

LCEC has returned \$220 million to customers

The Board of Trustees recently approved an equity distribution of \$12.2 million to current and retired members' accounts.

Members with accounts closed since 2006 will receive a total of \$6.1 million. Customers with current and retired accounts will also receive a total distribution of \$6.1 million. Over the years, LCEC has returned more than \$220 million in equity to its customers.

A customer's equity account is based on the amount of electricity they purchase annually. Amounts range from \$1 for new residential customers to more than \$100,000 for large power consumers such as commercial users.

LCEC is proud to be one of the leading electric cooperatives in the distribution of equity to its customers. It's one of the benefits of belonging to a financially stable electric cooperative.

Only about half of the 1,000 electric cooperatives in the United States return equity to customers.

In June, checks will be mailed to active members receiving more than \$250. Customers receiving \$250 or less will receive a credit on their electric bill.

Please be sure your address remains current so you will receive future payments. You can update it at www.lcec.net.

Energy theft hurts everyone



Stealing electricity is a crime you can't always see. The impact, including the danger, is often unrecognized. Honest customers do not illegally hook into a power supply, connect a line that has been disconnected, or tamper with a meter to avoid recording electricity usage.

Power theft carries deadly risks. Many thieves pay for the power they steal with their lives. It is not dangerous just for those who steal. Electricity thieves may also unknowingly feed energy back into the power line. This is dangerous for LCEC workers who may assume that the power line they are working on is de-energized.

Tampering with power lines can also cause the system to become overloaded, which could harm your electronics and appliances designed to receive a certain, steady amount of electricity.

Everyone can help prevent and reduce power theft:

- Notify LCEC if you know of an illegally connected consumer.
- Do not cut the seal on or tamper with your meter FOR ANY REASON.
- Remain aware of your surroundings and report any suspicious activities to law enforcement.

Most energy theft occurs through meter tampering, bypassing meters, and tapping power lines. Other less frequent crimes include tapping into neighboring premises and using illegal lines after being disconnected. Everyone is affected by power theft, and detecting and reporting illegal activity can protect neighbors and help reduce costs.



Relax with LCEC's convenient payment options

LCEC honored for payment options

LCEC was honored as one of the 2014 Excellence Award Winners by ACI Worldwide for excellence in Electronic Bill Pay & Presentment. This award honors an increase in convenient payment options at LCEC from two to more than 20 which led to a 10 percent increase in customer satisfaction and millions in cost savings.

Trustee election results announced

In April, LCEC held its annual meeting and announced results for the 2014 Trustee election.

Members elected Larry Turbeville to represent District 4, Lehigh Acres; Richard Pritchett to represent District 5, Seat 1, North Fort Myers; and Kenneth Kelly to represent District 5, Seat 2, North Fort Myers.

Trustees are members and bona fide residents of the geographic district they represent. Trustee duties include, but are not limited to, approving plans for an adequate, reliable supply of power at the most competitive rate possible; protecting assets and ensuring compliance with lending requirements; reviewing an independent annual audit, approving annual budgets and action related to margins and equity; representing the interests, concerns and needs of members; and attendance at regular Board and committee meetings.

Chief Executive Officer Dennie Hamilton and Board President Larry Turbeville both made brief presentations at the annual meeting to give an overview of 2013 accomplishments and the integrated business plan for 2014. For more information about LCEC, visit www.lcec.net.



LCEC 2013 Annual Reports are now available. If you are interested in one, please contact pr@lcec.net. Or read online at <https://lcec.net/about-lcec/company-information/annual-report>.

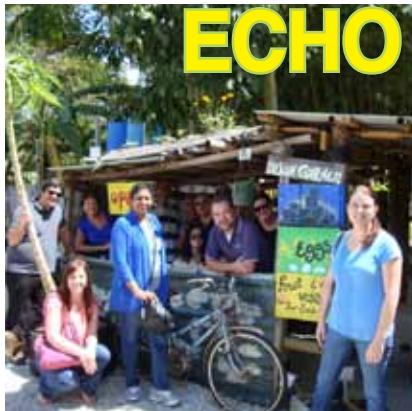
Temperatures in Southwest Florida can exceed 90 degrees during the summer. It is tempting to turn air conditioners to cooler settings. This will cause electric bills to rise. Here are a few tips to help you keep your cool when your electric bill arrives.

