly interrupt power during storms. Please use these guidelines when planting trees:

1. You should choose trees and plant them so the outer branches will never grow to within 15 feet of a power line. Check with your local nursery or Cornell Cooperative Extension for assistance in choosing the trees that fit your environment and work in concert with the electric line.
2. Avoid planting directly under power lines. Even short growth trees or shrubs create a safety concern for our line personnel. During outages we patrol on foot and need to have unobstructed access to assess the outage and potential problems. Many times we need to gain access to the right-of-way with our vehicles to either change out a pole, install an anchor, install a mid span splice, etc.
3. Plan ahead for plantings and give yourself an appropriate distance from not only electric lines, but from public and private roads and from your buildings as well.
4. You should keep plantings at least ten feet away from all underground electric lines. Remember, a tree's root system is as wide as the tree is itself. If planted too close to underground cables your tree could be seriously damaged if the Cooperative or its contractor needs to dig up the cable for repair or replacement.

Feel free to contact DCEC when planting around power lines so that we can help to locate underground cables and offer suggestions on planting clearances.



Annual Meeting, Continued from Page 1...

Members will also be asked to vote on minor changes to the Cooperative's bylaws at the Annual Meeting. Proposed by-law changes include the following:

- Changes to the director nomination process to allow nominations earlier in the year.
- Changes to the absentee ballot process to make it more convenient for members to vote by absentee ballot.
- Clarifications regarding how the Cooperative would address a tie vote.
- Changes to the definition of joint membership to comply with the current New York State law as articulated in the 2011 Marriage Equality Act.

Members will be receiving an Annual Meeting special edition of the Catskill Hi-Line with their August bills, which contains the official notice of the meeting, biographies of director candidates up for election, the financial report, and your Brooks Chicken BBQ reservation ticket. We hope to see you at this year's meeting!

Broadband, Continued from Page 1...

Once fiber-based services are available, members can choose to sign up for telephone, Internet, or television service or any combination of the three. Members will be charged the standard rates charged to other customers by DTC or MTC.

Due to the extremely high cost of rolling out fiber optic infrastructure in our rural area, a successful grant application is a pre-requisite to project construction. Keep your fingers crossed that we will be successful with our application!

Can't Make the DCEC Annual Meeting? Your Vote Counts!

If for some reason you are not planning to attend the 2014 DCEC Annual Meeting, you can still make your vote count by requesting an absentee ballot. In order for a member to be eligible to vote by absentee ballot they must request a ballot by completing an official form (available below) and submit it to the Cooperative. Once the Cooperative receives your form we will provide you with an official absentee ballot which you can then complete and send back to the DCEC office. DCEC will count properly completed absentee ballots as long as they are received by September 9, 2014 (10 days prior to the Annual Meeting). Once DCEC has received a member's absentee ballot it cannot be revoked if the member decides to attend the Annual Meeting and vote once there.



DCEC must receive the completed Request for Absentee Ballot form no later than August 20, 2014.

Members can return the below form either in person to 39 Elm Street, Delhi, by mail to the DCEC office at: P.O. Box 471, Delhi, NY 13753, fax to (607) 746-7548, or email to office@dce.coop.



REQUEST FOR ABSENTEE BALLOT

The Delaware County Electric Cooperative (hereinafter "Cooperative") will hold its Annual Meeting on **September 19, 2014** for the transaction of all lawful business in accordance with its Bylaws and the New York State Rural Electric Cooperative Law.

The Annual Meeting will be held at the Delaware Academy and Central School, located at 2 Sheldon Drive, Delhi, NY, and the business meeting shall begin at 6:30 pm.

Members who are unable to attend in person are permitted under Article III of the Cooperative's Bylaws to vote, by absentee ballot, on any and all issues presented to the general membership at that meeting.

To be eligible to vote by absentee ballot, members must request that an absentee ballot be sent to them by providing the following information and returning this completed form to the Cooperative. ***The Cooperative must receive this request no later than August 20, 2014.*** Upon receipt, the Cooperative shall send to the requesting member an absentee ballot with instructions for its completion and submission.

I HEREBY REQUEST AN ABSENTEE BALLOT FOR THE SEPTEMBER 19, 2014 ANNUAL MEETING.

Member's Name: _____

Member's Address: _____

Member's Account Number: _____

If you have any questions with respect to this form or the Annual Meeting, please contact DCEC at (607) 746-2341 or (866) 436-1223, or at the address below.

Send to: Delaware County Electric Cooperative
 P.O. Box 471
 39 Elm Street
 Delhi, NY 13753

Storm Preparedness

When the power goes out DCEC's goal is to restore it quickly and safely. Below are recommended safety measures for our members during outages. The first steps you should take if your power goes out are:

- Check to see if your neighbors' lights are on. If they are, then the problem could be in your home.
- Locate your fuse box or breaker panel to be sure that all fuses are intact or that the breakers are all in the "on" position. If they are all "on", try turning off and on the main power fuse on the fuse box or the main breaker on the breaker box.
- If able, put your ear against your meter, if there is a hum then you have power to the meter. Also if the digital read-out is blank this may also indicate a power failure. When the meter flashes all 8's that indicates power to the meter.



