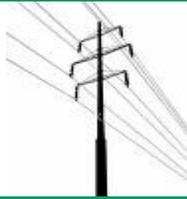




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CATSKILL HI-LINE

Bi-Monthly Newsletter

Volume 78 — Issue 7
November/December 2022



Intro and message from CEO/General Manager John Gasstrom

Thank you for attending your 78th Annual Meeting on September 9th, 2022. It was a pleasure to meet so many of you at this year's Annual Meeting with 106 in person and 19 attending virtually, for a total of 125 members attending (meeting quorum). Additionally, there were 51 guests attending for a total of 157 people in-person at this year's Annual Meeting.



If I haven't met you yet, **Hello**, as of August 19, 2022, I am the new CEO and General Manager. I am a native New Yorker and have had previous experience with NYSEG in Binghamton, Kirkwood, and Ithaca, NY as well as previous cooperative experience with Georgia System Operations Corporation (a G&T cooperative serving 38 Georgia distribution cooperatives) and Indiana Electric Cooperatives (the statewide association representing 38 Indiana distribution cooperatives). I bring over 30 years of electric utility service to the job and I'm looking forward to working for you here at Delaware County Electric Cooperative as we strive to bring you safe, reliable, resilient, and cost-effective electric power.

Happy to be back in Upstate NY and always,
Cooperatively Yours,

John Gasstrom



Home Energy Audit

What is Included?

- BLOWER DOOR TEST**
Measure the amount of air leakage.
- APPLIANCE CHECK**
Determine if your HVAC equipment is energy efficient and safe.
- COMPREHENSIVE REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS**
Find which improvements will have the greatest benefits.

What Are the Benefits?

- LOWER ENERGY BILLS
- IMPROVED INDOOR AIR QUALITY & HOME ENERGY TECHNOLOGY

Please note that this program is subject to change due to the availability of funds. To confirm the program details, please call (607) 746-2341 or email ee@dce.coop

Enjoy Year Round Comfort & Savings!



ENERGY STAR APPLIANCE REBATE PROGRAM

In order to qualify for the Energy Star rebate, the following guidelines must be met:

- The appliance must be purchased with the rebate program.
- The appliance must be Energy Star rated as of the date of installation.
- No other rebate programs may be used on the same appliance.
- The rebate amount is limited to the lesser of the rebate amount or the net cost of the appliance.
- The rebate amount must be received from the rebate program.

All rebate requests are subject to review. Please call the Call Center for more information. The rebate program is subject to change without notice. DCEC is not responsible for any errors or omissions in this program.

Up to 3 Appliances per Membership per Year & Rebate Request Due Dates: We need you to apply!

All members of all Service Classes are eligible for this program!

1. North Street, P.O. Box 471, Delhi, NY 13753
(607) 746-2341 (HOURS: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM)

Visit our Energy Efficiency webpage at www.dce.coop/content/energy-efficiency-programs please email: ee@dce.coop with any questions



COOK UP ENERGY SAVINGS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON.

- Clean oven burners regularly.
- Match the pan size to the burner you're using.
- Use small appliances like slow cookers and toaster ovens when possible.

From our table to yours,
Happy Thanksgiving!

