

DCEC was awarded an ARC Co-Chair grant making the purchase of this Altec Digger Truck possible!

The ARC Co-Chair grant is focused on DCEC's partnership with SUNY Delhi's Electrical Construction and Utility Operations program to enhance curriculum and secure necessary equipment and supplies to teach new students and provide on-going training to workers.

## Message from the desk of CEO John Gasstrom

May is here, the sounds of spring abound, and summer's promise teases us with scant glimpses of sunshine from time to time. This is that time of year when we may see all four seasons in one day. May is also the time of year when we celebrate electrical safety month. As you get out to do yardwork, fix up the house, or catch up on other projects, we remind you to keep safety first, especially around electricity.

In our beautiful section of Upstate New York, we are fortunate to have so many trees around us. However, these trees can also be dangerous, and the impact of the Emerald Ash Borer has been profound in our area. This invasive beetle has been ravaging the United States, and our area was not immune to its attacks. We are seeing a very-high kill rate on ash trees in our area, and some tree experts do not expect any ash trees to survive this onslaught.

The danger is that these trees die due to the beetle's damage, but they die standing up. Then large portions of the upper sections can break off and fall, creating extremely dangerous conditions for those below. Please take care in the woods! Of course, eventually the rest of the tree will fall, and for some reason they always seem to aim for the

power lines. Due to the way these trees die, the average homeowner with a chainsaw should not try to cut one down – they can fall in unexpected ways! If they are near a power line, you could also create a dangerous (and expensive!) situation if you fell a tree and it contacts the power lines. Please call us, or a reputable tree service if this situation applies to you.

DCEC is proud to be the lead applicant of a six coop, multi-state consortium on a \$36.9 million grant proposal submitted to the DOE (more on page eight). A large portion of that funding being targeted at combatting the effects of the Emerald Ash Borer and other invasive species. We expect to hear back on this proposal later this summer, so please keep your fingers crossed that your cooperative gets some federal assistance to help address this growing problem.

In May, you will also see slight changes in the distribution of costs on your electric bill, as we implement balances to monthly fixed charges and kWh rates to match electric revenues more closely with costs. Again, we thank all the members that attended the public hearing on March 19, 2024 to learn more about these upcoming changes.

*.....continued on Page 2*

## Powering Our Rural Communities

.....continued from Page 1

We also kick off the nominating process this month, as we have three director seats up for election at our August annual meeting. See information on page six if you are interested in running for a board seat.

Also, in May and June we will have even more opportunities to meet with you. In May, we plan to have a member information meeting set up in Jefferson to give members a chance to talk about right-of-way issues and hear what we're doing with tree trimming in the area. We will have a similar meeting in June in Andes. Please visit [www.dce.coop/members](http://www.dce.coop/members) for meeting details and how to RSVP.

And of course, we invite everyone to visit us at our booth at the Meredith Dairy Festival on June 8th and 9th. More details on page three. Hope to see you there!

Cooperatively Yours,

*John Gasstrom*



## The Power of Cooperative Membership

Cooperatives are not-for-profit, member-owned businesses. Electric utility cooperatives build and maintain three times the miles of power line of other utilities and do so at comparable rates despite fewer customers. They do this by operating on a not-for-profit, cost-of-service basis.

Once a member pays the membership fee, they become a part owner of the cooperative. They have a voice in how the Cooperative is operated and influence this process through casting their vote at the annual meeting. It is also at the annual meeting that the members elect DCEC's seven-member board of directors from the membership.

GI 2-48-10

Because the members of the Cooperative are also the owners this means the cooperative is locally owned and operated. Employees of the Cooperative are also local residents who are familiar with the needs of the communities they serve.

**What do farmers talk about  
when they are milking cows?**



**Udder nonsense!**

## LOOK UP AND LIVE DURING HARVEST SEASON

Keep an eye out for overhead power lines. Use a spotter when operating equipment near lines and poles.



