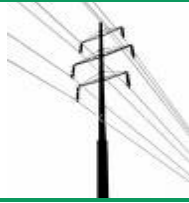




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# CATSKILL HI-LINE

Newsletter — January 2025



## From the desk of CEO John Gasstrom

Happy New Year to everybody, as we have been greeted by some rather chilly weather to start off 2025. We are all hopeful that the storm activity that we saw in 2024 does not continue into this year, as the Cooperative was plagued by numerous major events last year causing multi-day outages. For several of the storms in 2024, we saw significant tree-related impacts to our system, and required outside aid from other utilities. Moving into 2025, we are continuing to clear Right-of-Way in the Jefferson and Gilboa areas and exploring options for additional grid hardening to improve resiliency.

Due to the large number of outages and system damage we have sustained this year, the Cooperative has spent more than expected on operations and maintenance expenses in 2024. As we continue to close our books for last year, we have decided to hold off on Capital Credit Retirements at this time (see article on page 4). We expect to have more information soon on the state of our budget.

We are excited to move into 2025 though with the expectation of grant funding to help with our resiliency efforts. DCEC is leading a consortium of six cooperatives that have been awarded federal funding to combat the effects of extreme storms and invasive species, both of which have had a tremendous impact on our distribution system this past year. The Cooperative is also exploring additional technologies to aid in our ability to detect the causes of outages and speed restoration of service.

One new technology that will greatly assist in this effort is the upgrade of our metering infrastructure that will be able to

automatically report loss of power more quickly and provide additional location information so that we can determine the source of the trouble. You will start to notice that new infrastructure is being added to poles, and soon a DCEC employee may visit your home to replace your meter with a new one. We have also been exploring the deployment of battery storage technology to be able to continue to have service available, even when our transmission service is disrupted, and new drone technology to give us enhanced visual inspection of our lines and rights-of-way.

Please be aware that the current water heater curtailment program runs on the old metering system. Our current program will be sunseting later this year, and we will be announcing a new program shortly thereafter.

Also, one of our Cooperative Principles is "Democratic Member Control," which means every member has the opportunity to vote on the Directors who represent you. This year, we have one Director seat up for election in the Central Region (Bovina, Delhi, Franklin, Hamden, Kortright, Meredith). We are currently seeking volunteers to be on the Nominating Committee to help select candidates to run for this position. See more information on page 5.

As always, we thank our membership for your continued support of your electric cooperative, and we look forward to seeing you at some of our upcoming events in 2025. Please stay tuned to this newsletter, as well as our website and social media channels for more details on those upcoming events.

Cooperatively Yours,

*John Gasstrom*

## Reporting Outages

Members, please continue to 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 helps us pinpoint the issues. Providing information such as where trees are down on the line or "hearing a pop" can be useful to our crews to more quickly diagnose and restore the outage.

The automated outage line that does not have a volume limit: **(855)939-3672** We are also working toward having the capability to text message and/or email members with updates. Please keep your contact information up to date—we will have more to share on these developments soon!

## Powering Our Rural Communities

5 North Depot Street  
PO Box 471  
Delhi, NY 13753

AUTOMATED LINE (payments & outage reporting): **(855) 939-3672**

Office Phone: (607) 746-2341

Fax: (607) 746-7548

## 2024's Annual DCEC Food Drive Benefited Masonville Connects



Thank you to all members, employees, and directors who participated in DCEC's 2024 Food Drive. This year, we worked with Masonville Connects to collect nonperishable, unexpired food items, and hygiene products to aid their effort in supporting community members in need. We look forward to our annual food drive every year and are grateful to live and give in this wonderful community. Thank you again to all who participated!

## DCEC's 2025 Youth Delegate Program

BE A PART OF HISTORY! Seeking Youth Delegate Applicants for 2025!

- Are you a junior in High School or a parent of a junior in High School?
- Are you (or your junior-year child) interested in politics, law or environmental science? A utility field?
- Are you interested in helping your community?
- Would you enjoy visiting Washington D.C. for an all expense paid trip?