Powering Our Rural Communities

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

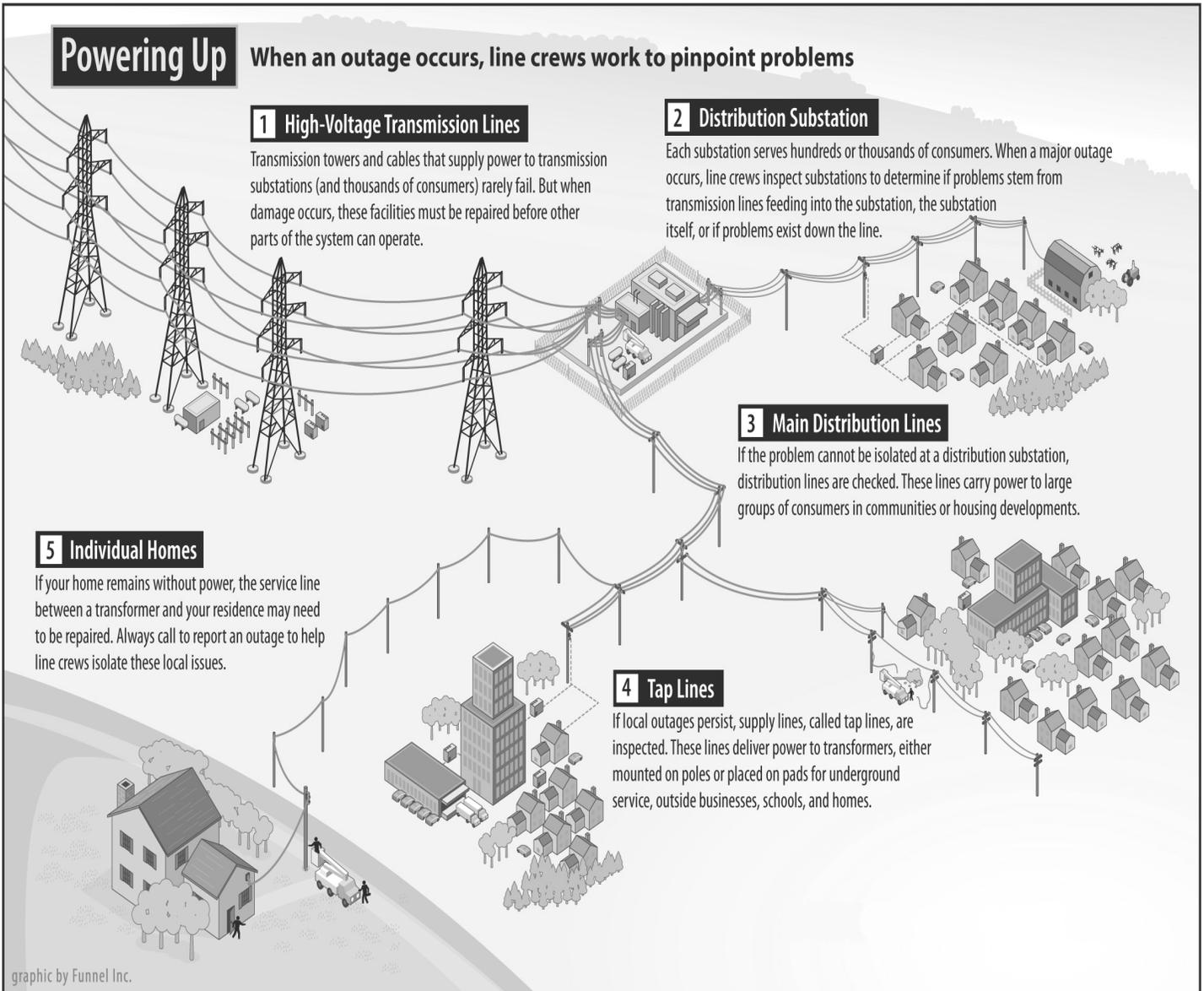
Fax: 607-746-7548
Pay-by-Phone 844-209-7162
OUTAGES: 607-746-9283

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**.



When electricity goes out, most of us expect power will be restored within a few hours. But when a major storm causes widespread damage, longer outages may result. Co-op line crews work long, hard hours to restore service safely to the greatest number of consumers in the shortest time possible. Here’s what’s going on if you find yourself in the dark.

Like our page on Facebook to follow our news:



Follow us on Instagram to follow our news:

dce.coop

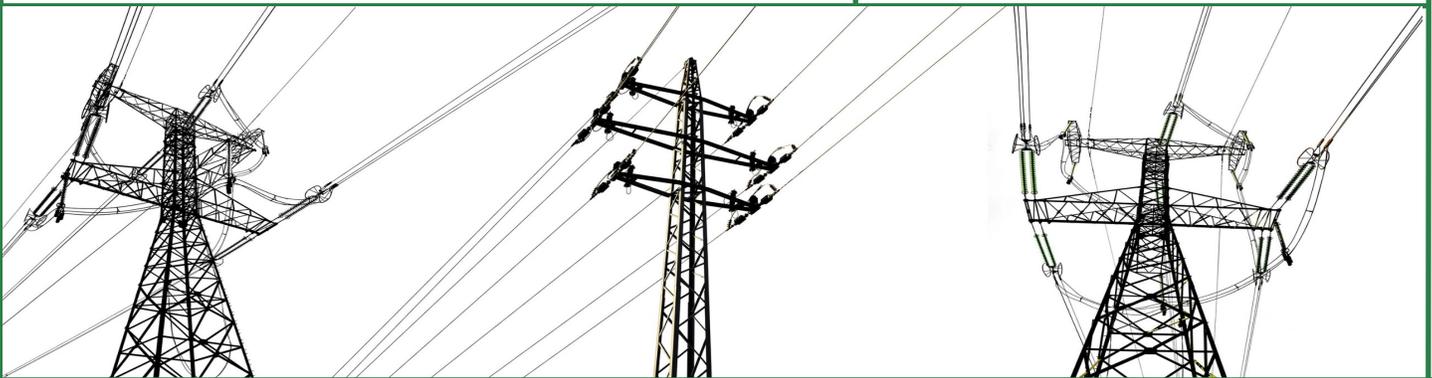


Create your SmartHub account today!

** You can click straight to SmartHub through our website: www.dce.coop **

\$0.50 Increase to Monthly Service Charge

In 2016, DCEC had developed a five year rate plan approved by the board of directors, which included a \$0.50 increase to the fixed monthly service charge for all residential, seasonal, and small commercial member service locations, scheduled to take effect on members' April 2020 bill. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the board voted to delay the implementation of that increase. With the expiration of the COVID-19 State of Emergency, that previously delayed increase will go into effect with the January 2023 bill.



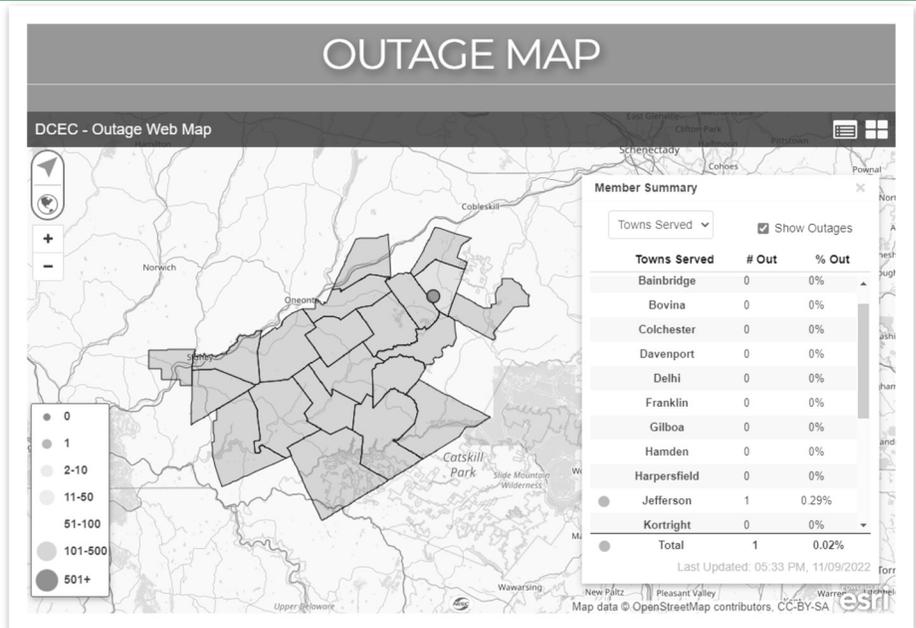
How am I supposed to view Facebook or call DCEC if my power is out?

Uninterruptible Power Supply! (UPS)

More than a surge protector, a UPS is essentially a battery backup that you can connect your wi-fi router & modem to.

In the event of an outage, your cell phone (or computer) can still run for a window of time on wi-fi allowing you to:

- Call **(607)746-9283** to report the outage
- Report outage through **SmartHub**
- Log onto Facebook/Instagram to see updates on the status of the outage
- Log onto www.dce.coop to view the Outage Map (see right)
- Communicate to family & friends



We will have more communication and details about UPS coming soon!

Highlights of the 2022 Annual Meeting

Each year, the Cooperative holds an Annual Meeting of members to give an update on how the cooperative has been operating, upcoming events, and for members to interact with staff and directors. This year, we were thrilled to be able to hold our 78th Annual Meeting at Delaware Academy in Delhi, and to get to spend time and enjoy chicken dinner with more than 150 of our friends and neighbors in the membership!

