

# SWANS ISLAND ELECTRIC COOP NEWSLETTER

## From the Manager:

The coming of mild weather has quickened the pace of our infrastructure work. During the winter months we procured cable, poles and pole top materials for use in the coming construction season. Poles are being distributed to locations on North RD, Atlantic RD & Harbor RD in anticipation of the arrival of our pole installation contractor later this month. Additionally, we have a tree trimming contractor scheduled to perform a week of aerial trim along our 3-phase lines in areas that have been allowed to grow in over the years. The tree contractor will do their "high" work while the lines are energized and leave the ground work for our SIEC field crew to finish. We still suffer from very high electricity losses in our distribution system which are largely a result of trees touching the wires.

We continue to work with a contracted first class line crew for at least 5 days/month to keep up with routine line work and installation of conductors on new poles. This is intended to be an interim arrangement until we hire a line superintendent. Please keep in mind that 5 days/month is a

small coverage rate and that problems can occur and our members may need assistance at any time – 24/7. If you have non-emergency work that can be scheduled please contact us well in advance so we can schedule the work. We may not be able to respond to last minute non-emergency requests.

We continue to work with our members on safety upgrades with 3-5 code upgrades ongoing at any one time. Our members must be aware of obvious safety threats. The most dangerous cases are low hanging wires (we found a service line recently only 4-5 feet off the ground and immediately disconnected the power) and wires that are lying on the ground. If you believe you have these conditions on your property please stay away from them and contact us for an inspection.

Finally, I reported to the Board in early 2013 that I will not be renewing my contract at the end of August. 2-1/2 years seems interim enough so its time to hand off to someone with more suitable experience in the electric business. My remaining time will be spent recruiting, transition planning and working on the pole program.

## From the Board:

At our April 4th meeting, your Board voted unanimously to phase out the option of quarterly billing for all members. The reasons for this were several – the chief one being that since nearly half of our members are seasonal residents we were continuously having to deal with wild swings in our operational cash flow from month to month. Having monthly billing for everyone will eliminate this "feast or famine" existence for your Co-op. Over the next 60 days we invite members who believe they will be adversely affected by this change to contact the office with your rationale on why the quarterly billing option should be retained. At present, the Board believes that neither the savings in postage or meter reading can justify hanging onto this archaic billing practice and all the complications that it generates.

At our quarterly community update meeting, March 28th, our interim Manager, Tom McAloon, announced that he would be stepping down when his current contract expires on August 31st. While the Board deeply regrets

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his decision, we are extremely grateful for Tom's service for the past two years and for the many improvements he has implemented at our Cooperative.

We are actively recruiting a resident line superintendent at present, and will begin the search for Tom's replacement as Co-op Manager on June 1st.

The Board is also beginning to prepare the membership for a rate increase later this year. It has been five years since our last rate hike, but as our grid modernization moves into high gear it is apparent that all our new poles and line must be paid for.

- ELECTRIC CO-OP OFFICE HOURS
- PHONE # 526-4336
- 7:30 AM TO 4:00 PM MON - FRI
- OFFICE MAY BE CLOSED BETWEEN 11:00 AM AND 12:00 PM FOR LUNCH.
- OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON HOLIDAYS.

AFTER HOUR

EMERGENCY

NUMBERS:

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