

News Light

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Dan Lacasse with his wife, Becky.

Daniel L. Lacasse 1957 - 2017

Eastern Maine Electric Co-op has lost a treasured friend and respected colleague. Attorney Daniel L. Lacasse passed away on January 31st after a brief illness.

Anyone who has attended the Co-op's Annual Meetings will remember Dan as the jovial meeting moderator and prize announcer.

The list of Dan's professional and local accomplishments is long, but he was best known as a good man who used his knowledge, influence, and resources on behalf of local people in need, regardless of their circumstances.

For those who knew him, Dan's good cheer and encouragement will be irreplaceable.

Rate Change Takes Effect First Delivery Base Rate Increase Since 2007

Eastern Maine Electric's March 2017 electric bills reflect the first delivery base rate change since 2007. Although it is only a modest increase, the Co-op is phasing it in over three years.

Unlike previous rate increases, the base delivery rate per kiloWatt-hour will not change. The increase affects only the monthly minimum charges.

This year, the total cost impact for residential, seasonal, and general service accounts is an increase in the monthly minimum charge of \$1.96, which is about 2.13% of the average residential electric bill in 2016.

The monthly minimums for all rates will increase again by the same amount in 2018 and 2019.

For the average residential member of the Co-op, the impact of the fully-phased-in rate increase would be about 6.4% over their 2016 bills. Cumulative inflation from 2007 to 2016 was considerably higher, at 16%.¹

As operational costs have increased since 2007, the Co-op has strategically managed resources to delay and minimize the cost impact of this increase.

Among other actions, this strategy has included:

- ◆ tight staffing with low turnover.
- ◆ partnering with local foresters to cut tree-trimming and -clearing costs.
- ◆ refinancing Cooperative debt.
- ◆ absorbing storm-related losses from

(continued)

New at EMEC.COM:

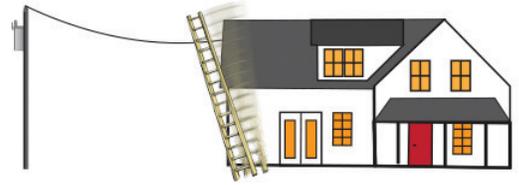
How Are Lineworkers Geared For Safety?

Lineworkers are required to perform detailed tasks while working 40 feet in the air, near dangerous amounts of high current. Have you ever wondered what keeps them safe while they do so? Visit emec.com for a video about how line workers keep themselves safe.



What's Overhead?

Look Up to Stay Safe This Spring



This is the time of year when cabin fever has many of us thinking about outdoor spring projects. Maybe you're thinking of planting a new tree, putting the dock out in the lake, or painting.

Just remember to keep overhead and buried power lines and equipment in mind when planning your project.

Assume every power line is a live line, even if the line appears insulated. If you're working near the power line that runs from the transformer to your home, call the Co-op, and request that a line crew install insulated wraps around those lines near the house to make them safer.

Make sure children do not climb trees if any branch of the tree could come in contact with a power line.

Be aware that some power lines are buried under ground, and avoid digging if there is any possibility of a buried cable.

Before starting any outside job, survey the area to find any overhead power lines or other potential hazards. If you discover a possible hazard, take the proper steps to avoid it, and make sure everyone involved in the project is aware of the hazards.

Here are other safety tips to keep in mind:

- ◆ Use caution when carrying or using ladders, pool skimmers, and pruning poles to keep them from getting near power lines or from resting where they may fall into contact with power lines.
- ◆ Keep equipment and yourself at least 10 feet from power lines.
- ◆ Never trim trees near power lines. Leave that to the professionals.
- ◆ Never use water or blower extensions to clean gutters near electric lines.
- ◆ If it is raining or the ground is wet, do not use electric power or yard tools.
- ◆ Never use electrical appliances or touch circuit breakers or fuses when you are wet or standing in water. Keep electric equipment at least 10 feet from wet areas.
- ◆ Use only extension cords that are rated for outdoor use when working outside. Keep your work area tidy, and do not allow your power cords to tangle.
- ◆ Use heavy-duty, three-pronged extension cords for tools with three-pronged plugs. Never

remove or bend back the third prong on extension cords. It is a safety feature designed to reduce the risk of electrocution or shock.

- ◆ Make sure outlets in garages and outdoors are Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) equipped outlets.

If you find you have doubts, don't just wing it, especially when it comes to working with electricity. Call a licensed professional to help you finish the job.

For more information on electrical safety, visit www.emec.com.

Rate Change *(continued)*

the catastrophic storms in 2013 and 2014, rather than deferring the expense and collecting in rates, as other affected utilities did.

- ◆ working with lenders to obtain waivers on financial performance ratios.

These and other actions have allowed the Cooperative to delay

and minimize the impact of the rate adjustment taking effect in March.

EMEC Rate Change 2017 Monthly Minimum Charges		
<i>Rate:</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>
<i>Residential</i>	\$ 5.08	\$ 7.04
<i>Seasonal</i>	\$ 11.57	\$ 13.53
<i>General Service</i>	\$ 11.28	\$ 13.24
<i>Large Comm.</i>	\$125.00	\$128.92

End Notes For All Articles

1. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index Calculator at <https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl?cost1=1.00&year1=2007&year2=2016>

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