We started the evening by honoring America and were treated to the delightful sounds of Grace’s Touch as they led us in singing the National Anthem. We also prayed together with Deborah Fleming, and were led in the pledge of allegiance by our board president, Edward “Rusty” Pick, Jr. We were also proud to recognize all of the military veterans in attendance, and continue to appreciate the service these fine people have provided to our nation.

It is important for members to know who represents them on the coop board of directors, and President Pick introduced the current board members and the areas that they represent. If you want to know which director represents you, visit our website at <https://dce.coop/content/directors> to find out. President Pick also introduced the cooperative’s attorney, Jeff Clark, and the coop CEO John Gasstrom. After the introductions, we were treated to a wonderful keynote address by Ms. Millie Faulkner, who served the coop for 30+ years and retired in 2021.

At each Annual Meeting, directors and staff from the cooperative present important information to you, as was done this year. This included how we gave notice of the meeting, the selection of tellers to count votes for director elections, a financial report, and a general update on the state of the cooperative. This year we had an election to fill a board seat in the Central Region District, which represents the towns of Bovina, Delhi, Franklin, Hamden, Kortright, and Meredith. We had one candidate complete the qualification process for director, and Mr. Ed Furgol was invited to the podium to introduce himself. Mr. Furgol was elected to the open director seat. Director Steve Oles was recognized for 30 years of service with the Coop!

We were also pleased to announce that we awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to Mr. Tyler Branigan of Delaware Academy and had a chance to listen to this fine young gentleman speak about the cooperative way and his plans for the future. In addition, we had the opportunity to hear from the Delaware County Dairy Ambassadors, including Jessica Coleman, about the im-

portance of our dairy industry to our area and our country.

This year, members had the opportunity to ask questions and make comments in a variety of ways, including through our interactive zoom session, by email in advance of the meeting, on our comment cards before and during the meeting, and in-person during the meeting. While some questions and comments can be addressed right away, we are also committed to giving well researched responses to more detailed questions. Keep your eye on future editions of this newsletter to see responses to member queries throughout the year.

One area of concern that was raised was around storm response and outage restoration times. Members had questions about how DCEC budgets for additional outside help during storms to aid restoration, and some concerns were raised about not raising rates to restore power faster. Since this is a very complex issue, CEO Gasstrom suggested that we create a member advocacy group to further study this issue. This group will convene in the spring with public education sessions and opportunities to express concerns given.

President Pick concluded the meeting with good wishes for all, and everyone was invited to enjoy delicious Brooks BBQ chicken in the cafeteria or “to-go.” We look forward to seeing you all at the next Annual Meeting.

2022 ELECTION RESULTS:

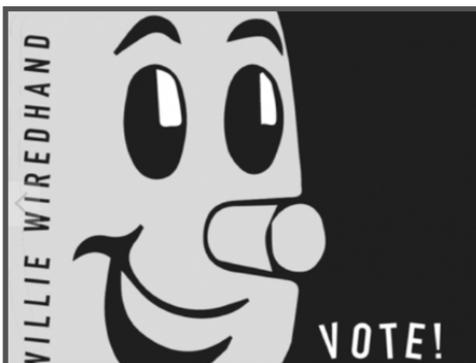
DIRECTOR CANDIDATES:

Central Region: Towns of Bovina, Delhi, Franklin, Hamden, Kortright, and Meredith

- Edward Furgol - 170
- No vote - 13

LOCAL ORGANIZATION DONATIONS:

- Alcohol & Drug Abuse Council of Delaware County - 85
Received \$1,000 from DCEC and CoBank
- Lake Delaware Boys Camp - 56
Received \$600 from DCEC and CoBank
- Greater Delhi Area Foundation - 42
Received \$400 from DCEC and CoBank



Reminder:

If you voted by Absentee Ballot, In-Person or Virtually at the 78th Annual Meeting, DCEC will be applying a **\$10 credit** to your November bill.

Does DCEC Have a Key To Your Gate?

The Electric Cooperative recognizes the importance of protecting your properties and limiting access to them by means of gates or chains. What we encourage our Cooperative members to do is to provide us with keys to your properties so that we can access them in the event of a power outage or to perform routine maintenance. Many property owners have provided us with keys or lock combinations to allow us access when we need it.

Often times, we come up on a new chain or gate and have no means to gain access except to remove the gate or cut the chain to access the property. In these circumstances, we remove the gate if possible or cut a link from the chain and install a repair link in its place when we leave.