**Safe  
Electricity.org®**





Celebrating our roots  
during June's  
"Dairy Month,"  
DCEC to sponsor and  
attend the:

## MEREDITH DAIRY FEST!

June 8th & 9th  
10am-5pm

HA 4-34-14

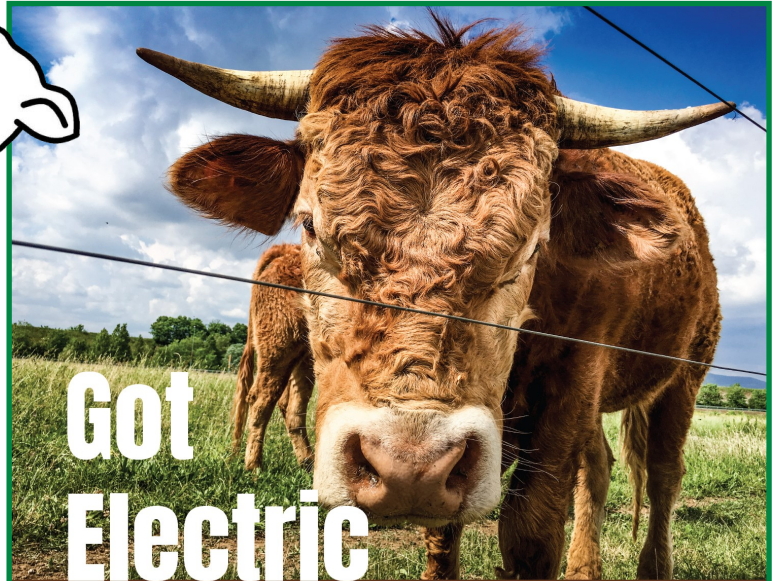
When DCEC (then called REA) first started in July 1941, there were only 12 members all of which were dairy farmers! Under the Roosevelt Administration's Rural Electrification Administration in 1935, farmers were urged to create electricity cooperative companies to bring electricity to rural areas.

The Meredith Dairy Fest's mission is to create a festival that celebrates our dairy history, our local businesses and crafts, and the individuals, families, and animals that make it all possible.

We look forward to seeing you there!

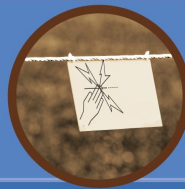
For more information, visit:

[www.meredithdairyfest.com](http://www.meredithdairyfest.com)



## Got Electric Fencing?

INSPECT IT  
REGULARLY



1.

**Make sure that fencing is visible.**  
Use electric fence tape, warning signs or other methods.

**Inspect electrical fencing regularly.**  
Ensure everything is tight, secure and free from frays.

2.



3.

**Make sure your electrical fence is tight and well-supported.**  
A lack of support can cause it to sag.

**Cap posts, especially metal T-posts.**  
This prevents an animal (or human) from being impaled.

4.



5.

**Check for a loose or sagging fence.**  
Not only can animals escape, but wires can fall out of insulators.

Learn more about electrical safety at:

**Safe  
Electricity.org®**

# BEFORE JUMPING IN

## KNOW THESE 6 POOL SAFETY TIPS

Keep these electrical safety tips in mind before and during swimming season. These safety tips also apply to hot tubs.



- 1** Keep anything that is plugged in at least 5 feet from the pool. The farther, the better.
- 2** Have a licensed contractor inspect the pool/hot tub wiring to ensure it meets code requirements.
- 3** Know where electrical switches and circuit breakers are and how to operate them.
- 4** Keep pool skimmers and other far-reaching tools more than 10 feet away from overhead power lines.
- 5** Make sure all outdoor outlets are GFCI protected. Test them once a month.
- 6** Do not touch electrical devices when you are wet or in contact with wet surfaces.

Teach these tips to kids and teens, especially when it comes to using a cell phone that is plugged into an outlet.

**May is Electrical Safety Month**, so what better time to talk about electrical safety than now? We are all excited about the warmer weather coming. Whether it's swimming, boating or fishing, summertime is water recreation time for millions. While enjoying water activities, don't let a safety hazard dampen your summer fun. As part of its "Teach Learn Care" TLC campaign, Safe Electricity reminds everyone:

