



A newsletter for  
customers of the  
South Hadley Electric  
Light Department

## LOCAL CONNECTIONS

Fall 2009

### FROM THE MANAGER

## South Hadley rejoins MMWEC

There's no question that the nation's struggling economy is affecting South Hadley. In recent months, more SHELDC customers are having trouble paying their bills, increasing our receivables. The demand for electricity has also dropped, further reducing our revenue.

In addition to these local factors, complicated new rules set by ISO New England – the entity that manages the regional power grid – have pushed up power supply costs. Today, wholesale power represents some 82% of our operating budget, a 15% increase over past years.

To manage these changes, we are carefully watching all expenditures and deferring all but the most critical. We have also rejoined MMWEC, the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Co., to help manage rising wholesale power costs.

MMWEC's professionals will track the complicated and changing ISO pricing rules to find us the most cost effective mix of suppliers, including energy from green resources. Since all four municipal utilities in Western Massachusetts are now MMWEC members, they can now pool our buying power for mutual benefit.

We are looking forward to the additional resources that MMWEC's managers can bring to South Hadley. Despite current challenges, bills here are still very competitive, and we remain committed to doing all we can to keep them that way.

Wayne D. Doerpholz, *SHELDC Manager*

## Rates here remain competitive

SHELDC's bills are still lower than those of the state's investor-owned utilities, despite higher wholesale power costs caused by new rules set by ISO New England – the entity that manages the regional power grid.

All customers can lower bills even more by using energy as efficiently as possible. For details on all our energy-saving programs, call our office or visit our website at [sheld.org](http://sheld.org).

## Think now, save later

We may not want to think about it yet, but cold weather is just a couple of months away. Before that first heating bill arrives, take time to consider how to make your home energy-efficient:

- Have your heating system professionally cleaned and serviced so it will operate at peak efficiency. If you need a new system, check its energy efficiency before you buy.
- Consider installing a programmable thermostat to automatically match your home's temperature to your schedule. You may qualify for a \$25 SHELDC rebate on the thermostat's purchase. Call our office or go online to [munihelps.org](http://munihelps.org) for rebate details.
- Take a look at your doors and windows. Replace broken glass and seal any air leaks with caulking or weatherstripping.
- Make sure your home is properly insulated. Call toll-free 888-333-7525 for free advice on recommended insulation levels.

## Residential Bill Comparison

750 kilowatt-hours July 2009

**SHELDC**

**\$101.62**

**National Grid**

**\$113.42**

**Western Mass. Electric**

**\$113.49**

## South Hadley Town Hall Connection



- **Beachgrounds Park gets a facelift.**

Local residents have a beautiful new park to enjoy, thanks to the combined efforts of South Hadley Town Departments and private citizens. SHELD installed lighting and controls for the parking lot at no cost to the Town.

“We at SHELD were pleased to participate in this worthy public project,” said General Manager Wayne Doerpholz. “SHELD’s contribution is just one of the benefits of a community-owned utility.”



*Beachgrounds Park*

- **Sign up for trips, teams and classes.** The South Hadley Recreation Department has two bus trips to New York City set for Nov. 21 and Dec. 5. Cost is \$35 for residents/\$40 for non-residents. The bus leaves South Hadley at 7:30 a.m. and leaves NYC at 6 p.m. Catch a show, do some sightseeing or finish up your holiday shopping.

Registration for youth basketball begins Sept. 14 for grades K-12. Tryouts for grades 5-8 travel baseball and softball teams for next spring will be held this fall. Registration is Sept. 14-25.

Upcoming adult fitness classes include Total Body Blast, Zumba and Aquacise. Also available are co-ed volleyball and ballroom dancing. For more details on any Recreation Department program, call 413-538-5039 or go online to [southhadleyrecreation.org](http://southhadleyrecreation.org).



*School safety program*

## Quick Tips

**It’s safety first at SHELD.** Local students learned about electrical safety this spring during a school safety program sponsored by SHELD. The program, which includes classroom instruction and take-home materials, visited the Plains School and the Mosier School. This annual event features SHELD linemen and a professional safety educator.

**Substation update.** Our project to completely rebuild the PINESHED substation is on schedule, with conversion to the new switchgear equipment now underway. The project is set for completion by the end of the year.

**Solar energy is here.** South Hadley has its first photovoltaic installation by a customer who is now turning solar energy into electricity. SHELD welcomes these innovative projects, which could result in excess energy sold to SHELD. Call us if you would like more information.

## Thanks for coming to Big Rig Day!

We loved being part of Big Rig Day at Buttery Brook Park once again this summer, when hundreds of visitors got a close-up look at two line trucks and learned how they operate. We also had a ball serving hot dogs, hamburgers, chips and soda to those who stopped by, and send thanks to Arnold's All Star Dairy and Arnold's Meats.

SHELD’s chefs and food servers included Commissioners Cheryl Scott Nickl, Rita M. Lawler and Jeffrey Labrecque, Manager Wayne Doerpholz, Attorney Mark Beauregard, Bob Blasko and Henrietta Fortin. Demonstrating the two SHELD line trucks were Dennis Canavan, Larry Fisher, Peter Jesionowski, Ed Morrin and Jesse Page.



*SHELD brought two line trucks to Big Rig Day and served lunch to visitors. In the center photo, Manager Wayne Doerpholz, at left, mans the grill with Bob Blasko, SHELD electrician.*



South Hadley Electric Light Department  
85 Main St., South Hadley, MA 01075-2797  
413-536-1050  
[www.sheld.org](http://www.sheld.org)

### Municipal Light Board

Cheryl Scott Nickl, Chair  
Rita M. Lawler  
Jeffrey Labrecque

Office hours are Monday through Friday,  
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**In case of a power outage or other electrical emergency, call 413-536-1050 anytime.**

Wayne D. Doerpholz, P.E., Manager