If you're a new property owner or an existing DCEC member that has installed a gate or chain please contact us at (607) 746-2341 in regards to providing us with a key or code. This would be beneficial to both of us in the event of an emergency.

TO 3-77-15

Dangers of Unauthorized Pole Attachments

Do you have a satellite dish, bird feeder, clothes line or any other kind of unauthorized attachment to the Cooperative's utility pole near your house? If you do, you are not alone. Unfortunately these unauthorized attachments pose a threat to the safety of line workers when they must climb a pole to perform maintenance or restore power after a storm. Under OSHA regulations enacted in 2014, a line worker needs to utilize a fall restriction device that wraps around the pole as he climbs. Each time a line worker reaches an unauthorized attachment, he needs to remove the fall restriction device from the pole to climb past the obstruction, placing the worker at increased risk for a fall. Please do your part to keep our workers safe. If it can be done safely, remove any unauthorized attachments from the utility poles near your home. If you need help removing an attachment or you don't know whether an attachment is authorized, call the Cooperative's office at 607-746-2341. We would be happy to assist you.



Electrical Safety Tips for Hunters

We encourage all members to be aware of electrical equipment while hunting. Keep these safety tips in mind as you enjoy the great outdoors.

- Keep clear of electrical equipment.
- Do not shoot at or near power lines or insulators.
- Know where power lines and equipment are located where you hunt.
- Be vigilant in wooded areas where power lines may not be as visible.
- Never place deer stands on utility poles.
- Never place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment.

Property Access – Thank you Landowners!

The Cooperative maintains 800 miles of distribution lines across four counties in order to provide electric service to 5,300+ homes and businesses. Those distribution lines run across thousands of properties owned by thousands of different landowners. On behalf of the Line Crew and Tree Crew members who perform daily maintenance and storm restoration, thank you to all the landowners who support their work by allowing access to our rights-of-way through driveways, farm roads, fields, and yards. Without you allowing them to cross your properties to access our rights-of-way, maintenance and restoration of the electric system would be impossible. Various obstacles prevent our workers from traveling directly down the rights-of-way:

- Natural features such as waterways, rock ledges, and gorges
- Stone walls
- Livestock fences

For this reason, it is often necessary for Cooperative crews and equipment to pass through private property outside of the easement area in order to accomplish their work. Thank you to all those landowners who continue the long tradition of allowing Cooperative crews to pass through your property. If the Cooperative creates ruts or other impacts to your property in the process of doing our work, we are responsible for repairing the damage and returning your property to its prior condition. If you have ruts or other damage on your property, call Operations Manager Ryan Sullivan at (607) 746-9284 to arrange for repairs.



HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE

Make a difference this holiday season!

Drop off unexpired, non-perishable goods at DCEC's office
11/14/22 through 12/12/22

5 NORTH DEPOT STREET, DELHI, NY 13753

Especially needed items: instant oatmeal, peanut butter, canned fruits, instant mashed potatoes, stuffing & soups

**DONATIONS WILL GO TO:
STAMFORD SACRED HEART FOOD PANTRY**



I Can't Pay My Electric Bill: Where to Get Help

Members currently struggling to meet their monthly payment obligation have the following options available to them:

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.

HEAP Benefits

The New York State Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) provides payment assistance for income eligible residents to use towards the 2022-2023 heating season. This year's regular HEAP benefits opened November 1, 2022. For eligibility, income guidelines, and how to apply contact your local Department of Social Services or the NYS OTDA Hotline at 1-800-342-3009. Additional information is provided on: <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap>

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.

For more information about third party notifications, please contact the office.

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/General Manager John Gasstrom, Operations Manager Ryan Sullivan, Billing Specialist Rosemary Alwine, and Cooperative Services Administrator Janelle Linhan.

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.....Edward Pick Jr.
 Vice President.....Jeffrey Russell
 Secretary.....Laurie Wehmeyer
 Treasurer.....Paul Menke
 Director.....Steve Burnett
 Director.....Edward Furgol
 Director.....Steve Oles
 CEO/General Manager.....John Gasstrom

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, call us at (607)746-2341 and you will receive a DCEC fleece sweatshirt! **Good luck!**

CLOSED FOR THE FOLLOWING HOLIDAYS:
 11/24 & 11/25/2022 – Thanksgiving
 12/23 & 12/26/2022 – Christmas
 1/2/2023 – New Year's