**Teach** what you know about electrical safety.

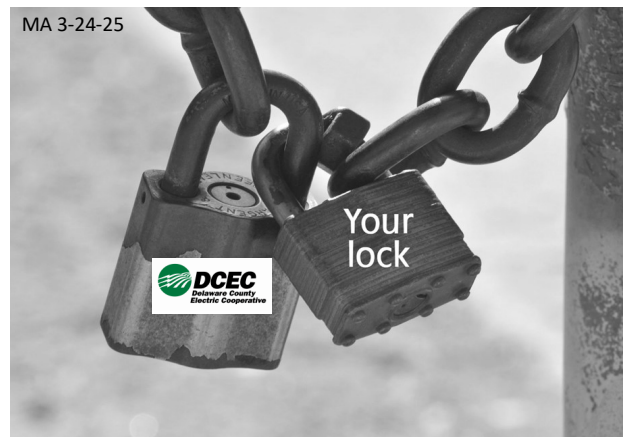
**Learn** what you need to, and

**Care** enough to share it with those you love.

Developing an awareness about ways to protect you and your family against harm from being exposed to energized electrical conductors or wires may someday prove to be lifesaving.

## Gate Codes and "Why are there two locks on my chain?"

MA 3-24-25



Since the nature of restoring power may require access to your property — and it might be the middle of the night: raining, hailing, snowing — it is important that our crews can more easily get through gates to resolve the problem.

Some members have gates with codes. If you have installed a gate with a code padlock and you do not believe that we have that information, please call our office and we will add it to our secure list.

Other members have a chain with a traditional lock as seen in the photo. If our crews come to your property and only "your lock" is on the chain, we simply cut the next link of the chain to add a "DCEC lock." This allows both you, the member, and DCEC access. You'll see DCEC's name and phone number on green tags for our locks that our crews have added.





## DON'T PLUG THESE 15 THINGS INTO A POWER STRIP

It is fine to plug in some things into a power strip, such as computers, lamps, phones and other light-load electronics.

However, appliances that require a lot of power should not be plugged into a power strip. **Do not use a power strip with the following appliances:**

### IN THE KITCHEN

- ✗ Refrigerators
- ✗ Microwave ovens
- ✗ Toasters
- ✗ Coffee makers
- ✗ Blenders
- ✗ Slow cookers
- ✗ Rice cookers

### IN THE BATHROOM

- ✗ Hair dryers
- ✗ Curling irons
- ✗ Other hairstyling tools

### IN THE LAUNDRY ROOM

- ✗ Washing machines
- ✗ Dryers

### ANYWHERE

- ✗ Sump pumps
- ✗ Space heaters
- ✗ Portable air conditioners



*Do not overload power strips by plugging in appliances that consume more watts than the cord can handle. This can cause the power strip to overheat or start a fire.*

**Safe** Electricity.org®  
Learn more at:

## DCEC Completes Annual Audit

Each year, the DCEC board retains an outside accounting firm to conduct a comprehensive audit of DCEC financial practices and internal controls. The auditing firm of Fiore Fedeli Snyder Carothers, LLP, located in State College, PA., completed a very comprehensive audit of how DCEC conducts business, applies accounting practices, and records financial transactions from all departments. We are pleased to report to our members that the 2023 financial statements present fairly, in all material aspects, the financial position of DCEC.

## 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.

## Are You Interested in Being on DCEC's Fixed Budget?

Members interested in being on DCEC's fixed budget plan must contact the office by the end of June in order to be enrolled. Members can also elect to be on a variable budget plan, which you can sign up for at any time throughout the year as long as you have 12 consecutive months of usage. For more information on the budget plans, please contact the office.

## Board Appoints Nominating Committee:

Each year, an independent committee of DCEC members works to recruit members interested in running for the DCEC board at the Cooperative's Annual Meeting. This year members will elect new directors at the 2024 Annual Meeting scheduled for Saturday, August 24th. The Committee will need to submit official nominations by June 25th. Members interested in learning more about being a director or becoming a candidate, should contact Janelle Linehan at [janelle.linehan@dce.coop](mailto:janelle.linehan@dce.coop) by June 7th.

All candidates will be expected to submit a letter to the Nominating Committee presenting their credentials and qualifications and explaining why they are interested in serving on the DCEC Board of Directors.

