

NEWS



RELIABLE POWER one protective device at a time

Maintaining a reliable electric system is complex. Throw in the overarching goal of keeping rates competitive, and the LCEC team has their work cut out for them. Fortunately, LCEC utilizes technology to help provide reasonable rates while keeping the lights on. Automated protective devices are able to detect and isolate faults on the system and leave as much as possible of the power network operational until repairs can be made.

Not only do these LCEC devices minimize the impact of, or when possible avoid an outage, but they also help to preserve the integrity of the electric system by creating momentary blinks until the circuit is cleared. If whatever has contacted the line has not cleared the line after several brief operations, the line is de-energized to prevent damage to electric facilities. These devices also offer an added layer of safety for utility workers or customers who may come in contact with power lines. A disturbance on the line could be the result of a human, and isolating the fault could save a life.



No rate increase but weather is driving bills up



It is hard to believe that winter has arrived when temperatures are still reaching summer levels! A record heat wave this fall and lack of afternoon thunderstorms are impacting customer electric bills this month. Typically, residents enjoy coastal breezes and open windows in November and December. However, air conditioners are running steadily and, as a result, electric usage is high.

You can manage your bill by keeping that thermostat at 78 degrees or higher. Use ceiling fans only when you are in the room, and close the blinds or curtains in the morning and afternoon to block out heat from the sun. Visit www.lcec.net for additional energy-saving tips!

HOW TO IDENTIFY AN



LCEC offers many simple ways to pay your electric bill, including convenient authorized walk-in payment stations located throughout the LCEC service territory. LCEC authorized payment stations charge a \$1.50 cash service fee and have a blue and white sign. Accepted forms of payment at these stations include cash, check, money order, cashier's check, and traveler's check. Payments made before 8 p.m. post to your LCEC account within approximately 40 minutes. It is vital to check the list of authorized walk-in payment stations on www.lcec.net.

Paying your electric bill at an unauthorized payment station results in a higher service fee, and your payment could be delayed for several days. In some cases, a delay in getting the payment to LCEC could lead to disconnection of service.

LCEC suggests that you skip the line to pay your electric bill! The following payment methods have no fee, no waiting, and no worrying:



A convenient, time-saving option that will automatically deduct your payment from your bank account the business day before the due date of the bill.



A convenient way to pay your bill by check over the phone: 239-656-2300 or 800-599-2356.



Pay by check online when you log in to Account Access.

For more information on LCEC's payment methods, visit www.lcec.net.



Your Board of Trustees is charged with governing LCEC to ensure reliable delivery of electricity and quality service at competitive prices. Board members serve the membership as a whole and at the same time represent a designated geographic area. The group must think and learn together to make decisions in the best interest of all members. Trustees must also be vigilant in fulfilling fiduciary duties and setting policy on behalf of members, while understanding industry trends and regulatory requirements. They delegate responsibility to the leadership team and employees to operate the business on a daily basis, and they provide oversight of the business strategy.

Throughout history, the LCEC Trustee have embodied the values they champion. They are dedicated, passionate, and dynamic members of the community who are also LCEC customers. Applications for Board positions representing Cape Coral and the Immokalee/Everglades City area are being accepted through January 4. Contact pr@lcec.net if you would like more information.

COOPerATIVE Membership

Cooperatives are formed when people come together to meet a common need. They are active in every sector of the economy, including finance, insurance, agriculture, retail, health, and service. Locally owned and democratically controlled by the members who use the service, cooperatives are founded on the common idea that people know what's best for them and can work together to achieve goals.

LCEC is no different. LCEC was established in 1940 when no other utility would serve parts of Southwest Florida. The movement to energize the community began in North Fort Myers. Residents joined together to bring electricity to Sanibel and Pine Island, then Immokalee, Marco Island, and

Everglades City. By 1957, Lee County Electric Cooperative was strong enough to fund the infrastructure that served the first homes in Cape Coral. In 1962, service was expanded to Lehigh Acres and more recently to Ave Maria.

Cooperatives are different from other businesses:

1. Purpose – to meet the needs of members, not to make a profit.
2. Control – one member equals one vote, not one-vote-per-share.
3. Margin allocation – margins are returned based on usage, not on share-holding.



Cooking up SAVINGS

When you are cooking dinner or doing dishes, the last thing you think about is saving electricity. But saving electricity in the kitchen is a snap when you consider the following:

► Keep your stove-top burners and reflectors spick and span!

The cleaner they are, the better they will heat (which can save electricity).

► Always match the pan size to the heating element.

The closer the pan size is to the size of the burner, the less heat will be lost.

► Turn off the burners or oven several minutes before the timer rings.

The heating element will stay hot enough to cook your food while saving electricity.

► Resist the urge to check the oven.

It might be tempting, but resist the urge to continually open your oven door. Each time it opens, heat escapes, which means more energy must be used.

► Be smart when opening the fridge.

When putting away groceries or getting items out to cook, be quick. This will minimize the loss of cold air.

► Clean those refrigerator coils.

It is wise to clean the condenser coils located under your fridge every few months. Dust buildup can work as an insulator and decrease the efficiency of your fridge.

For more energy-savings tips, visit www.lcec.net.

Pull the plug on holiday hazards



We urge customers to use extension cords safely year-round and especially during the holiday season. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, 3,300 residential fires are caused by faulty extension cords each year. Following are tips to keep your season merry and bright!

1. Only use certified cords.
2. Make sure cords are properly rated for the intended use.
3. Do not overload cords.
4. Keep outdoor extension cords clear of water.
5. Inspect cords to look for cracks, frays or damage.
6. Do not plug a power strip into another power strip.

Extension cords are meant to be a temporary solution and should not be used for the long-term.

RUNNING AND FUNNING FOR UNITED WAY



Last month, LCEC coordinated a Goblin Gallop 5K Race and a Tunes and Taste Buds night of entertainment to raise funds for those in need. These are just two of the events that employees organize throughout the year in an effort to give back. This year's United Way contribution will be close to \$200,000.



LCEC is a nonprofit corporation. Established in 1940, LCEC delivers power to more than 207,523 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. Last month's winner was Michael Grady Wilson of Punta Gorda.