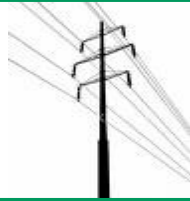




This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



CATSKILL HI-LINE

Newsletter- April 2026

Message from the desk of CEO John Gasstrom

Happy Spring, Members! I'm sure many of you are ready for warmer weather and hoping for some relief from the higher power costs we've seen recently.

I'd like to take a few minutes to explain how the Cooperative works and how energy policy and markets impact us all. As a not-for-profit electric cooperative, DCEC purchases "preference power" from the New York Power Authority (NYPA), giving us access to low-cost, clean hydroelectric energy from Niagara Falls and the St. Lawrence River. This power is shared among New York's cooperatives and municipal utilities, with DCEC currently allocated about 11.6 MW.

We purchase this power and pay transmission providers, primarily NYSEG, to deliver it to our substations. From there, we step down the voltage and distribute it to homes and businesses. Our team maintains the system to ensure safe and reliable service. Simply put, we don't generate electricity—we purchase it wholesale and deliver it to you.

Our rates are designed to cover the cost of purchasing and delivering power, along with a small margin to prepare for unexpected events like storms. When that margin isn't fully needed, it is returned to Members as Capital Credits. Your bill mainly includes a Monthly Fixed Charge and an Energy Charge, along with a few additional items such as a Power Cost Adjustment and an Energy Efficiency Fund charge. In the future, you may see new line items such as a demand charge or on-peak, off-peak, and mid-peak energy rates as we work to keep costs fair and manageable.

As a cooperative, any excess revenue we collect beyond our operating costs goes back to you—not shareholders. We aim to keep costs low rather than collect large margins.

Because electricity must be used as it's purchased, we can't store it when prices are low (with very few exceptions). When demand is high across New York, especially during peak times, prices tend to rise—especially as energy supply becomes more variable.

We've also been upgrading electric meters across our service area. (see "A Word About Smart Meters" on page 2). These new meters give you better insight into your energy use and help us respond more quickly to outages, improving overall service and efficiency.

Members who would like to learn more about how the cooperative works, our metering project, or new rates we are considering are invited to attend an upcoming Member Q&A session. Details will be shared soon, and we welcome your input on topics, times, and locations. To get involved, please email MemberAdvocacy@dce.coop. We hope to see you there!

Cooperatively Yours,

John Gasstrom



"I still remember how her grandma cried with joy the day we hooked them up."

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



A Word About Smart Meters

There seems to be a lot of confusion about Smart Meters lately. As DCEC personnel go around the territory and upgrade our current metering platform to a newer technology, we often get asked whether we are installing a new Smart Meter on their home. The answer is that DCEC implemented Smart Meters back in 2012 and our Members have been enjoying the benefits of them ever since. The new digital meters are much more accurate than older analog style meters (which we haven't had in over a decade), and allow the meters to communicate to us more speedily, to inform us when there is an outage affecting your electric service.

Additionally, electric cooperatives like DCEC typically have a much lower consumer-density. That means on our distribution system, there is an average of about seven(7) meters per mile of line. In some areas of our system, there is less than one meter per mile, but the average is around seven. Contrast this with 35 meters per mile for investor-owner utilities and 48 per mile for municipal electric companies. For a cooperative to keep costs low for Members, we need to utilize technology to perform tasks that are impractical to do with standard personnel. To read a single meter manually could cost the Members of the cooperative \$125 dollars or more, depending on the location of the meter.

That's why the co-op, back over a decade ago, implemented new "Smart Meters" to automate the reading of our meters and save money for all Members. The added benefits include increased safety for staff and additional data available to help Members make informed decisions about energy use. Our current project, which is nearing completion, upgrades the meter to one that can communicate back to the office much faster, so that we can be informed of outages almost immediately. Prior to this system, we often had to wait until Members called in to be aware of an outage and start to troubleshoot its cause.

If you already have one of the new meters (see picture below), you should be able to see your energy consumption data in much greater detail. The best way to view it is to use the "SmartHub" app on your phone (scan QR code below). With SmartHub, please press *Usage*, then *Usage Explorer* and then enter desired dates to view your energy usage up to the point it was last collected (usually midnight of the day before). Being aware of the way that your household consumes electricity will be a great step towards taking advantage of the energy saving and cost cutting programs we will be rolling out in the near future.