### ***The director positions up for election in 2024 are:***

Northern Region: Towns of Gilboa, Jefferson, Summit, Davenport, Harpersfield, Stamford & Maryland

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

Southern Region: Towns of Andes, Colchester, Masonville, Middletown, Sidney, Tompkins, Walton & Bainbridge

## 2024 Nominating Committee:

<b>Member</b>	<b>Region</b>
Dr. Seth Blocker	Central
Molly Oliver	Central
Lynn Hait	Northern
Adriaen Jackson	Northern
Frank Winkler	Southern

# 80th ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING



SAVE THE DATE!

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 24, 2024**

9:00AM – REGISTRATION

BUSINESS MEETING TO FOLLOW

**DELAWARE ACADEMY**

2 SHELDON AVENUE | DELHI, NY



ME 1-78-3

## Members Decide on Charity Donations:

At the Annual Meeting on Saturday, August 24, 2024, DCEC will be teaming up with CoBank, one of our financial services partners to give three donations to three, charitable organizations to be selected by the members. 1st prize award will be \$1,000, 2nd prize is \$600, and lastly 3rd prize will be \$400. Nominations for charities should be sent by Co-op members to Janelle Linehan by June 14th at [janelle.linehan@dce.coop](mailto:janelle.linehan@dce.coop) or by regular mail to the office of the Cooperative. To be nominated to receive a donation, a charity **MUST**:

- Have a significant presence within the DCEC service territory
- Have 501(c)3 status
- Be able to attend the DCEC Membership meeting and educate Members on behalf of their organization

Nominated charities will appear in the special edition of the Catskill Hi-Line, which you will receive with your July bill. Members will vote on the “winning” charities at the Annual Meeting. Many thanks to CoBank’s Sharing Success for their matching grants!



## Operations Update:

Spring has arrived and the DCEC crews have been picking their work wisely to avoid wet spots and getting our trucks stuck. The service work has increased as is typical for this time of year when all of our members get their building projects underway. DCEC is always available to help you with any of your electric service questions and feel free to contact us and we will assist you in anyway possible. Our staff has been busy designing work orders and speaking with active and potential members in regard to their service upgrades and new builds.

The line crew has busy very busy handling an abundance of trouble calls, pole replacements, Generlink Installations, and day to day operations. DCEC held an Advanced rubber glove school for apprentices from all four of the NY State Cooperatives. We had 10 students in attendance, and they all learned a great deal from instructors from the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association (PREA) as well as our veteran staff members who assisted with training. The training is a requirement for any Line apprentice during their progression and is fundamental in their safe working habits and abilities during their careers.

The DCEC Tree crew has been very busy working in the Hamden and Gilboa areas. They have trimmed out many triplex services running to members homes and working hard to combat the Emerald Ash Borer that is really starting to effect our areas. We are finding large swaths of dead Ash trees and some of these trees are quite large and endangering the wire and poles. We are looking for ways to combat the damage done by this invasive insect, but our staff is very concerned by the level of damage we have encountered.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if your triplex service is in need of being trimmed out, if you see a tree endangering our lines, or if you have any service request or needs. Please stay safe this spring, look up before you plant any trees and be mindful of power lines when you have a chainsaw in your hand.

- James G. Small Manager of Operations, Job Training and Safety



*Pictured are employees of Delaware County Electric Cooperative and Steuben Electric Cooperative work together to safely move energized conductors to a newly set pole.*

## 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.***



## Grant Status Update:

Members, we have been quite busy over the past year plus applying for applicable grants that will help our co-op harden its grid, increase resiliency, and create opportunities to grow and develop future generations of utility workers.

A lot of team work went into DCEC's most recent GRIP grant application through the Department of Energy for our "Resilience to Intense Storm and Invasive Species-Triggered Grid Disruptions" (RESIST Grid Disruptions). It's no secret that our service territory got pounded with significant storms this winter. After applying for the \$36.9M grant in mid-April, our team has been busy promoting our project to elected officials in hopes to win support in our pursuit for federal funding dollars. We are happy to report that DCEC has found incredible support from NY elected officials for our small, yet mighty cooperative! Members, please think all positive thoughts that DCEC wins this!

