



The things that matter most to you

LCEC is a not-for-profit electric cooperative. We are in the business of delivering electricity. Our focus is on serving customers' interests in the most cost-effective manner. LCEC revenues in excess of expenses are used for long-term financing. Credits are allocated annually and can be returned in the form of equity when financially possible. There are many benefits to your cooperative membership. Following are just a few:



RATES – LCEC has reduced rates for the past two years and has not had a rate increase in seven years. Rates are the lowest among Florida cooperatives, and we continually work toward remaining competitive.



SERVICE – LCEC strives to provide quality service at every point of contact. Our Customer Care Center has been certified as a Center of Excellence, and we measure performance and work to raise the bar every day.



RELIABILITY – Last year, LCEC set a record for reducing the amount of time customers were without power. This is the result of consistent maintenance, vegetation management, and strategic planning. In addition, quick response and smart technology have been beneficial when restoration is needed.



COMMUNITY – LCEC employees volunteer thousands of hours to support community agencies, programs, events and causes. In addition, they contribute funds, along with corporate donations, to meet the needs in all parts of our five-county service territory.

You can be an energy star!

Energy Star is a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) program designed to help you save money. An Energy Star label means the product or appliance will deliver great service and use less energy. This will not only reduce your electric bill, but it will also help the environment.

- * Energy Star air conditioners are 15 percent more efficient.
- * Energy Star televisions are 25 percent more energy efficient.
- * Energy Star refrigerators can save as much as \$300 on energy costs over their lifetime.
- * Energy Star clothes dryers use 20 percent less energy.



Equity returns— *putting money back in your pocket*

The LCEC Board of Trustees approved a second-quarter distribution of \$3 million in equity to current and inactive customers and an additional distribution of \$7 million to memberships that have been closed since 2007. LCEC is proud to have returned more than \$231 million in equity to members over the years.

Equity is not equivalent to cash or liquid assets; it represents members' contribution toward LCEC's electrical system in the form of infrastructure and other facilities. The amount of equity allocated to each member each year is based on the amount of electricity used by the member during the year.

Equity equates to financial strength for LCEC members. It allows for improvements in the delivery of power and service through capital projects without incurring costly loans. LCEC is proud of the financial strength that has allowed us to return equity to our customers. It is one of the benefits of belonging to a financially stable electric cooperative. Only half of the electric cooperatives in the United States are able to return equity to members.



MAY IS NATIONAL ELECTRIC SAFETY MONTH

Each year, electrical failures or malfunctions cause more than 50,000 home fires in the United States, resulting in 450 deaths, nearly 1,500 injuries and more than \$1.5 billion in property damage, according to the National Fire Protection Association. Workplace electrical incidents result in another nearly 300 deaths and more than 3,500 injuries every year. LCEC urges you to keep yourself and your family safe around electricity. There are many resources where you can learn more!

- www.electrical-safety.org
- www.esfi.org
- www.osha.gov
- www.safeelectricity.org



2014 LCEC Annual Reports are now available. If you are interested in receiving a copy, please contact pr@lcec.net. Or read it online at <https://lcec.net/about-lcec/companyinformation/annual-report>.

Annual Meeting and Election Results

The LCEC Annual Meeting was held in April. President Larry Turbeville and Chief Executive Officer Dennie Hamilton gave a brief update on the state of the organization. The 2015, election results were also announced, confirming the election of, Trustee Curtis Bostick, Dr. Darlene Andert, Geoffrey Roepstorff, and Russell Priddy. Trustees are members of LCEC elected by the entire membership to represent geographical areas for a three-year term. Terms are staggered to provide Board continuity.

Talented employees on the job and in the community

The LCEC Killa-Watts band formed five years ago. A group of employees who didn't work in the same department, or even know each other that well, got together and shared their common love... music. They agreed to use their talent for good and have played at dozens of community events over the years. They recently performed at Six Bends Harley Davidson for the regional United Way campaign celebration. In April they performed at Lehigh Acres and Cape Coral Relay for Life events and at the Cape Coral Cardboard Boat Regatta. Be sure to visit <https://www.facebook.com/LCEC1> to learn about their next gig!



SOLAR TECHNOLOGY SAFETY

Just over 100 LCEC customers have installed photovoltaic power systems at their home or business. The benefit of these systems is that panels convert solar energy into electric energy. Although users still rely on the electric grid during evening and less-sunny periods, they can reduce their usage.

There are safety considerations that should be examined when installing solar power systems. Prior to purchasing the system, the home or business should be evaluated by a licensed, qualified electrician to ensure the existing electrical system can support the technology. Before net metering, or putting power back on the grid, LCEC must be notified and an application process must be completed. This keeps electric workers and neighbors safe and also ensures proper credit for shared power. Once installed, solar power systems may present unique challenges for first responders and firefighters, so it is important to notify local officials about the type of panels that have been installed. This will help to protect firefighters and minimize damage to the building if a fire occurs. Find out more about how you can "Be in the Know about the New" at <http://ehstoday.com/electrical-safety-month>.

Protect your pooch from electric hazards

What measures do you take to protect your furry friend from electrical hazards? Dogs, cats, birds, bunnies and hamsters all love to chew on things such as electrical wires and components. Not only are they putting themselves in harm's way, they could easily endanger others living in the household. The following tips can help protect your pet from electrical shock and worse!

- Always keep electrical cords out of sight behind appliances.
- If you are unable to find pet-proof cords in the store, consider flexible safety cable wraps (which can be found at a hardware or computer store) or encase them in PVC.
- Consider coating your electric cords with a bitter substance available at pet stores. This could help deter pets from chewing on the cords.
- If you have a young pet, unplug all accessible electrical cords when it is unsupervised.
- Be sure that all plugs are in the socket and not partially exposed. An unprotected prong can be dangerous territory for a playful paw or a curious nose.
- Do not allow pets to snooze behind electrical appliances (computers, dryers, etc.).
- Use caution in placing lamps around playful pets. Some lamps, such as halogens, can get hot during use and could start a fire if knocked over by a happy tail.
- Use caution with appliances near water sources such as tubs, sinks or pools. Pets can easily knock things over during playful times, which can create hazardous situations.
- If you witness or suspect that your pet has had an electrical shock, immediate treatment from the veterinarian is necessary. Use caution in approaching an animal that has been shocked to ensure that you will not harm yourself.



**Stealing
electricity
can be life
threatening**

Theft of electricity is not a victimless crime and can be life-threatening. In an effort to safeguard all customers, utilities throughout the industry work to identify and stop those who steal electricity. LCEC is vigilant in detecting meter cheaters through the use of automated meter reading technology, business intelligence reporting and field investigations. The goal is to reduce losses and prevent injury.

Dangers of meter tampering:

- The electric meter is the point that electricity enters the home. Tampering with the equipment can result in injury or death by electrocution.
- Altering equipment can be a fire hazard and cause back-feed into the lines where crews are working, putting them in danger.

Consequences of meter tampering:

- In accordance with the Florida Public Service Commission guidelines and LCEC rate tariff, power is disconnected and the meter is removed immediately.
- A \$200 meter-tampering fee, equipment replacement charge, security deposit, current bill and restitution must be paid before power is restored.
 - Power theft is a crime subject to legal prosecution.

What can you do to help reduce power theft?

If you suspect someone is stealing electricity, contact LCEC at www.lcec.net and click on Customer Care or call 239-656-2300 or 1-800-599-2356.

LCEC is a nonprofit corporation. Established in 1940, LCEC delivers power to more than 206,665 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



www.facebook.com/LCEC1

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 Craig Woodward of Marco Island.