



## SEVERE STORM SEASON, BUT RELIABILITY HAS IMPROVED

LCEC employees have been working around the clock to keep the lights on during this very active storm season. Year-to-date, LCEC has tracked nearly **170,000 lightning strikes, which is 16 percent more than 2014 at this time!** Although lightning can wreak havoc, we have been extremely lucky this storm season. Rest assured that if and when a major storm threatens our area, LCEC is ready, willing and able to get the power restored as quickly as possible utilizing our thorough and well-practiced restoration plan.



## NO RATE INCREASE IN 2016 making it eight years without a rate increase!



### LCEC pilots an LED street lighting program

LCEC began evaluating the cost and benefits of LED street lighting several years ago. LED lighting has become more feasible due to the recent decline in the price of fixtures. Earlier this year, test LED lights were installed in several locations throughout the LCEC service territory so options could be properly evaluated. The goal of the program is to test the durability and performance of various manufacturers to see how they stand up against extreme summer temperatures and to evaluate surge tolerances from nearby lightning strikes. At the same time, LCEC is also testing for ease-of-installation utilizing the existing pole arms.

Once the field study results are in and have been analyzed, LCEC plans to develop an LED lighting rate tariff and hold an LED streetlight information forum for interested customers. LCEC has held similar workshops to review programs and initiatives, discuss the cost and safety considerations and to listen to customer comments and concerns. Stay tuned for more information as the program progresses.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Cape Coral City Council is considering options to negotiate a new franchise agreement OR to take over (municipalize) the electric system within City limits.
- Most electric systems run by cities began as a government run utility.
- A takeover is a very costly venture and could result in higher electric rates.
- The only City to municipalize in the past 50 years took place when citizens voted for a takeover by public referendum. The City gave them a vote in the matter.
- Thanks to State law, as a cooperative member, you will have a voice in the matter. The law requires a two-third approval of all members before a significant portion of the electric system can be sold.

## 8 reasons cooperatives benefit us all

**1** Cooperatives are **DEMOCRATIC** businesses **EQUALLY OWNED** & **CONTROLLED** by a community of people.

**5** Members equally **share THE BURDEN** in hard times and equally **share THE BENEFITS** in good times.

**2** **EVERY MEMBER** has **ONE** vote.

**6** Cooperatives are an **INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT**. There are **thousands** upon **thousands** of cooperatives around the world that **make a difference**

**3** Because they are owned by community members, cooperatives keep **MONEY & JOBS** in their community.

**7** Cooperatives strive to make people's **LIVES, COMMUNITIES, & ECONOMIES** more just, equitable, & democratic.

**4** Cooperatives are not theory. They are **PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS** to many **ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL, & SOCIAL PROBLEMS** that can be implemented **RIGHT NOW**.

**8** Cooperatives **AREN'T CHARITY** – they are an **empowering** & means for self-help & solidarity.

# LCEC Environmental Funding Award



LCEC is proud to give back to the community in a variety of ways. From volunteering time to installing osprey platforms to sponsorship of events, LCEC makes a positive local impact. One way of giving back is LCEC's Environmental Funding Award Program. This program, which began in 2013, awards funds to organizations who apply and meet the following criteria:

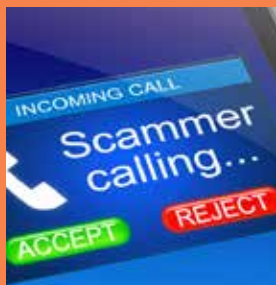


- ◆ Located within LCEC service territory
- ◆ Funding utilized for projects/programs that are related to the environment and the utility industry
- ◆ Having a demonstrated need for funds

In just two short years, this program has flourished! The Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation, the Center for the Rehabilitation of Wildlife, Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife and the Bailey-Matthews National Shell Museum are just a few of the thankful recipients.

The next application deadline for LCEC's Environmental Funding Award is March 15, 2016 and applications can be emailed to [pr@lcec.net](mailto:pr@lcec.net).

## DON'T BECOME A utility scam victim



### If it sounds like this it is a scam

**Caller:** I am an employee at LCEC. You missed your payment and service will be terminated unless you immediately wire a payment by Green Dot card, Western Union, or MoneyGram.