"Concern for Community" and "Education, Training, and Information" are two of DCEC's seven guiding cooperative principals. Since partnering with SUNY Delhi — especially the Electrical Construction and Utility Operations program — DCEC has applied for grants to enhance the training of utility workers going on right here in Delhi. Our line and tree crews have travelled to Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and further for training. Well, what if DCEC could help further develop curriculum, embrace new technology, and continue building out an existing program here in our backyard? The ARC Co-Chair grant that DCEC was awarded last year has already brought incredible benefits to the community securing proper equipment such as the digger truck for students and workers in the utility trade to learn on. We continue exploring all avenues to further SUNY Delhi's program.

DCEC is pro-actively seeking all funding opportunities that are fitting to fortify the co-op. We are hoping to have some big WINS to combat the bugs and grow our community's workforce!

*Congratulations to SUNY Delhi's 2024 graduating class of the Electrical Construction and Utility Operations program!*

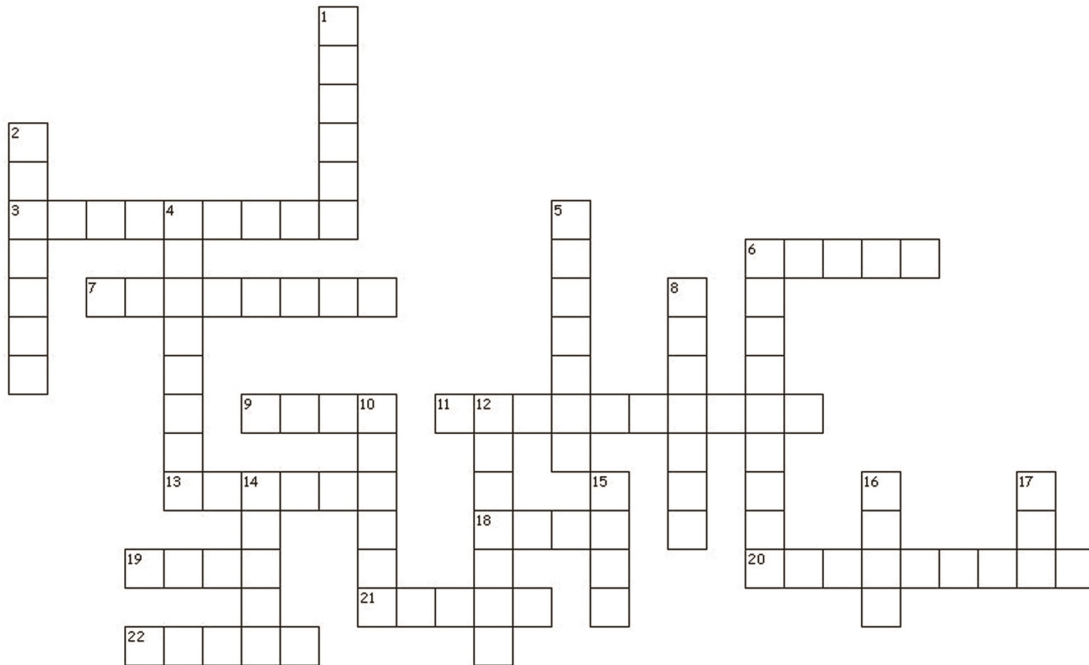


*Above left, is the unfortunately successful work of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). The EAB lays its eggs in the cracks of ash trees. Once the eggs hatch, EAB larvae burrow into the tree to continue their growth cycle. This process leaves distinctive, curvy patterns in the tree. The EAB disrupts the Cambium layer of the ash tree thus killing it. In essence, the Cambium layer is a highway within the tree between the bark and the wood transporting necessary liquids and nutrients to promote growth. Without it, the ash tree dies inside. These diseased trees are incredibly dangerous for our talented, dedicated tree crew to take down since the bark slips right off, one cannot climb the tree. Since the tree is dead, branches also from above fall at any time clearly creating a safety hazard. Average ash trees grow between 50' to 80' tall. DCEC needs the proper equipment to safely remove these diseased trees—which always seem to aim for our power lines when they fall! At 50'-80' tall outside of our ROW clearance, they can still reach and take out your electricity, which nobody likes! Pesky little buggers...*



