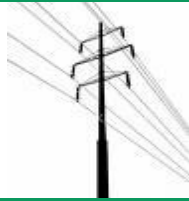




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CATSKILL HI-LINE

Bi-Monthly Newsletter

Volume 75—Issue 6
November/December 2019

Powering Our Rural Communities

Happy Holidays

From Delaware County Electric Cooperative



A Gift from DCEC just in Time for the Holidays

After reviewing Delaware County Electric Cooperative's financial position and determining it to be sound, the DCEC Board of Directors has approved a Capital Credit retirement (refund) of 1992 in the amount of \$377,483.00. Current members who were actively receiving electric service from

is decided by the board of directors annually, based upon the financial condition of the Cooperative. Your retirement is applied to your bill in December if you are an active member, if not a check will be mailed to the last known mailing address of the inactive member.

DCEC in 1992 will receive a credit on their December bill identified as "CAPITAL CREDIT REFUND". Members who are no longer receiving electric service from DCEC today but did so in 1991 will receive a check in the mail provided their refund is \$5.00 or greater.

In addition, all inactive members who have <\$100.00 remaining in capital credit allocations will receive a check by mail.

Frequently Asked Questions About Capital Credits

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?

Allocations are made annually for each member, based upon the amount of revenue contributed the previous year. An allocation is the amount set aside into a separate account to be used as operating capital for reliability improvements and maintenance over a period of years. Your allocation notice will be printed on your bill usually during the summer months. In 2018, this information was printed on the July bill. A retirement is the amount you receive back as a capital credit refund. It is a portion of your total capital credit balance. The portion to retire

Why can't my capital credit allocations be refunded to me all at once?

Remember that capital credit funds are used for reliability improvements and maintenance—and these are long term investments. Capital credits cannot be refunded all at once because they help the Cooperative remain financially sound, thereby ensuring a stable, reliable electric service for the benefit of the members we serve.



The Directors, Managers, and Staff of DCEC would like to wish you a and a Joyous Holiday Season, Good Health, and Happiness in the New Year!



Thanksgiving Day



Christmas



New Year

SAVE \$4 Every Month on Your Electric Bill

Are you interested in saving money this winter? The Cooperative's Load Control Program is designed to offer savings to our members.

Q.) How does it work?

A.) During times of high demand (usage) the Cooperative selectively shuts down electric hot water heaters. Doing this allows the Cooperative to limit how much energy we buy in the open market, also shaving off the peak which affects how we are billed by the New York Power Authority. The Cooperative is then able to pass on that savings to the members.

Q.) How do I know if I am eligible?

A.) All residential members who have a 50 gallon (or larger) electric hot water heater and use at least 350 kWh a month are eligible.

Q.) How do I sign up?

A.) Call the office directly at (607) 746-2341 to start saving today! The Cooperative will set up an appointment to outfit your water heater with a Load Control Switch (at no cost to you) which we will wire into the electric circuit that feeds your hot water heater. When the Cooperative's Load Control system predicts that the load will exceed a set value and potentially set a new demand we will shut off your electric hot water heater for a short time. When the demand recedes from the peak the Cooperative will bring water heaters back online slowly. It's just that simple!



HEAP Benefits

The New York State Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) provides payment assistance for income eligible residents to use towards the 2019-2020 heating season. This year's regular HEAP benefits will open on November 12, 2019. 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>

Additional Benefits



Western Catskills Community Revitalization Council, Inc.
 125 Main Street, Suite A
 Stamford, NY 12167
 Phone: 607.652.2823
 Fax: 607.652.2825
www.westerncatskills.org

Delaware Opportunities Inc.
 35430 State Highway 10
 Hamden, New York 13782
 Phone: (607) 746-1615
 Fax: (607) 746-1605
www.delawareopportunities.org



Highlights of the 2019 Annual Meeting

This year at DCEC's Annual Meeting, President Oles presented service awards to the following employees: Scott Tuttle 1st Class Gloving Lineman for 30 years, Millie Faulkner Finance Manager for 30 years, Mike Sackett 1st Class Gloving Lineman for 30 years, Doug Rosa Line Foreman for 30 years, and Randy Tweedie Tree Crew Foreman for 20 years (was not present or pictured above). President Oles noted the unique combined achievement of 120 years of service collectively among the four 30-year honorees. The membership gave a long round of applause to celebrate this collective achievement while pictures were taken of the four 30-year honorees.

