

## Neutral-to-Earth Voltage Evaluator Training Continues to be a Success

A Neutral-to-Earth Voltage Evaluator training course was held in May by the MAEC and the Agricultural Engineering Department at MSU. The three day course included 13 students from five utilities, a dairy construction firm and a recent graduate of the Bio-systems Engineering program. The objective of the course was to convey an understanding of neutral-to-earth voltage sources, investigative procedures, instrumentation and equipment needed for an on-farm evaluation. This course is open to anyone. It can be offered in other locations, pending sufficient interest, and it is offered annually at MSU. Please contact Keith Tinsey if you are interested in attending or hosting a course

### *Customer Service Telephone Numbers for Michigan Electric Utilities:*

|                                 |               |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Alger Delta Co-op.              | (800)562-0950 |
| Alpena Power Co.                | (866)358-4900 |
| American Electric Power Co.     | (800)311-6424 |
| Cherryland Electric Co -op.     | (800)442-8616 |
| Cloverland Electric Co -op.     | (800)562-4953 |
| Consumers Energy Co.            | (800)252-8658 |
| DTE Energy                      | (800)477-4747 |
| Edison Sault Electric Co.       | (877)254-8233 |
| Great Lakes Energy Co -op.      | (888)485-2537 |
| Tri-County Electric Co -op.     | (800)848-9333 |
| Midwest Energy Co-op.           | (800)492-5989 |
| Ontonagon County REA            | (906)884-4151 |
| Presque Isle Elec. & Gas Co-op. | (800)423-6634 |
| Thumb Electric Co -op.          | (800)327-0166 |
| Upper Peninsula Power Co.       | (800)562-7680 |
| We Energies                     | (800)242-9137 |
| Wisconsin Public Service Corp.  | (877)444-0888 |
| Xcel Energy                     | (800)895-4999 |



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The MAEC develops and presents educational programs related to electrical issues in the agricultural community. Members include representatives of electrical power suppliers, the Michigan Public Service Commission, the Michigan State University Extension field staff, and Michigan State University campus faculty.

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## **NEWSWIRE**

### **Update on MAEC Activities June 2003**

#### **MAEC Releases Five New Publications**

Five new publications are now available on the MAEC website.

- Construction Strategies for Minimizing Stray Voltage on Dairy Farms
- The Equipotential Plane in New Livestock Facilities
- Michigan Stray Voltage Protocols
- Protocols and Practices for Stray Voltage Testing
- On-Farm and Off-Farm Stray Voltage Sources and Pathways

The publications are the result of collaborative efforts by Jonathan Althouse, Dr. Truman Surbrook and Keith Tinsey, Agricultural Engineering, Michigan State University and by Thomas Wilson, Pennsylvania State University Extension.

Each paper was presented at one of two conferences sponsored by the NRAES (Natural Resource, Agriculture, and Engineering Service). *Building Freestall Barns and Milking Centers: Methods and Materials* and *Stray Voltage and Dairy Farms* were both held this spring in Camp Hill, PA. The entire conference proceedings are available through NRAES at [www.nraes.org](http://www.nraes.org).

#### **Electrical Safety Check Program**

In cooperation between the MAEC and the Michigan Department of Agriculture the next Dairy Farm Electrical Safety Check program is slated for August and September, 2003. The Michigan Department of Agriculture Food and Dairy Division milk inspectors will perform simple electrical safety checks at dairy farms they visit for two months. This program is an annual campaign emphasizing the need for electrical safety on Michigan dairy farms. After making a simple measurement, the milk inspectors will record their findings in an informative brochure and leave it with the farmer. This brochure will include information regarding the safety check as well as basic information on electrical safety and stray voltage. The brochure will also contain contact information should the farmer have a concern and wishes further investigation. The MAEC's role in the program is to deliver technical assistance as well as to supply the necessary test equipment. The MAEC will also analyze data and report findings from the data that the inspectors collect. For more information see the brochure on the MAEC website or contact Susan Esser at the Michigan Department of Agriculture, 517-373-1060 or Keith Tinsey at the MAEC, 517-353-0643

#### **MPSC Case No. U-11684 Update**

A significant step was reached in the Michigan Public Service Commission Case No. U-11684, Attorney General vs. Consumers Energy regarding Stray Voltage.

The MPSC Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) served his Proposal for Decision to all parties on April 22, 2003. Exceptions were to be submitted on or before May 20, 2003 and replies to exceptions were to be filed on or before June 10, 2003. Afterward, the process continues to the MPSC Commissioners. There is no timeline established as to when the Commissioners would act on the case.

The entire ALJ Proposal for Decision is 81 pages in length. The conclusion is included below as a summary. The document is available from the MPSC by contacting the commission's Case Management Section at (517) 241-6170 and is also available on the MPSC website at [www.cis.state.mi.us/mpsc/orders/alj](http://www.cis.state.mi.us/mpsc/orders/alj).

#### **"VII. Conclusion**

The ALJ finds that the AG's complaint should be dismissed. The ALJ finds that the AG has the burden of proof to show by the preponderance of the evidence the allegations set forth in it's complaint including Count II of it's complaint. The ALJ finds that the AG has failed to show a stray voltage problem in Consumers' service territory or, that Consumers has violated the NESC or MPSC rules, or negligently operated or maintained it's distribution system. The AG has failed to show that Consumers electric rates are unreasonable as a result of the inclusion of costs attributable to stray voltage research and litigation. Therefore, the ALJ recommends that the Commission dismiss with prejudice the AG's complaint in its entirety."