



HONORING OUR COMMITMENT TO **RELIABILITY AND REASONABLE RATES**

The LCEC mission is to deliver reliable, cost-competitive electricity, and we are doing what we set out to. The average electric system interruption rate indicated that reliability in 2014 was at an all-time high. This is the result of using smart technology, constant analysis, good response time, coordinated maintenance and vegetation management and years of integrated business planning. Although results were outstanding, LCEC is raising the bar, and 2015 goals are even more aggressive.

Planning was also a factor in helping to implement another rate decrease in January. Diligence in improving processes, optimizing existing technology and adherence to the budget are just a few of the ways that the LCEC team has been able to reduce rates for the second year in a row. In fact, LCEC has not raised electric rates since 2008. The great news is that there are no plans to raise rates in the near future.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT



LCEC has a tree trimming program to help ensure reliable electric service. This year, LCEC vegetation management contractor Trees Inc. will be working throughout the service territory.

Customers are responsible for maintaining trees and vegetation around secondary lines that serve homes and businesses and lines outside of the utility easements. However, customers should never attempt to trim a tree

near electric wires or remove branches that are touching power lines. The professional LCEC contractors and many other licensed trimmers are trained in safety practices needed to trim trees near or contacting power lines.

Trees are essential in providing future generations with a cleaner, greener place to live.

Birds of a feather



LCEC works to help protect and preserve our precious wildlife! Throughout the year, LCEC partners with local wildlife organizations and customers on projects related to alternate avian habitats, educational programs and brochures, environmental grants, and local attractions.

TRUSTEE ELECTION IN MARCH

LCEC members will receive a ballot for the annual Trustee election next month. Members are encouraged to exercise their right to vote. We continue to offer three convenient ways to vote: online, phone and mail. Help keep costs low by voting the green ways – online or by phone.

Characteristics of a qualified Board of Trustees candidate:

- Ability to represent the total membership on an impartial and equitable basis
- Capability of overseeing policies governing investment of LCEC funds
- Desire to keep LCEC rates competitive, service reliable and budgets reasonable
- Knowledge to protect LCEC assets and ensure compliance with lending institutions and governmental requirements
- Effective analytical, problem-solving and logic skills
- Independent thinking and strong business training
- Capacity to work as a strong, cohesive team member
- Integrity and earned respect from business and community members
- Awareness of key local issues
- Willingness to remain informed by studying data and other pertinent information

The Nominating Committee

The 10-person LCEC Nominating Committee, independent from the Board of Trustees, is made up of LCEC members charged with interviewing and objectively evaluating applicants interested in serving on the Board. Committee members exercise due diligence and great care to ensure the process is carried out with integrity. They are members themselves, and the focus is on evaluating applicants' ability to represent LCEC members' best interests in the business of the cooperative and avoidance of situations that may present a conflict of interest.

Trustee positions up for election in 2015 are:

- District 1 – Marco Island
- District 2, Seat 2 – Cape Coral
- District 3 – Sanibel/Captiva/Pine Island
- District 6 - Immokalee, Everglades City, Ochopee, Ave Maria

Be sure to check out the Annual Burrowing Owl Festival on February 28! Visit www.ccfriendsofwildlife.org to find out more!



ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

You are invited to attend the Annual Meeting on Thursday, April 16, 2015, at 8:30 a.m., at the LCEC Corporate office. Board President Larry Turbeville and Chief Executive Officer Dennie Hamilton will review 2014 accomplishments and the Trustee election results will be announced.

Keeping the house electrically safe

Keeping up with a household can be a lot of work. Making sure the house provides a safe electrical environment for all ages is easy!

- Take a few minutes to cap any routinely unused outlets around the house. This keeps children and pets safe.
- Remind your kids never to climb or play near trees that are located near power lines.
- Keep all electronic devices far from water and water sources.
- Keep all power cords out of walkways.

Educating your children on the potential dangers of electricity around the house can prevent serious accidents! Take the time to teach them safe electrical habits.



Making the season bright

LCEC employees and family members could be found throughout Southwest Florida during the holiday season. From feeding the hungry to participating in community celebrations, Team LCEC was there.



PROTECT YOURSELF FROM SCAMS AND RIP-OFFS

According to the Consumer Federation of America (CFA), the National Association of Consumer Agency Administrators (NACAA), and the North American Consumer Protection Investigators (NACPI), the top complaints that consumer protection agencies receive are related to everyday transactions such as car sales and repairs, credit and loans, home improvement work, utility service, Internet sales, home solicitations, and health products and services.

Protect yourself from scams and rip-offs

- Be suspicious of requests to wire money, scare tactics or pressure to act immediately. Promises that you can borrow, win or make money easily if you pay a fee in advance are usually a scam.
- Look at track records. Before you buy, check with the Better Business Bureau.
- Hire licensed professionals. Ask consumer agencies if contractors must be licensed and confirm that they are.
- When you buy goods or services to be delivered later, pay with a credit card so you can dispute the charges if they don't arrive or aren't as promised.
- When in doubt, check it out. If you think something is fishy, ask your state or local consumer agency for advice.

QuickPay – fast and free

They aren't worrying about getting their electric bill paid on time. They utilized LCEC's QuickPay option!

Paying your bill online using a checking or savings account is FREE!
It can post immediately to your LCEC account, and it's also an easy way to be green!

LCEC is a nonprofit corporation. Established in 1940, LCEC delivers power to more than 204,800 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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CUSTOMER SURVEY WINNER
If you receive an LCEC customer survey in the mail, return it for a chance to win \$50. December's winner was Armando Perez of Cape Coral.