***Then, this experience is for you!***

This opportunity is to represent DCEC, as a Youth Delegate, in D.C. at The Legislative Conference in April. This could lead to another opportunity to represent the entirety of New York's Rural Electric Co-Ops at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) 2026 conference. The program connects the young minds in rural America with political leaders in congress and senate. As a youth delegate, you will make changes in both your personal community and the country as a whole. If making friends, learning about your community, implementing change and providing insight into what your view of the future is...

***Then, this opportunity is for you!***

Applications are due **February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025** (interviews taking place 2/25/2025)

The Legislative Conference is held **April 27-30<sup>th</sup>, 2025** in Washington, D.C.

For application, information, and to hear more about 2023/2024 Youth Delegate, Erin Coppersmith's experience, please visit our website at:

<https://www.dce.coop/youth-delegate-program>



## Operations Update

### Welcome to 2025!

DCEC is looking forward to some very sizeable and important projects this year that will affect each and every one of our members. One of the projects will be a brand new metering system, which is long overdue. We will be changing out every meter on our system to a new meter which will allow DCEC, and you as a member, to capture important electricity usage data. It will also offer DCEC much quicker information to isolate outages during storms and normal day to day operations.

The other exciting upgrade will take place at the DCEC Delhi Substation. Due to the electrification of all sorts of devices, from vehicles to home heating equipment, there is an increased use of electricity. The main transformer at the substation is nearing capacity. The new replacement transformer is going to more than double the capacity to serve Delhi area residents. The lead times and coordination of a transformer upgrade of this magnitude requires many employees, planning, and preparation. These two upgrades will have many added benefits, and will be in place for many years to come.

With those upgrades on the agenda for 2025, let us take a quick look back at 2024 and all the work that has been accomplished:

Electrician Appointments	272
Work Orders (started)	201
Work Orders (completed)	204
New Poles Set	158
Right of Way: Miles Cut	55.3
Emeral Ash Borer Trees Cut	2780 Infected Trees

As you can tell, your DCEC Field Personnel had a very busy and productive year. Their dedication to providing all our membership with reliable electric service, which often comes with the sacrifice to spending time with their family doesn't go unnoticed. In fact for 2024, DCEC Crews were out Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Thanks to all the DCEC employees for a great 2024 and as a DCEC member be on the lookout for the upgrades coming to your electric delivery system.

Manager of Operation, JT&S



James G. Small



DCEC Delhi Substation



## How Capital Credits Work

### What are Capital Credits?

Capital credits represent each member’s ownership of the Cooperative. They are the margins credited (or allocated) to the members of the Cooperative based on their purchases from the Cooperative the previous year. These margins are used by the Cooperative as capital to operate the business for a period of time.

### What’s the difference between an allocation and a retirement?

A Capital Credit Allocation is the process of determining each member's share of the excess margin in a given year. The amount of allocation to each member is based on their contribution of revenue to the Cooperative. Allocations represent the record of equity or ownership individual members have in the Cooperative. After the allocation occurs, an allocation notice is displayed on member billings, typically occurring in the summer months. In 2024, the allocation of 2023's margin was posted on the June bill. A Capital Credit Retirement is the process of returning equity back to the members through a bill credit (for current members receiving electricity) or a check (for those members no longer receiving electricity from the Cooperative).

Each year, the Board of Directors review the Cooperative's financial position to determine if a Capital Credit retirement is in the best interest of the operation of the Cooperative, and if so, the total amount of capital credits to retire. For 2024, the decision of the board was to not retire Capital Credits at this time.



## Reminder: Monthly Service Charge Changes Occurring in May 2025

Proposed Rate Revision Time Table	
Last Rate Increase	April of 2016
Cost of Service Study Completed	August of 2022
Proposed Rate Revisions Announced to Membership	February of 2024
Member Public Hearing Meeting Scheduled	Tuesday, March 19, 2024 @ 7pm
Board of Directors to Finalize Service Charge Revisions at Regular Board Meeting	Tuesday, March 26, 2024
1st Service Charge Revisions are Applied to Member Bills	May of 2024
<b>2nd Service Charge Revisions are Applied to Member Bills</b>	<b>May of 2025</b>
Rate Redesign	2027



As a democratic organization, Cooperative members vote each year to elect directors to represent them on the DCEC Board. Elections for director positions occur at the DCEC's Annual Meeting in August. DCEC currently has seven directors representing three regions of the DCEC's service territory. Directors serve 3-year terms. In accordance with the DCEC bylaws, a Nominating Committee considers members interested in serving on the board and nominates candidates for the election.

