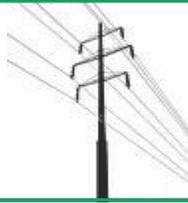




This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



CATSKILL HI-LINE

Newsletter — February 2026



FEBRUARY AMERICAN HEART MONTH



From the desk of CEO John Gastrom

Brrrr! It has been an extra chilly winter so far this year, and we have seen electricity demand and prices hit new highs. On January 30, at 9 AM, we hit our peak for the month at 17.1 MW of electric load with morning temperatures of around 3 degrees Fahrenheit at that time. Unfortunately, the Saint Lawrence and Niagara rivers saw ice build up during January and that affects the amount of water that goes through the turbines generating power. We don't yet know the exact impact of the icing at this point, but it normally results in a "true-up" cost to us later in the year. I've included two graphs on the top of the next page. The graph on the left shows the system load for each hour of January, where you can see that we were over our hydro allocation for most of the month. The graph on the right shows that our hourly average for mornings was around 10 AM, but our hourly average for evenings was around 8 PM and a little higher. This is the type of information we are monitoring on a regular basis to enable us to take actions to try to save on power costs, and manage our load if New York State ever has a constrained supply situation.

On the "Average January Day" graph on the right, I highlighted those peak morning and evening bands. If you have the ability to move some of your energy use outside of those bands, you will help your power bill, as well as every other member's power bill, by lowering the amount of market-priced power we need to purchase to meet our load. You can see a "valley" in our system load between 3-5 PM each day. By shifting your electricity use to the afternoon instead of the morning or evening, you can help significantly reduce costs for the entire membership. If that usage could be moved even further to the early morning hours between 3-5 AM, the savings would be even greater.

That brings me to another topic, our hydro rates. For many decades, we have been very fortunate to be able to take advantage of "preference power" rates through the NY Power Authority (NYPA). Those rates will increase starting this April, and you will see some of the impact of that increase in your Power Cost Adjustment (or PCA) on your bill.

Since DCEC is delivering and reselling the power from NYPA, those power costs are a pass-thru to you the Member, and the PCA is the mechanism that allows for that pass-thru. When we begin our rate re-design project later in 2026, we will factor in NYPA's new rate schedule, which phases in over the next several years.

Finally, I want to give a big shout out to Congressman Josh Riley. The Congressman came to visit the Co-op a few weeks ago, and braved the cold and snowy conditions to spend time with our linemen and with SUNY-Delhi's Utility Construction students and faculty. Congressman Riley saw first hand the rough conditions that linemen face when duty calls and power must be restored after a storm or an accident. As a team, the Co-op and SUNY-Delhi have been working to try to get funding to build an Electric Technology Training Center here in Delaware County, which could be used to train linemen year-round, as well as prepare a workforce to use new distribution grid technology in this age of the "Smart Grid." Once again, we thank Congressman Riley for his support of the Cooperative, our employees, and SUNY-Delhi as we work together to better our community.

If you would like to help support the Cooperative in our endeavors to educate elected officials on the challenges we face as a rural electric distribution grid, please consider signing up for "Voices for Cooperative Power" so that we can have a ready list of people willing to share their voice on important issues. Also, consider making a small monthly contribution to the America's Electric Cooperative PAC that helps DCEC and NRECA get our message to elected officials in Albany and D.C. Even a dollar or two a month goes a long way to helping support this mission. (See page 6 to sign up!)