If you still have no power call DCEC's outage line at (607) 746-9283 or (866) 436-1223 to report the outage and be prepared to provide the following information:

1. The name on the account for the location of the outage
2. The service location number, if you know it
3. A telephone number where you can be contacted
4. The nature of the outage, how long you have been out and anything you may have seen or heard

Be sure to stay safe during an outage. Make sure to keep away from downed power lines and debris that is resting on a power line, turn off major appliances to help avoid a sudden surge of power when service is restored, and leave one or two lights on as a signal for when power is restored.

Being prepared for outages is important, especially during weather related outages where damage can be widespread and repairs may be complex. Having a plan and an emergency outage kit are good ideas for everyone to consider. If a member of your household is dependent on electricity for life support, be sure to have portable oxygen tanks, backup power and/or a temporary relocation plan. Outage kits should be kept in an accessible location and should provide for basic needs. Items should include: battery powered flashlight(s), portable radio, extra batteries, battery powered alarm clock, dry and warm clothing, sleeping bags and/or blankets, bottled water, foods which can be consumed with little or no preparation and a phone that does not need electricity to work.

If you have any questions on what you can do to be more prepared for an outage please contact the DCEC office.

DCEC Develops Friendlier Process for Late Payments

DCEC billing staff have been working with the board of directors and the New York Power Authority (NYPA) to devise a set of friendlier processes related to late payments. The purpose of the changes is to create the most respectful communications we can possibly have with our members while still accomplishing the difficult task of collecting late payments and complying with NYPA regulations. There have been instances where long-standing members of the Cooperative have missed one payment after years of on-time payments. Our old processes for dealing with late payments inadvertently treated such members disrespectfully and for that we apologize. Here are some of the changes you can expect to see related to late payment processes over the next few months:

- If a member forgets to pay a bill, the first written notice they receive from the Cooperative regarding the past due amount will be a friendly reminder.
- Friendly reminders will also be sent to members owing a past due amount via automated phone calls.
- Members will be given a window of opportunity to clear up the past due amount after the friendly reminder is sent and before a certified letter is sent. Note that certified mail costs the member \$5 for a special mailing fee.
- Final Disconnect Notices will still be sent by certified mail as required by NYPA regulations.
- Members on the disconnect list will receive an automated phone call.
- During winter months, members on the disconnect list will also receive a personal phone call from a DCEC staff member.

These changes are the result of feedback from our members. We value your input and we have tried to create a process that balances the difficult task of collecting past due balances with our desire to maintain friendly and respectful relationships with all of our members. If you have any questions about these new processes, please call CEO/General Manager Mark Schneider at (607) 746-9282.

DCEC & Legislative Youth Delegate Visit Washington, D.C.



Congressman Chris Gibson with DCEC Legislative Youth Delegate and CEO/General Manager, Mark Schneider

Mary Mitsopoulos of Stamford, NY and a Junior at Jefferson Central School, was chosen by the DCEC Board of Directors as the 2014 DCEC Youth Delegate. Mary accompanied DCEC officials on a trip to Washington, D.C. to meet with government representatives and participate in the 2014 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Legislative Conference. Mary will report about her experience at the Legislative Conference at

the upcoming DCEC Annual Meeting on Friday, September 19, 2014.

Mary was chosen from a pool of very qualified applicants. “Mary approached all of our meetings with our legislators with respect, interest, and professionalism that reflected very well on her, the Cooperative, and her whole community. After getting to know Mary I am certain she will be a great success as she pursues her academic, creative, and professional goals”, said Mark Schneider, DCEC CEO/General Manager.

DCEC/NYSEG Cooperate for Job Growth

DCEC was an important member of the economic development team that helped Amphenol Aerospace relocate to a new manufacturing facility in Sidney, NY. Having Amphenol as a DCEC member has big benefits to our whole membership. Amphenol will be sharing in the fixed cost to run the Cooperative, which helps keep rates as low as possible for all members. DCEC could not have begun serving the Amphenol facility without cooperation from our neighboring utility, New York State Electric & Gas (NYSEG). NYSEG had lines in the area and they let DCEC tap into those lines so that we could deliver energy to Amphenol.

DCEC may now have the opportunity to return the favor to NYSEG while helping Greene Lumber (NYSEG customer) create jobs in Davenport. Greene Lumber needs a large electrical service upgrade to handle their expanding operation in the vicinity of Butts Corners. DCEC has lines in the area, so NYSEG may be tapping into our lines to deliver Green Lumber energy.

The two utilities were brought together in both cases by Delaware County’s Economic Development Department. Glenn Nealis, Delaware County’s Director of Economic Development said, “Both DCEC and NYSEG have been supportive of our efforts to attract and retain jobs within Delaware County. Reliable and cost-effective electric service is a vital part of any economic development project.”