To read more about the highlights of the 2019 Annual Meeting see page 6...

New Sportsfield Specialties Facility

In January, 2019, DCEC Member, Sportsfield Specialties, Inc. advised DCEC of their plan to construct a new, 60,000 square foot manufacturing facility to be located nearby to their existing manufacturing complex on New York State Route 10 near Delhi, NY. This new facility, known as the Sportsfield South Site, will provide Sportsfield with efficient and expanded manufacturing capabilities here in Delaware County. This project is expected to have a positive effect on the area's economic development.

DCEC planned and constructed an extension of its overhead electric distribution facilities to serve the Sportsfield South Site development following an extensive review process conducted by DCEC in conjunction with the New York Power Authority ("NYPA") and New York State Electric and Gas ("NYSEG"). Completing this review process helped to ensure the safe construction, operation and maintenance of this new line extension which was constructed beneath and in close proximity to three (3), energized, 345 kV overhead transmission circuits operated



by NYPA and NYSEG on NYSEG owned property.

DCEC's line extension design included consideration for the expected attachment of Delhi Telephone Company's ("DTC") fiberoptic broadband communication facilities to the DCEC structures.

DCEC worked closely with a neighboring farm Member to help mitigate to the

extent possible encumbering agricultural activities in the vicinity of the newly constructed line extension.

Construction of the line extension was completed by DCEC crews and the service to Sportsfield Specialties' South Site was energized in late October, 2019. Power System Engineering, Inc. provided assistance to DCEC by performing line profile modeling services.

Cords
Plug no more than three strands of lights into each electrical cord or outlet. Overloads can cause fires or lines to short circuit.

Bulbs
Don't use holiday lights with broken fuses or broken light bulbs.

Tree
Water your tree and keep electric cords away from tree strands with water pans.

Follow these Safety Tips and your Holiday will be Merry & Bright

Broadband Internet Update

The Delaware County Broadband Initiative (DCBI) is getting close to our goal of 100% of the Cooperative's members having access to high speed Internet access at competitive prices. DCEC will be only the second rural electric cooperative in the United States to achieve that milestone. The first Cooperative did it by investing tens of millions of dollars in their own fiber optic network. DCEC is accomplishing it through the power of partnerships. The Cooperative's partners in DCBI are the Delhi Telephone Company (DTC) and the Margaretville Telephone Company (MTC). Both of these local companies are entirely vested in the future economic viability of the local communities they serve. They do not have a "plan B" like the regional and national communications companies.

Bigger companies like Verizon that serve large metropolitan areas like New York City may view our rural communities as a bad investment. Those bigger companies do not rely on future revenues from our rural communities to stay profitable. This is quite evident when you look at how little these large companies have invested in the last several decades in their service territories throughout our region. The giant communications companies would much rather invest money to improve their down-state networks than invest in new fiber networks to serve our rural area.

The exact opposite is true of our partners, DTC and MTC. These local partners only serve our local communities and their entire viability depends on continued vibrancy of our local economies. Our partners may be small compared to the regional and national communications companies, but they have made the large investment needed to build an expansive fiber network and to bring broadband to our members.

The DCBI team is almost wrapped up with the portions of the fiber network that are receiving grant dollars, but the project doesn't end there. The DCBI team will continue construction through the 4th quarter of 2019 and into 2020 in what we call the "non-grant areas." That means that DTC and MTC are absorbing the entire cost of construction in these last remaining areas of the Cooperative's service territory so that every single member of the Cooperative will have access to broadband Internet service. The Cooperative is blessed to have partners like DTC and MTC, who are bringing broadband to 100% of our members.

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!

DCEC Promotes Renewable Energies for our Future

The Cooperative's 2018 wholesale power supply was 91% renewable with the vast majority of the renewable energy coming from the New York Power Authorities Robert Moses hydro plant at Niagara Falls. The Cooperative purchased approximately 82.2 million kilowatt-hours of energy on behalf of its members in calendar year 2018, of which approximately 74.4 million kilowatt-hours were renewable. In addition to hydro power, the Cooperative purchases renewable energy generated by solar panels and wind turbines owned by Cooperative members.