WHAT'S
SO SMART
ABOUT A

SMART METER ?

Unlike the older-style electricity meters that are read manually, smart meters use sensors to measure the amount of electricity flowing in and out of your home.



Scan me !



AS OF **2022**



SMART METERS* had been installed across the country.

**Includes hourly interval meters and real-time meters that are capable of recording and transmitting instantaneous data.*



Understanding Payment Arrangements: Flexible Options for Our Members

At Delaware County Electric Cooperative, we understand that life doesn't always go as planned. Unexpected expenses, seasonal changes, or temporary financial challenges can make it difficult to keep up with monthly bills. That's why we offer payment arrangements, a flexible solution designed to help your power stay connected while managing your budget.

What Is a Payment Arrangement?

A payment arrangement is binding agreement between you and the cooperative that allows you to pay your past-due balance at a date later than it is due or in several payments, rather than all at once. This can help prevent service interruption and give you a little breathing room to get back on track.

How Does It Work?

When you set up a payment arrangement, you agree to:

- * Pay a portion of your outstanding balance by a specific date
- * Continue paying your current monthly charges on time
- * Meet all agreed-upon deadlines

By sticking to the plan, you can avoid additional fees or service disruption. If the payment arrangement is broken, you are responsible for the entire billed amount at the time that it is due and the account may be subject to disconnect. Once you have broken three payment arrangements, you are no longer eligible for a payment arrangement for 12 months.

When Should You Request One?

If you anticipate difficulty paying your bill in full by the due date, it's important to act early. Payment arrangements are most effective when set up before your account becomes severely past due or subject to disconnect.

Common situations where a payment arrangement may help include:

- * Temporary job loss or reduced income
- * Unexpected medical expenses
- * Seasonal financial strain (such as winter heating costs)

Setting up a payment arrangement is simple. Contact our office as soon as possible to discuss your options.

It is always our mission to serve our members, not just with reliable electricity, but with understanding and support. We are a not-for-profit cooperative and when we can make it easier for everyone to be able to pay their bills, that is good thing for all of our members. If you're facing financial challenges, don't wait. Reach out today and let us help you stay connected.

BUDGET BILLING PLANS

CHOOSE A BUDGET PLAN THAT FITS YOUR STYLE



FIXED

VARIABLE

June (budget billing begins in July)	WHEN YOU CAN ENROLL	Any month
1/12 of the annual estimated net billing is billed for each of the first 11 months (July–May).	HOW THE MONTHLY AMOUNT IS CALCULATED	Monthly amount = average of the previous 12 months of actual usage. Recalculated each month.
Stable for 11 months (same amount July–May).	MONTHLY BILL CONSISTENCY	Varies month to month, but seasonal swings are significantly smoothed by averaging.
Prefer predictable payments and don't mind a June adjustment.	BEST FOR MEMBERS WHO...	Prefer payments that track usage trends with reduced seasonal spikes.

ELIGIBILITY FOR DCEC BUDGET BILLING

- Residential Service Class – 1 (SC-1) or Residential Service Class – 2 (SC-2)
 - 12 months of usage required
 - Account balance has to be \$0 to enroll

Note: Three late payments in 12 months discontinues the plan, and any past due balance is subject to our Disconnects Policy.

Lineworker Appreciation Day

Line crews work directly with high-voltage power, often in severe weather and dangerous conditions, to maintain or restore service and safeguard communities from downed lines. Their vital role deserves more than a day of recognition — it deserves our ongoing gratitude.

Here are 10 of the many reasons we appreciate lineworkers:

1. They are expertly trained to work on power lines and equipment.
2. They are dedicated to safely and efficiently maintaining power.
3. They have a heart for service, always looking out for their communities.
4. They conquer heights without hesitation.
5. They prioritize safety every second of every day.
6. They answer the call — day or night — to restore power.
7. They endure it all: rain, shine and extreme weather conditions.
8. They go when they are needed, supporting communities nationwide when severe weather strikes.
9. They have each other's backs, and work together like family.
10. They power our lives and energize our communities!

