



## Auld Lang Syne

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The record indicates that it has been over 21 years, but it seems like only yesterday that I traded my 32-mile commute to New England Electric for a two-mile sprint to the Groton Electric Light Department on Station Avenue. Time has not dulled my memory of how happy I was to say good-bye to Route 495, nor have I forgotten the culture shock I experienced. After all, New England Electric had 5,000 employees and Groton Electric had ten!

It turns out that I traded in the camaraderie of many work associates for the intimacy of a few well-known employees and the many wonderful customers who come in month in and month out to pay their bill and share tips on everything from A to Z. It didn't take long for me to surrender to the charm of working locally. New England Electric was a great company (it is now National Grid), but you can't beat municipal electric systems for service or rates. And we like to think that Groton Electric heads the list.



The numerous changes that have occurred over the last two decades range from the mundane to the dramatic, from local to industry-wide, and from temporary to long-term.

Admittedly, the most rewarding time has been the last five years, coinciding with my promotion to general manager. There have been no shortage of challenging issues. We have resolved many, but there are a couple of important issues that I am disappointed that I won't be able to see through to completion.

One is the Washington Green case, which is being heard by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court in early January. The issue the Court will decide is whether the state's Housing Appeals Committee exceeded their authority in ordering the Light Department to grant easements for clearing and access to the proposed 40B development next to our substation on Lowell Road.

Another unfinished task is the expansion of our facilities, which is long overdue. It is much too involved to recall here all of the factors that have stalled this project. I expect the determination of next steps will be made early in 2008 and construction could start later in the year.

Though I truly enjoy my work, the lure of travel has won out. I have gained lots of good memories over the years and am grateful for the opportunity of have served you.

You'll meet my successor on the next page. I know he will do a great job and will continue the fine public power legacy established here in 1909.

Doris Chojnowski

## OFFICE UPDATE

# Kevin Kelly is named Manager of Groton Electric Light Department

Kevin P. Kelly will be assuming his new duties on February 4, 2008 upon the retirement of the current manager, Doris Chojnowski. "It is an honor to be appointed as the sixth manager of such a well run electric department," said Mr. Kelly. "Working here for the last five years has been great preparation for my new responsibilities as Manager."



## Energy Conservation Demonstration

Have you seen our energy conservation light display? Not only does the tree on Fireman's Common (in the town center) have a special glow, it uses 90% less energy than in the past. We purchased 1400 LED lights to replace the incandescent bulbs that have historically decorated the tree. LED stands for "light-emitting diodes." This technology has been around for a while, but until recently there were few LED products available that could compete with traditional Christmas lights. The up-front cost for LEDs is higher, but the operating cost is much less – only one-tenth the cost of standard lighting. When you are contemplating your next purchase of outside lighting for your festival of lights, you may want to consider LEDs as an option. LEDs are much less likely to burn out - they can last up to 200,000 hours, while conventional bulbs last 1,000 to 2,000 hours.

After measuring the electric use of the LED lights and comparing that use to the incandescent bulbs that were on the town tree last year, it was calculated that we will save almost \$3.00 per day. The new lights should pay for themselves after about 60 days of operation.

## Christmas tree bonfire

There will be a Christmas tree bonfire on January 4, 2008 at 6:00 pm to light up the night sky behind the Groton Library. Please do not drop off trees at the Light Department. The collection area for trees this year will be behind the library. After January 4, please take your tree to the transfer station.

## Be aware of holiday energy use

If your electricity use looks a little high on your January bill, you may want to think about how the holidays may have affected your electric use.

Decorative lighting indoors and out, as well as holiday cooking and entertaining, are just a few of the factors that can increase your electricity use. Holiday guests also mean more hot water for showers and laundry. New electric-powered toys and appliances can be a factor, too.

And just as the holidays arrive, so does the cold weather. Even if you don't heat with electricity, most systems need power to run motors, pumps or blowers. So if your January bill's usage seems a little high, the increase is probably only temporary. As you return to your normal routine, your energy use should return to normal also.