- Close shades, drapes and blinds during the hottest part of the day to keep the sun's rays from heating your house.
- Change your air conditioner filters monthly. Clogged filters make your air conditioner work harder.
- Run your air conditioner on "auto" instead of "fan," and set the thermostat to 78 degrees when you're home and 83 degrees when you're away.
- Plant shade trees, especially on the east and west sides of your home, to reduce air conditioning costs.
- Seal air leaks around doors and windows using caulk and weatherstripping.
- Clean the clothes dryer's lint filter frequently. Lint or clogged vents will slow the airflow and cause the dryer to run longer.
- Cook with your microwave or outdoor grill instead of the oven.
- Turn off the lights when you leave a room.

Save on your summer bill

LCEC ENVIRONMENTAL FUNDING AWARD

LCEC recently awarded the Clinic for the Rehabilitation of Wildlife (CROW) with an environmental funding award to help in its mission to save wildlife through care, education, and collaboration. CROW is the first organization to receive LCEC's newly established environmental funding award. To see if your organization qualifies for this award or for an application, email pr@lcec.net. This funding award is just one of the many ways that LCEC positively impacts and supports wildlife and the environment.



LCEC employees recently paid a visit to ECHO, a local nonprofit that equips people with agricultural resources and skills to reduce hunger and improve lives. Approximately 925 million people in the world are hungry, and ECHO empowers small-scale farmers to increase harvests and the nutritional diversity of their crops. LCEC supports the organization by sponsoring the solar booth at the annual Farm Day held in March.

Electrical safety month



Each year, electrical-related incidents result in thousands of residential fires, claim hundreds of lives and cause thousands of injuries. These incidents also cause nearly \$700 million in property damage annually.

In observance of National Electrical Safety Month, LCEC is asking customers to identify and repair electrical safety hazards in their homes.

Many electrical accidents are preventable.



Following are a few things to look for:

- Make sure cords are in good condition. A frayed or cracked cord could cause a shock or fire. Replace old and damaged extension cords with independent-testing-laboratory-certified cords.
- Check to see that extension cords are not overloaded, as indicated by the ratings labeled on the cord and the appliance. Overloaded extension cords can cause fires and should only be used on a temporary basis.
- To reduce the risks of electric shock, make sure that GFCI protection is provided for outlets at kitchen counters, in bathrooms, and at outdoor receptacles. Test GFCIs monthly to make sure they are working properly.
- Check the wattage of all bulbs in light fixtures and lamps. Replace bulbs that have a higher wattage than recommended to prevent overheating that could lead to a fire.
- If an appliance repeatedly blows a fuse, trips a circuit breaker, or has given you a shock, unplug it and have it repaired or replaced.
- Check to see if outlets and switches are unusually warm or hot to the touch. If so, an unsafe wiring condition could exist. Do not use the outlet or switch and have a qualified electrician check the wiring as soon as possible.

surgeSENSE

DUAL-STAGE PROTECTION from LCEC

Protection for appliances and electronics

Although Southwest Florida is the lightning capital of the world, with some storms delivering more than 300 lightning strikes per minute, only 35 percent of power surges come from lightning.

The remaining 65 percent are generated inside homes and come from microwave ovens, printers, copiers and air-conditioner motors. Even small voltage changes from these items can damage your appliances and sensitive electronics.

There is a way to protect electrical equipment from these harmful surges — LCEC's surgeSENSE surge protection program.

Surge suppressors direct harmful power disturbances away from your home and to ground. They protect both large and small appliances through dual-stage protection.

If you would like more information about surgeSENSE, visit www.lcec.net

LCEC is a nonprofit corporation. Established in 1940, LCEC delivers power to more than 202,000 customers. LCEC News is published monthly for customers by the Public Relations Department, P.O. Box 3455, N. Ft. Myers, FL 33918-3455 (800) 599-2356 or 239-656-2300 • www.lcec.net



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BOARD MEETINGS

LCEC Board meetings are typically held the third Thursday of each month at 9:30 a.m. at the North Fort Myers office (4980 Bayline Drive). Monthly meeting agendas are available online two days prior to the meeting. Call 239-656-2300 for more information.

CUSTOMER SURVEY WINNER If you receive an LCEC customer survey in the mail, return it for a chance to win \$50. March's winner was James Dancsec from North Fort Myers.