# Be Safe with Electricity!

## Read the Safety Tips to Find the Missing Words



### Across

3. Use extension cords on a \_\_\_\_\_ basis - not as permanent household wiring.
6. Run lamp \_\_\_\_\_ along walls and behind furniture so they're safely out of the way.
7. Screw light bulbs in securely. Loose bulbs may \_\_\_\_\_ and cause a fire.
9. Before you dig, \_\_\_\_\_ your local underground utility locator service to avoid damage and injuries.
11. Prevent electrical shocks and fires by using safety-tested \_\_\_\_\_.
13. If you see a \_\_\_\_\_ or sagging power line, stay far away, warn others to stay away and call the utility company.
18. Make sure outlets in the kitchen, bathroom, laundry, workshop, basement and garage have \_\_\_\_\_s.
19. Unplug \_\_\_\_\_-producing appliances like irons and toasters when not in use.
20. Don't remove the \_\_\_\_\_ pin to make a three-prong fit a two prong outlet.
21. Make certain extension cords are \_\_\_\_\_ to handle the lamp, tool or appliance you are using.
22. Have your home's wiring checked regularly, at least every 10 \_\_\_\_\_.

### Down

1. Use \_\_\_\_\_ covers or special outlets if you have young children in the home.
2. All \_\_\_\_\_ sockets should have ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Use a portable GFCI if those outlets don't have them.
4. Flickering, blinking and dimming lights can be a sign of home electrical \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Test ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Keep cords out of walkways. Don't cover cords with \_\_\_\_\_ or rugs. The cords could overheat.
8. Go indoors when \_\_\_\_\_ roars.
10. Never place tall items like a \_\_\_\_\_ or antenna near a power line.
12. Never reach into water for a \_\_\_\_\_-in appliance. Unplug it first.
14. Keep appliances away from \_\_\_\_\_.
15. Overloaded outlets and extension cords can overheat, increasing the risk for \_\_\_\_\_. Limit the number of appliances plugged into each outlet.
16. Pull by the \_\_\_\_\_, not the cord when unplugging appliances.
17. Keep all objects at least \_\_\_\_\_ feet away from overhead lines.

Across: 3. temporary 6. cords 7. overheat 9. call 11. appliances 13. downed 18. GFCI 19. heat 20. grounding 21. rated 22. years  
Down: 1. safety 2. outdoor 4. overload 5. monthly 6. carpeting 8. thunder 10. ladder 12. plugged 14. water 15. fire 16. plug 17. ten

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, content, and photos submitted by CEO John Gasstrom; Manager of Operations, Job Training & Safety James G. Small; Field Engineering Technician I Brittany Hall; and Manager of Cooperative Relations 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.

#### Board of Directors

President.....Edward Pick Jr.  
Vice President.....Jeffrey Russell  
Secretary.....Laurie Wehmeyer  
Treasurer.....Edward Furgol  
Director.....Steve Oles  
Director.....David Krzyston  
Director.....Patrick O'Brien  
CEO.....John Gasstrom

#### Current Lobby Hours:

**Monday:** 8:00am — 4:00pm  
**Tuesday:** 8:00am — 4:00pm  
**Wednesday:** 8:00am — 4:00pm  
**Thursday:** 8:00am — 4:00pm  
**Friday:** 8:00am — 4:00pm

Phone hours with DCEC staff will continue to be  
from 7:30am — 4:00pm

#### Summer Lobby Hours: beginning July 1st

**Monday:** 8:00am — 4:00pm  
**Tuesday:** 8:00am — 4:00pm  
**Wednesday:** 8:00am — 4:00pm  
**Thursday:** 8:00am — 4:00pm  
**Friday:** Office Closed

Phone hours with DCEC staff will continue to be  
from 7:30am — 4:00pm Monday through Thursday

#### **DCEC Office Closures:**

*DCEC's office will be closed on:*  
*Monday, May 27, 2024 – Memorial Day*  
*Thursday, July 4, 2024 – Independence Day*  
*Friday, July 5, 2024 – People's Choice Day*  
*Monday, September 2, 2024 – Labor Day*

### **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!**

#### **Like our page on Facebook to follow our news:**



#### **Follow us on Instagram:**

dce.coop



Create your SmartHub account today! You can click straight to SmartHub through our website:  
**www.dce.coop**

KO 2-61-3

### **NOTICE**

If you have a new phone number or mailing address, please let us know so we can update your account. Call our office at (607)746-2341 or email [billing@dce.coop](mailto:billing@dce.coop)