2013 Capital Credit Allocation

DCEC maintains its financial records on a calendar year basis. Each January the Cooperative completes year-end financial statements and determines “net margin” for the prior year. The 2013 net-margin totaled \$297,108. This amount was allocated for future pay out of Capital Credits for all members who had an active electric service in 2013. Your specific allocation amount appeared on your May 2013 bill.

Annually, the DCEC Board determines whether the financial condition of the Cooperative is strong enough to retire, or give back to its members, a portion of this equity in cash. That is called a general capital credit retirement. Currently, DCEC has retired through 1988.

DCEC Member Load Controllers Save Co-op Money

The recently completed installation of the replacement load control switches on some of our members electric hot water heaters have allowed DCEC to save approximately \$114,000 in purchased energy costs over the 12 month period ending March 31, 2014. Controlling members hot water heaters during periods of high energy use (typically during the winter) allows DCEC to improve its load factor which allows the Cooperative to purchase the maximum amount of low cost hydro power from our supplier, the New York Power Authority (NYPA).

DCEC Members Now Able to Purchase GenerLink™ Emergency Transfer Switches



GenerLink™ emergency transfer switches will allow members to connect a 9500 watt or less portable generator to their home during power outages. These switches are five-inch devices that are installed, by DCEC, behind your existing 200 amp meter base and come with a 20 foot cord. When you connect a portable generator to GenerLink™ and start it up it automatically disconnects your house from the electric utility grid preventing the possibility of back feed, which can damage equipment and harm DCEC line and right-of-way personnel. Each switch also has an internal warranty surge protection for household appliances.

The member cost for the devices will be \$760 plus a \$100 installation charge. The GenerLink™ switches are now available to purchase at the Cooperative. Please note that not all generators are compatible with these devices. For more information please call the DCEC office at (607) 746-2341.

Operations Update

Line Reconstruction & Pole Replacement:

DCEC line crews are finishing up the line rebuild on Monroe Road in the Town of Meredith and on Reuben Todd Road in the Town of Delhi. We are beginning a line rebuild on or near Fish Hollow Road in the Town of Hamden.

Right of Way (ROW) Clearing:

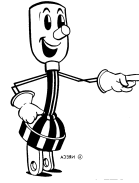
DCEC ROW tree clearing crews continue to clear right-of-ways on Frank Hafele, Ryder Hill and Dick Mason Roads in the Town of Delhi.

Asplundh, a DCEC contractor, will be clearing right-of-ways starting in the Town of Kortright and progressing to the Town of Bovina. Member notifications have been made.



SU 2-4-4

Community Calendar



**DCEC Annual Meeting
Friday, September 19, 2014**

**127th Delaware County Fair
August 11—16, 2014
Walton, NY**



**Delaware County
Historical Society:
Enchanted Evening at the
Gideon Frisbee House
July 19, 2014**

**6—7:30 pm Buffet Dinner
7:30—9:00 pm Dessert Buffet
in the Frisbee House
Live Music
To RSVP and for ticket
information contact DCHS
at (607) 746-3849**



**Otsego County Fair
July 29—August 3, 2014
Morris, NY**



**Schoharie County
Sunshine Fair
July 26—August 2,
2014
Cobleskill, NY**

Keep an Updated Address with DCEC

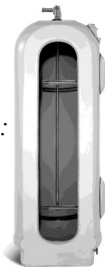
Just a reminder to DCEC members. If you move and leave DCEC's service territory please remember to keep an updated address with the Cooperative. If the co-op needs to send you a capital credit check in the future we want to make sure you receive the funds you are owed.



Providing our rural members with:

- ⚡ Low-cost Electricity
- ⚡ High System Reliability
- ⚡ Community/Member Service

**LIFETIME Warranty and
available in 30, 50, 85 and 105
gallon sizes!**



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P.O. Box 471
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Ph: (607) 746-2341
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www.dce.coop

Your local area
dealer for electric

Marathon
WATER HEATERS

**Is Your 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 you will receive a DCEC fleece sweatshirt! **Good luck!**



Buyer's Market



*If you would like to place
an ad in our Buyers
Market please call our
office at
(607) 746-2341*

FOR SALE:
Haywood pool filter,
motor, pump, vacuum
& solar mat.
Paid \$800, will sell for
\$300 firm.
Call (607) 265-3446



**Congratulations to the
Graduating Classes of 2014!**

CATSKILL HI-LINE is a Publication of the Delaware County Electric Cooperative, Inc. and is published bi-monthly for the membership.

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.

Board of Directors

- President Frank Winkler
- Vice President..... Hartley Russell
- Secretary Rusty Pick
- Treasurer Stephen Oles
- Director Paul Menke
- Director Meg Hungerford
- Director Shawn Hartwell
- CEO/General Manager..... Mark Schneider
- Asst. Manager Wayne Marshfield

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