

## **Delaware Electric Cooperative Announces Record Reliability**

**GREENWOOD**, Del.- Delaware Electric Cooperative has announced that 2021 was its most reliable year ever. Members experienced fewer outages in 2021 and, when outages did occur, employees restored electric service in record time. The average outage in 2021 lasted 53 minutes, down from 69 minutes in 2019 — which, until 2021 — was our most reliable year. From the perspective of the average member, this may not seem like a vast improvement, but the minutes count when blizzards or hurricanes strike Delmarva.

During the Jan. 3 snowstorm, 37,000 members lost power. When people are cold and the electricity is out, a few minutes can make all the difference. The improvements in reliability are a direct result of the hard work and dedication of employees, who are ready to respond to outages 24 hours a day, seven days a week. According to Jesse Spampinato, DEC's Vice President of Operations, "Our team is like a family. Whenever a storm rolls through, our employees put everything aside and focus on turning the lights back on for members."

Careful planning by engineers has led to fewer outages. Their goal is simple: limit the number of outages through the development of programs that can prevent outages from happening. Extensive efforts have also been made to significantly reduce the duration of outages. The idea is to approach outages proactively, and DEC has excelled in its ability to do just that.

From the removal of trees and vegetation around power lines to the testing and replacement of existing lines, equipment and poles — our crews continually look for ways to prevent outages. Additionally, aggressive maintenance of electrical equipment, the installation and placement of animal guards on that equipment, and the use of drones to scan our system for problems have also resulted in fewer outages.

"There's a lot that we are currently doing to ensure excellent service to members. We're making sure DEC has the manpower, financial resources and advanced technology for our team to continue down the path of reliability and improvement,"

CEO Greg Starheim says.

Advanced automated devices on DEC's distribution system can sense issues on the lines and, in some cases, automatically restore power. Supervisors are also able to remotely operate advanced equipment in the field, isolating parts of the system experiencing problems and redirecting electricity to areas where members are in the dark.

Starheim says that no amount of planning and technology would matter without the men and women who work long hours in some of the harshest weather conditions. At the end of the day, it's the employees who put those plans into action that demonstrate DEC's commitment to reliable power. "We have one of the best teams in the nation. Our incredible employees can tackle storms and restore power as quickly and safely as possible," said Starheim.

Delaware Electric Cooperative is a member-owned not-for-profit utility powering more than 108,000 homes, farms and businesses in Kent and Sussex Counties. For more information, visit DEC on the web at [www.delaware.coop](http://www.delaware.coop) or follow them on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.