**Caller:** I am an employee at LCEC. You missed your payment and service will be terminated without an immediate cash payment delivered to me within the next thirty minutes.

### If you receive a call like this you should:

Hang up and call LCEC to verify that your account is in good standing and report the scam.

Contact law enforcement fraud departments to report the scam. (Lee County Sheriff's Office – 239-258-3292, Collier County Sheriff's Office – 239-793-9300)

## Combat energy VAMPIRES and PHANTOM loads this Halloween



October is the perfect time to battle "Energy Vampires" and "Phantom Loads." Don't worry. These vampires and phantoms don't have sharp teeth or fly around making scary noises. Electrically speaking, "Energy Vampires" or "Phantom Loads" mean the same thing. These terms are meant to describe appliances and electronics that are left plugged-in even when they are not in use. These items literally drain electricity all-day, every-day. Even scarier than the idea of these energy villains is the fact that most Americans have at least 20 "Energy Vampires" or "Phantom Loads" in their home right now. Although these predators only add pennies to your electric bill, awareness and conservation will make an impact on both your change purse and your carbon footprint! Are you ready to tackle little monsters (no garlic necessary)? Simply unplug items such as coffeemakers, phone chargers and radios when you are not using them. Whether you are going on vacation or just to work, unplug any appliances and electronics that do not need to be plugged in. You may want to invest in an energy-efficient power strip which can help you easily switch off items when they are not in use. If everyone in the nation tackled the energy vampires in their home, it would make a huge impact on our carbon footprint!



### LCEC honored as a healthy business

LCEC recently received the 2015 Horizon Council Healthy Business Award for its commitment to employee wellness. Health initiatives benefit customers as well as employees by keeping healthcare costs in check and reducing the bottom line. In addition, many of the LCEC wellness programs add to employee engagement and workforce retention which have also proven to decrease costs. Last month, employees challenged each other to walk, run, or bike 100 miles in 30 days.

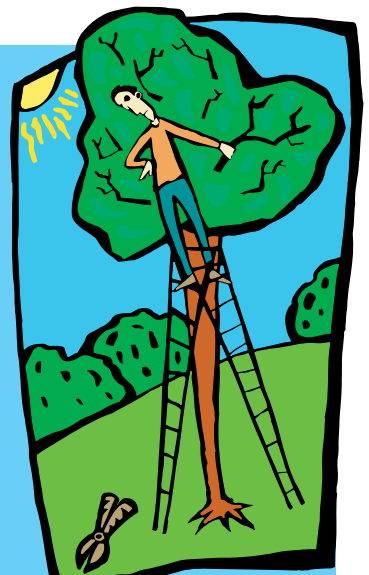
## Right Tree, Right Place

As leaves in parts of the nation begin to turn shades of red and brown, Southwest Florida's natural vegetation, dense foliage and gorgeous swaying palm trees remain green. Looks aside, our beautiful landscape can become dangerous and disruptive if it collides with power lines. You can ensure your family's safety by learning the dangers of climbing, planting, or trimming trees near electric power lines.

Trees are excellent conductors of electricity. When tree limbs contact power lines, the electricity travels through the tree to the ground. If you touch a tree that is contacting power lines, you will become part of that path and could be seriously injured or killed.



- Always remember to call 811 before you dig to avoid hitting buried electrical lines.
- Always look up and around you for overhead power lines before trimming tree branches.
- Never attempt to trim a tree near electrical wires or remove branches that are touching power lines. Certified tree trimmers are trained and have the proper safety equipment to trim trees near high-voltage lines.
- Protect your family from the dangers of trees and electricity by planting the right tree in the right place. As a general rule of thumb, plant trees that have a mature height of 20+ feet away from overhead electric lines.



For more information on planting the right tree in the right place, visit the **Reliability** tab on [www.lcec.net](http://www.lcec.net).

LCEC is a nonprofit corporation. Established in 1940, LCEC delivers power to more than 207,840 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](http://www.lcec.net)



[www.facebook.com/LCEC1](http://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. Last month's winner was Dayari Martinez of Cape Coral.