Due to increasingly competitive pricing available for solar energy, the Cooperative is partnering with NYPA and the State University of New York at Delhi to build a 2 megawatt community scale solar farm adjacent to our substation on the Back River Road in Delhi. Although NYPA is financing the entire project, both the Cooperative and SUNY Delhi will benefit from an inexpensive source of renewable energy credits, or "RECs." The Cooperative has an obligation to buy RECs in accordance with New York State's Clean Energy Standard, which was enacted in 2016 and was updated in 2019.

Here is some encouraging news –

If you own an electric powered vehicle and you charge that vehicle by plugging into the Cooperative's electric grid, your vehicle gets "greener" and "cleaner" each year as the Cooperative increases the renewable content of our wholesale electricity supply. Your electric vehicle was 91% renewably fueled by the Cooperative's electricity in 2018, but each year the Cooperative will be enhancing the green and renewable portion of our power supply, which makes your electric vehicle, and all of your electric appliances, greener and cleaner every year.





Dangers of Shooting in the Direction of Utility Lines

Margaretville Telephone Company received reports of residents in the Town of Roxbury area recently suffering from an extended MTC Telecommunications outage that was the result of a gunshot to their Fiber Optic cable. The birdshot penetrated the cable and caused catastrophic damage to the glass fiber strands that carry the telecommunications signals to those residents and businesses. This incident interrupted critical telecommunications services, including the ability to call 9-1-1 emergency services, and cut off internet and tv services.

This is a reminder to all hunters and sportsmen of the dangers of shooting in the direction of any utility lines. Damage to those lines can cause interruptions in critical infrastructure that provide circuits for hospitals, education, business communications, backhaul of cellular communications and most importantly, the ability for people to call for any emergency services.

Consideration also needs to be given to the cost associated with the repair of damaged lines. Repair costs can run in to the tens of thousands of dollars to restore interrupted services and repair technicians may be forced to work in extreme conditions to make those repairs. Repair costs can and will be the responsibility of any known individuals that have caused the damage.

Margaretville Telephone Company only asks that sportsmen be responsible when shooting. Attention and simple precautions will prevent a very costly mistake.

Material for article submitted by Margaretville Telephone Company

Headquarters Consolidation

The Cooperative plans to consolidate its operations to a single location late in 2020. The Cooperative's headquarters are currently spread out between the office at 39 Elm Street and the shop at 5 Depot Street, as they have been since 1970. The current office location at 39 Elm Street will be sold, most likely to a private home owner. Members of the Cooperative will still be able to get the same types of walk-in service that they get now, but those services will be offered at the location at 5 Depot Street starting late in 2020.

Recent developments in the headquarters project include the following:

- 1) A design packet was completed by the architects of SEI Design Group.
- 2) Site plan approval was received from the Delhi Village Planning Board.
- 3) The project storm water plan was submitted to the NYC DEP for review.

Upcoming activities include:

- 1) Pouring a concrete floor in our existing maintenance pole barn so that it can be used as a temporary warehouse during construction next year.
- 2) A bid packet will be developed by Schoolhouse Construction Services in conjunction with SEI Design Group, so that bids may be collected for the main construction project to be completed during 2020.

The consolidated headquarters location will provide an opportunity to serve members more safely and efficiently once the project is complete. The Cooperative will continue to keep members updated as the project proceeds. In the meantime, if members have questions about the headquarters project, they can call CEO/General Manager, Mark Schneider at 607-746-9282.

Highlights of the 2019 Annual Meeting...Continued from Page 2...

The members of the Delaware County Electric Cooperative (DCEC) met this past September as we do annually to conduct the business of the Cooperative. The evening began with honoring America. We sang the National Anthem with the help of Grace's Touch, we prayed with the help of Deborah Fleming, we pledged our allegiance with the help of Board President Steve Oles, and we also recognized those veterans in our presence. President Oles spoke briefly about the state of the Cooperative, including the following topics: community solar project development, headquarters facility project, the Delaware County Broadband Initiative in partnership with Delhi Telephone Company and Margaretville Telephone Company, electric distribution system reliability projects, New York Power Authority hydro contract extension, and the seven cooperative principles.

