

LIGHT LINES

Newsletter of the Sterling Municipal Light Department

December 2016 Edition

General Manager: Sean Hamilton Light Board: Chairman: Matthew Stelmach; Clerk: Brian Pierce; Third member Joseph Curtin

General Manager's Report December 2016

Community Clean Energy Resiliency Initiative Battery Storage Grant – In February of this year we reported that the SMLD administered a \$1.463M Battery Storage Grant from the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) for the Town of Sterling. This project was also funded in part by the DOER Community Clean Energy Initiative Grant under the direction of Commissioner Judith Judson. In addition, we received another \$250,000 grant from the Department of Energy and Sandia National Labs through their Energy Storage Program under the direction of Dr. Imre Gyuk. When complete, this 2 mega-watt / 3.9 mega-watt hour project will be the first utility scale project in Massachusetts and the largest in New England. I am delighted to update that we are nearing completion of our \$2.7M project that we expect to have on-line by the end of the year. This energy storage system will provide up to 12 days of resiliency to the Police and Dispatch critical facility in the event of a catastrophe and it will also be used to stabilize the output of our 2 large solar projects during inclement weather. Other benefits that will be provided to the ratepayers of Sterling include the ability to arbitrage, whereby we would purchase power during off peak hours when prices are low and release it from storage during higher demand periods when prices are higher. A major benefit is that we will have the ability to reduce the peak demand charges that we pay for transmission services. These charges have risen from \$583,000 in 2010 to over \$1.2 million going into 2017. A recent development occurred on November 18, 2016 when The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission released a statement calling for the Independent System Operator of New England (ISONE) to include energy storage as part of the wholesale power market. This will create additional benefits that the SMLD had not anticipated. We look forward to the completion of this project that will help us to better serve our community

The SMLD would once again like to thank the Town of Sterling, Board of Selectmen, Energy Committee, Fire Department, Police Department, Building Department, Electrical Inspector, DPW and the SMLD employees for the assistance they provided during this project.



At the groundbreaking for the Sterling Battery Storage Project on October 12, 2016 are (from left) Joe Curtin, Sterling Municipal Light Board; Selectmen Chairman John Kilcoyne; Todd Olinsky-Paul; Sterling Municipal Light Board Chairman Matthew Stelmach; Dr. Imre Gyuk, Department of Energy program manager; Department of Energy Resources Commissioner Judith Judson; Mass. Secretary of Energy Matthew Beaton; State Rep. Harold Naughton Jr.; Sterling Municipal Light Board Clerk Brian Pierce; Eladia Romero (representing U.S. Rep. James McGovern; State Sen. Jennifer Flanagan; State Rep. Kim Ferguson; Dan Borneo, Sandia National Laboratories, Project Leader; and Sterling Municipal Light Manager Sean Hamilton.

Sterling Municipal Light Department, 50 Main Street, Sterling, MA 01564-2135

Telephone: 978-422-8267 Web: www.energysterling.com

Normal Business Hours: Mon– Thurs 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Friday 7:30-11:30a.m. Full 24-hour coverage for power emergencies

Please call 978-422-8267. After normal business hours Sterling Police Dispatch at 978-422-7331.

Municipal Lighting Plant \$110,000 Grant – In December of 2016 the Energy Efficiency Grant Program for the Sterling Energy Committee will come to the end. The Committee has been working with the SMLD for the last 2 ½ years correcting energy deficiencies that were recognized in a 2013 energy audit of the Town buildings. In addition to the grant funds the SMLD has committed to pay \$200,000.00 over a two-year period toward Town improvements and upgrades. We will also convert all Town streetlights to LED. Other improvements included engineer sponsored review and contracted repair of the HVAC systems at both the Police and Fire stations as well as exterior lighting conversion to LED at these locations. The lighting fixtures for the interior lights are in stock and will be completed soon. All of these upgrades will result in an enormous savings in both electricity and oil consumption. The SMLD applied part of these grant funds toward energy improvements that were performed during the renovations of our 1885 building. We look forward to continuing our great working relationship with the Energy Committee as we further improve energy efficiency of our municipal buildings. I also want to thank the department heads and employees of the Town of Sterling who worked so cooperatively with us during the energy improvement projects.

LED Streetlights – We are pleased to report that we have completed the conversion of all overhead streetlights to new light emitting diode (LED) fixtures. We have 22 remaining underground fixtures to replace that are included in our 2017 budget. These new streetlights will provide much better lighting at a substantial savings to the Town budget.

Neighbor-To-Neighbor - The Neighbor-to-Neighbor Fund was established to help Sterling residents during difficult economic times. The Sterling Municipal Light Department has a program in place where our customers can continue to help their neighbors. Since the creation of our bill Round-Up-Program in June 2014, and thanks to your generous memberships to the program, a total contribution of \$5,978.00 has been donated to the fund. Neighbor-To-Neighbor has been able to assist over 40 individuals and families throughout the community. The program provides assistance with payments toward housing, utilities, food, clothing and other essential living costs. In the generous spirit of giving this holiday season we ask once again that you consider signing up for our Round-Up-Program. The way the program works is that your SMLD bill is rounded up to the nearest dollar and each month and the difference is given to the Neighbor to Neighbor Fund. Your maximum donation per account would not exceed \$11.88 per year. To sign up for the Round-Up Program, please stop by our office, call us at 978-422-8267 or visit our website at www.energysterling.com and send your request to Customer Service. You also have the option to make contributions directly to the Neighbor-to-Neighbor Fund. To find out more information or how you can make your tax free donations directly to the program, please log onto the Town of Sterling website at www.sterling-ma.gov under the Board of Selectmen column or you may contact the Community Representative, Patrick Fox at 774-275-1174 or pafox57@comcast.net. Thank you again for your continued generosity.

ACH Program – As an incentive to sign up for our ACH Program we are offering you a free power strip capable of sensing one main fixture being powered off and will automatically power down other items plugged in. The ACH Program gives our customers automated opportunity to receive the discount amount on their bills. By using this program there is no need to put your bill in the mail or drop it off at the office. You will receive your bill as normal (paper or email) and on the discount day the payment is automatically deducted from your checking, savings or credit card account. Once paid you have the option to receive an email or text message confirming payment. Sign up today and never miss your discount day again!

Utility Scam – We want to continue to make you aware of utility scams that are taking place in our area. Scammers are making calls after business hours at night and throughout the weekends. They identify themselves as an SMLD employee or from another “utility” and demand that a payment be made over the phone or the service will be disconnected. **Do not make a payment to this request.** Hang up and call our office at 978-422-8267 (Mon. - Thurs. 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Fri 7:30 to 11:30 am) or after hours call the Sterling Police Department at 978-422-7331. Also, if anyone stops by your home claiming to be an SMLD employee and you do not have a pre-arranged appointment, **do not let them in.** All SMLD employees have photo I.D.’s and will only be at your home for a scheduled appointment. Again, call our office or the Sterling Police Department if this incident should occur.

*The Sterling Municipal Light Department, Board of Commissioners
along with all the employees would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you a safe
and happy holiday season.*



Sincerely,

Sean Hamilton
General Manager

*Public Power
“Owned by the People We Serve”*