Cooperatively Yours,

John Gastrom

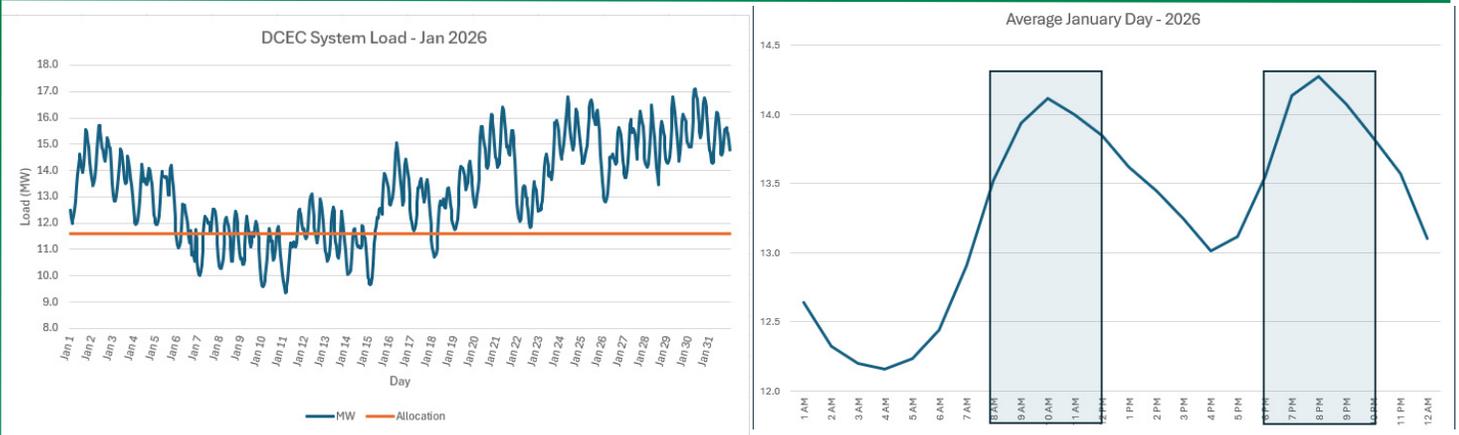
Powering Our Rural Communities

5 North Depot Street
PO Box 471
Delhi, NY 13753

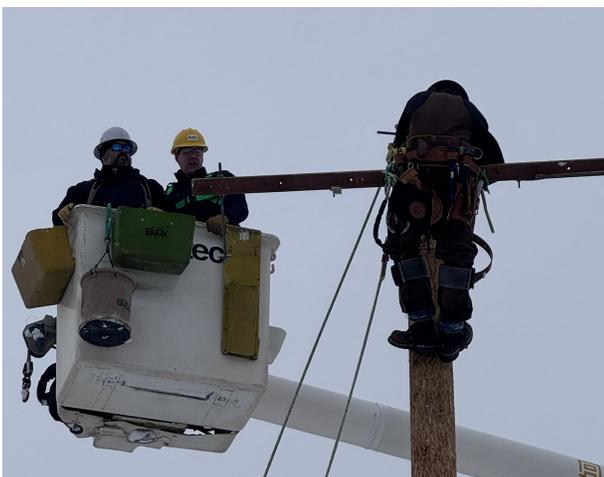
AUTOMATED LINE (payments & outage reporting): **(855) 939-3672**

Office Phone: (607) 746-2341

Fax: (607) 746-7548



Congressman Josh Riley visits the DCEC offices to learn about how your Cooperative supports the power grid.



Congressman Riley and Lineman Jimmy Green observe students performing pole-top work at the SUNY outdoor training yard.



Congressman Riley greets SUNY Delhi instructor Ryan Klein at SUNY's outdoor training yard in Delhi



Walking for **2.5 hours a week** can cut your risk of heart attack **by 30%**.

Source: Harvard



Metering System Update

As we've discussed in recent newsletters, the Cooperative is currently upgrading our aging electric meters to newer models. These new meters will be better able to send outage information to our office when there are problems on our system, as well as enable the Cooperative to better manage our hour-by-hour energy consumption as a system. This enhanced capability to manage our energy consumption is one of the best ways that we can stay within our hydro allocations from the New York Power Authority. We are excited about this project, and the opportunities it brings to better serve you, our members. You may start noticing new devices being installed on Cooperative poles (see pictures below) that allow us to collect and transmit information faster to respond to the increased energy needs of the membership. Stay tuned for more information about this exciting project in the months to come.



What you can do this American Heart Month

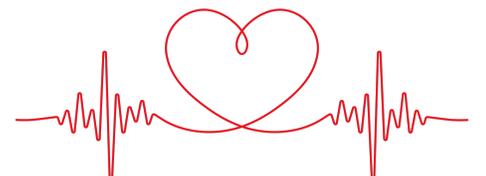
Get trained. Take a CPR, AED and First Aid class through Red Cross or AHA. Even a few hours of training can give you the confidence and skills to respond effectively in an emergency.

Spread awareness. Share CPR resources and encourage others to learn lifesaving techniques. Sharing hands-only CPR videos or local training opportunities helps spread knowledge and creates a network of potential responders.

Promote AED access. Advocate for and ensure workplaces, schools, gyms and community spaces have visible AEDs. It can mean the difference between life and death.

Support preparedness. Urge employers and organizations to provide training and develop emergency plans.

Foster the mindset to act. Encourage others to be ready to call 911, start CPR and use an AED when available. When more people are willing and able to take these steps, we benefit from stronger, safer communities.





Why do my lights blink?