The business of the annual meeting included the approval of the minutes from last year's annual meeting. Secretary Edward "Rusty" Pick reported that a quorum consisting of 120 voting members were assembled. Secretary Pick turned the lectern over to Treasurer Paul Menke. Treasurer Menke reported on the previous Year's Financial Report: Treasurer Menke mentioned the following aspects of the Cooperative's 2018 financial performance: \$250,000 special return of revenues to members in their November, 2018 bills, \$605,000 capital credit return to members in their December, 2018 bills, and \$490,000 in overall debt reduction during 2018. Treasurer Menke entertained a motion from the floor to dispense with the reading of the 2018 Financial Statement. A motion was made by member, Robert Cairns and seconded by member, Michael Kaufman. It passed by the membership.

Treasurer Menke then invited the CEO/General Manager, Mark Schneider, to provide the CEO/General Manager's Report. CEO Schneider outlined the following items: balancing power supply costs, risks, and pursuit of higher renewable energy content, hydro contract extension with the New York Power Authority (NYPA), and community scale solar project in partnership with NYPA and SUNY Delhi at the Delhi Substation.

Final election results as follows:

Director Election:

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

Steve Burnett	115 ballots	1 st highest number of votes.
Steve Oles	104 ballots	2 nd highest number of votes.
James Warren	53 ballots	3 rd highest number of votes.

In accordance with the bylaws, Mr. Burnett will serve a 3-year term (2019-2022) and Mr. Oles will serve a 2-year term (2019-2021).

Charitable Organization Donation:

Arc of Delaware County	74 ballots	1 st highest number of votes.
Bright Hill Press & Literacy	32 ballots	2 nd highest number of votes.
Center of the Catskills		
Catholic Charities	29 ballots	3 rd highest number of votes.

Arc of Delaware County will receive a \$1,000 donation. Bright Hill Press will receive a \$600 donation. Catholic Charities will receive a \$400 donation.



HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE

MAKE A DIFFERENCE THIS HOLIDAY

11/7/2019—12/20/2019



39 ELM STREET | DELHI, NY 13753 | (607) 746-2341

Drop off unexpired goods & nonperishable goods

Donations will go to Delhi Food Bank

Operations Update

Line crews are wrapping up make ready in behalf of Delhi Telephone, Margaretville Telephone and Spectrum. Crews have regular work planned on Clark Road and Randall Hill in the town of Masonville.

Right of way crews will be trimming trees and mowing in Davenport along Charlotte Creek.

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 Mark Schneider, Engineering & Technology Manager Paul DeAndrea, Operations Manager Ryan Sullivan, Billing Specialist Rosemary Alwine, and Administrative Assistant Alicia VanZandt.

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.....Stephen Oles
- Vice President.....Frank Winkler
- Secretary.....Edward Pick Jr.
- Treasurer.....Paul Menke
- Director.....Jeffrey Russell
- Director.....Laurie Wehmeyer
- Director.....Steve Burnett
- CEO/General Manager.....Mark Schneider

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.

- November 11, 2019 – Veterans Day
- November 28–29, 2019 – Thanksgiving
- December 24–25, 2019 – Christmas
- January 1, 2020 – New Year's Day



10 ELECTRIC SAFETY TIPS FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Provided by Consumers Energy



Install smoke detectors on every level of the home, and make sure at least one is located outside the sleeping area.



Always keep a working fire extinguisher available.

If you decorate a real tree, water it every day and prevent lights from coming into contact with tree branches.

If you choose an artificial tree, be sure it is certified as fire resistant by looking for the UL label.

Turn off or unplug holiday lights when not in use. Never leave lights on unattended. Consider using a timer.

Use holiday lights that are approved by a nationally recognized testing organization, such as Underwriter's Laboratory (UL).

Avoid running extension cords across long distances, under rugs or near doorways. Never use extension cords with space heaters.

For outdoor decorating, use only lights and power strips that have been approved for outdoor use.

Keep electrical connections off the ground and make sure wiring is clear of downspouts, railings and aluminum siding.

Before hanging your holiday lights, inspect them for frayed wires, broken sockets or other signs of wear and tear; then test each light string.