**Interested in serving on the DCEC Nominating Committee?**

In accordance with DCEC bylaws, the Nominating Committee must prepare a list of candidates for membership consideration at least 60 days prior to the Cooperative's Annual Meeting. The 2025 Annual Meeting of the Members is tentatively scheduled to be held on:

Saturday, **August 23, 2025 at 10 a.m.**

Elections will occur at the 2025 Annual Meeting for **one board seat, representing the Central Region.**

The Nominating Committee will meet from April through June at the DCEC office at 5 North Depot Street, Delhi, for the purpose of identifying candidates for the above position. The committee is composed of members representing the geographic diversity of the DCEC service area (see chart below). Members serving on the committee are offered a modest stipend for their service.

Nominations for directors are governed by Article IV of the Bylaws. A director may be nominated either through:

- 1) The **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**. The Nominating Committee meets to identify at least two candidates to run for each seat up for election.
- 2) The second way is by **PETITION**. Any 15 or more members may petition the Cooperative to place a qualified member on the ballot. This must be done at least 45 days before the Annual Meeting.

Rules regulating director elections are outlined in DCEC's bylaws, which are available on: [www.dce.coop/dcec-bylaws-policies](http://www.dce.coop/dcec-bylaws-policies). Voting for directors is covered by Article III. Each member may cast one ballot for a nominee for each seat up for election. **A married couple holding a joint membership are considered one member and will receive one ballot.**

BOARD DISTRICT REGIONS		
Northern	Central	Southern
Gilboa	Bovina	Andes
Jefferson	Delhi	Colchester
Summit	Franklin	Masonville
Davenport	Hamden	Middletown
Harpersfield	Kortright	Sidney
Stamford	Meredith	Tompkins
Maryland		Walton
		Bainbridge

**Interested in Serving on the DCEC Board?** The governing body of DCEC is a member-elected Board of Directors comprised of active DCEC members who are compensated for their time. The Board is responsible for the Co-op's overall policy and direction, as well as for standards and requirements for safety, affordability, and reliability. The DCEC Board is a working board with active committees. The Board currently meets in-person once monthly, typically on the 4th Tuesday of each month. The Board also has separate committees for such matters as financials, staff and organization, and core projects. The current Board of Directors invites any interested candidates to join a regular scheduled monthly meeting. The interested candidate can get a sense of the regular business addressed at the monthly meetings and will have the opportunity to ask any questions that they may have about serving on the Board. If you are interested in attending a Board meeting please contact the Cooperative at (607) 746-9294 prior to the meeting so we can ensure you are notified of any changes/modifications of the regular schedule.

Serving on the Board of Directors is a worthwhile and enriching experience, both personally and professionally. If you are interested in adding your name to this year's ballot, please send an email to [Stacey.Young@dce.coop](mailto:Stacey.Young@dce.coop) informing the Cooperative of your intent to do so. A letter of intent should be submitted by **Friday, March 21, 2025.**

*If you are interested in being a candidate, or if you would like additional information, please contact the DCEC office at (607) 746-9294.*

**For additional information about the Nominating Committee and how to serve please call Stacey Young at (607) 746-9294**

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**Rebate Program Update**

We are currently evaluating new energy efficiency programs for 2025 and beyond. Our previous rebate program ended on December 31, 2024. Rebate forms for the prior program must be submitted by January 31, 2025 to be eligible for payout. Stayed tuned for announcements on future energy efficiency programs.

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 James Small, and Cooperative Relations Manager, Stacey Young.

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.....Edward Furgol
- Director.....Ross Gill
- Director.....David Krzyston
- Director.....Patrick O’Brien
- CEO.....John Gasstrom

**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.***

**HEAP Benefits**

The New York State Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) provides payment assistance for income eligible residents to use towards the 2024-2025 heating season. This year’s regular HEAP benefits opened November 1, 2024. 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>

**DCEC’s UPDATED NUMBERS:**

**AUTOMATED LINE for payments & outage reporting: (855) 939-3672**

**LIVE Representative 24/7/365: (607) 746-2341**

**DCEC Office Closures:**  
**Monday, February 17, 2025-Presidents’ Day**