Electric utilities operate and maintain power lines that have protection equipment installed to address possible faults that may occur that could cause temporary or extended outages. When a blink or momentary interruption occurs, this protective equipment is programmed to temporarily interrupt power to allow the fault to clear to avoid an outage situation. Possible faults could include a tree limb touching the line oftentimes caused by severe wind. Other possibilities could include faulty insulators, which fail most commonly during cold and/or damp weather conditions. Occasionally, wildlife (e.g., squirrels, birds, etc.) can cause faults from their presence on pole tops and in substations. Lightning strikes can also cause electrical surges to occur that cause outages when protective equipment automatically isolates affected power lines. During outage conditions, line crew need to assess the cause of the outage before they are able to repair the problem and restore service. This can at times be elusive which can lead to extended outage situations.



What is causing the increased demand for electricity?



While extreme weather is one source of growing energy demand, development and technology are increasing the demand for energy. This demand is projected to rise 15-20% in the U.S. over the next decade, according to the Department of Energy.

Significant factors impacting this growth are the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) and its expanding data centers, cloud storage, communication tools and much more.

The grid faces two significant opportunities for growth: adapting to extreme weather conditions and meeting the rising energy demand. The energy industry is working tirelessly to ensure the power grid meets these ever-growing challenges and provides a more resilient and sustainable energy system that supports affordability and reliability.

Utility companies, government agencies, regulators, and other stakeholders are working to increase grid resilience. Efforts include raising substations that are vulnerable to flooding, deploying battery storage to supplement the grid, expanding renewable energy sources, and connecting regional grids to improve overall stability.

What can we do?

While the challenges facing the power grid are significant, there are steps we can all take to reduce strain and contribute to a more reliable energy system.

- Simple actions like running high-energy appliances during off-peak hours can ease pressure on the grid, especially peak demand times.
- Conducting a home energy audit can identify ways to improve your home's efficiency, reducing both your energy consumption and utility bills.
- Investing in battery storage can provide peace of mind by allowing you to store energy when demand is low and use it during peak times.

DCEC Recipe Corner:

Strawberries & Cream Frozen Yogurt

Good Food Magazine, June 2015

Strawberries & Cream Frozen Dessert



Ingredients

- 3½ cups strawberries, hulled and chopped
- 2 cups Greek yogurt
- 1½ cups sweetened condensed milk (1 standard can)
- 2 tsp, vanilla bean paste or extract
- Just under 1 cup double cream (heavy cream works)
- 1-1½ cups crushed shortbread biscuits (optional),
- 2 tbsp freeze-dried strawberry pieces (optional), available

Notes

- For a softer “soft-serve” style texture, thaw for 10 minutes before scooping.



Instructions

1. Prepare the strawberries—Hull and roughly chop. Set aside a small handful if used.
2. Blend the base—Add strawberries, Greek yogurt, condensed milk, and vanilla to blender, until smooth
3. Whip the cream—Whip the double cream to soft peaks
4. Fold it together—Gently fold the whipped cream into the strawberry mixture until fully combined.
5. Layer (optional)—Pour into a loaf pan or container, smooth the top, and freeze for at 4–6 hours or until firm.
6. Serve—Scoop into bowls, top with extra crumbs or strawberries, and enjoy!

Each Newsletter, DCEC would love to share member’s favorite recipes. If you’d like to submit a recipe, please email it to: memberservices@dce.coop



HEAP Benefits

The New York State Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) provides payment assistance for income eligible residents to use towards the 2025-2026 heating season. This year’s regular HEAP benefits opened November 1, 2025. 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 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:
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 & 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.

DCEC Office Closures:

- Monday, February 16, 2026 - Presidents Day
- 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

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.



- | | |
|---|---|
| <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

WHY IS MY POWER OUT?

A storm or a squirrel may be to blame



When the power goes out, we work hard to resume service as quickly and safely as possible.

Here are some common reasons the power goes out:



STORMS:

Mother Nature can interfere with power delivery.



TREES AND VEGETATION:

This is why we work so hard to keep power lines clear.



ANIMALS:

Curious animals can cause damage, especially squirrels.



ACCIDENTS: Run-ins with a utility pole or other equipment can cause an outage.



PUBLIC DAMAGE: Unsafe digging, equipment or line damage, vandalism or theft can all interfere.



OVERLOAD: This happens when demand spikes, like on a hot summer day.



EQUIPMENT ISSUES: We maintain and inspect equipment regularly, but sometimes malfunctions occur.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

Winter or spring, don't forget to call 8-1-1 before you dig!