Lineworkers are protectors of safety and keepers of comfort for our communities and beyond. Every day, they bring a spirit of service, unwavering focus and specialized knowledge to a job that demands both skill and heart. Their commitment to safety isn't just a requirement — it's a way of life.

So, to all the lineworkers out there, thank you for running toward electrical challenges when others step back. Thank you for your continuous training, hard work and dedication to keep us all safe. Thank you, lineworkers, for all you do to keep the lights on.



Our Crews

Are Working

to Serve You

Help us keep them safe

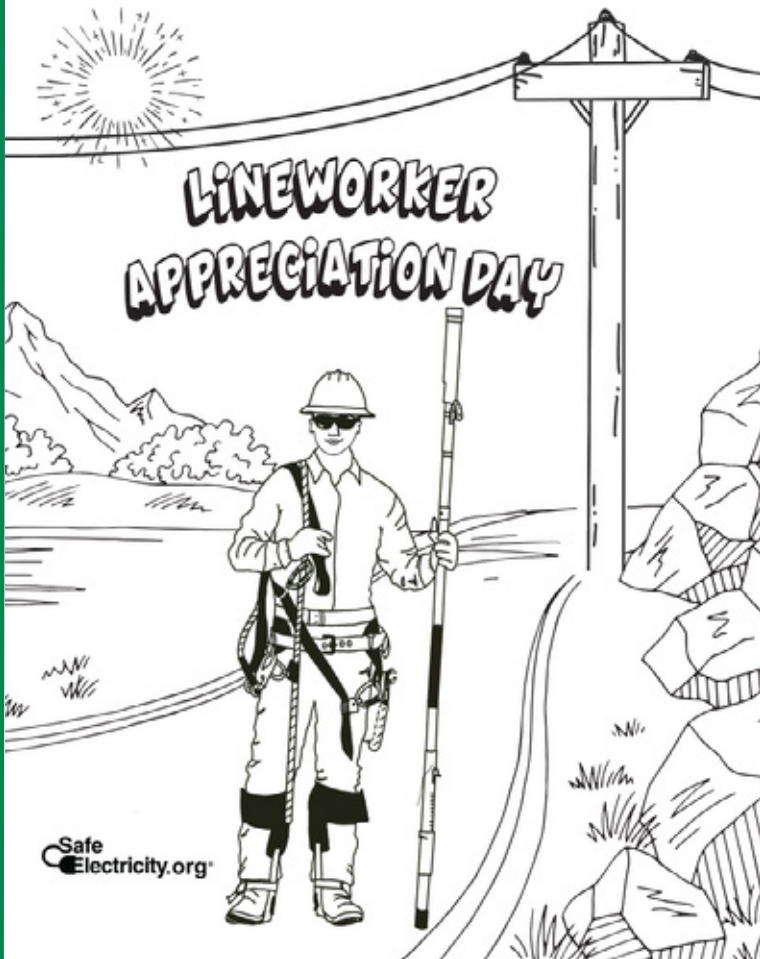
To provide excellent service and keep our crews as safe as possible, please help us with the following:

- At a job site, do not stop to ask crews what they are working on or when power might be restored. Crew members need to give the repairs their full attention to ensure safety. Asking them questions can divert their attention and increase the amount of time it takes for the issue to be resolved.
- When driving by a utility truck (or any roadside vehicle with flashing lights), please move over and give them space. In a work zone, follow all signage, including speed limits. Drivers who travel through a work zone too fast can endanger workers on the ground and up in the bucket.
- If one of our employees is in your yard or on an easement to address service issues, be sure to secure your dogs. Please keep meters and padmount transformers (green boxes) free from obstructions.

Please be patient as we work on an outage or other issues. Safety is our top priority, for you and for our employees.

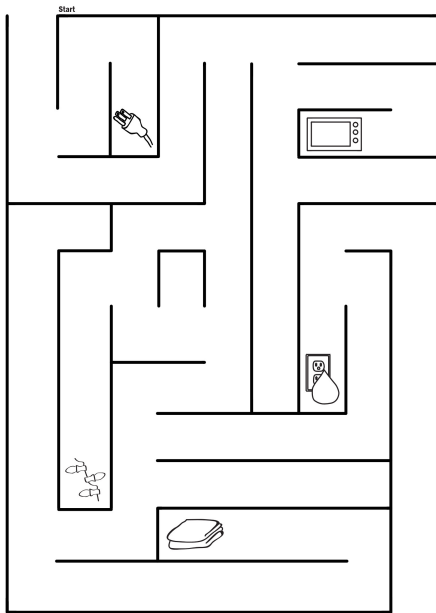
Learn more:

Safe Electricity.org





Sparky Needs Your Help to Stay Safe!


Sparky is sniffing around the house to see what's new and interesting before he takes a nap. Lead him safely to his favorite resting spot by keeping him away from electrical hazards.





Help protect pets from electrical hazards.

 Do not let pets find a cozy warm spot near electronics to stay warm. This is not safe!

 If your pet shows an interest in electronic cords, tell your parents so that they can move the cords where they cannot be reached.

 Water and electricity are a dangerous mix! Check to make sure appliances and electronics near sinks, bathtubs, and pools are safely away where playful pets can't knock them in.

 Never let a pet sleep on top of an electric blanket.

 Pay extra attention to pet safety during the holidays. Your pets may confuse lights and decorations for new toys!



Why did the lineman break up with the light bulb?



⚡ She was too "high maintenance!" ⚡

DEEC Recipe Corner:

Banana Bars with Cream Cheese Frosting

Prep Time: 15 min

Cook Time: 20 min

Servings: 4 dozen

Ingredients:

- ½ cup butter, softened
- 1½ cups sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ¼ tsp salt
- 2 medium ripe bananas, mashed

Frosting:

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese softened
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 3-3/4 to 4 cups confectioners' sugar

Instructions:

- Preheat oven to 350°.
- In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy, 5-7 minutes.
- Add eggs, sour cream and vanilla.
- Combine flour, baking soda and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture.
- Stir in bananas.
- Spread into a greased 15x10x1-in. baking pan.
- Bake until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean (do not overbake), 20-25 minutes.
- Cool completely.
- For frosting, in a large bowl, beat cream cheese, butter and vanilla until fluffy.
- Gradually beat in enough confectioners' sugar to reach desired consistency.
- Frost bars.
- Store in the refrigerator.



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.

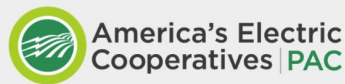
1. Contact DCEC's Billing Department to set up payment arrangements: 1-607-746-2341
2. Contact your local County Social Service program:
 - a. Delaware County 1-607-832-5300
 - b. Schoharie County: 1-518-295-8334
 - c. Otsego County: 1-607-547-4200
 - d. Delaware Opportunities provides assistance through 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.

Contributions to the NRECA America's Electric Cooperatives PAC are not tax deductible for federal income tax purposes. Contributions to America's Electric Cooperatives PAC are voluntary and will be used for political purposes. You have the right to refuse to contribute without reprisal. Federal law prohibits contributions from foreign nationals who lack permanent resident status. Any contribution guidelines presented are merely suggestions. You are free to contribute more or less than the suggested amounts, or not at all. NRECA will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount contributed or a decision not to contribute.

DCEC Office Closures:

- Monday, May 25, 2026 - Memorial Day**
- Friday, July 3, 2026 - Independence Day**
- Monday, September 7, 2026 - Labor Day**
- Wednesday, November 11, 2026, - Veterans Day**
- November 26-27th, 2026 - Thanksgiving**
- December 24-25th, 2026 - Christmas**
- Thursday, December 31, 2026 - New Years Eve**



<input type="radio"/> Bill Addition *	<input type="radio"/> \$1/Month (\$12/year)
<input type="radio"/> One-Time Contribution	<input type="radio"/> \$2/Month (\$24/year)
<input type="radio"/> \$ _____	<input type="radio"/> \$5/Month (\$60/year)
	<input type="radio"/> \$10/Month (\$120/year)

I affirm that my contribution has been made with personal funds:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

COOPERATIVE: _____

EMAIL: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

*Federal law requires the following information for contributions exceeding \$200:

EMPLOYER: _____

OCCUPATION: _____

Also sign me up for Voices for Cooperative Power

*Monthly contributions will continue until you notify us to discontinue

ORANGE you glad you slow down in WORK ZONES?



Safe Electricity.org

Help keep all types of workers (including ours!) safe. Slow down, move over and proceed with caution in work zones. Don't drive distracted!