



While the cost of living increases, **LCEC keeps rates competitive**

When LCEC was established as an electric distribution cooperative in 1940 energy wasn't as critical as it is in the 21st century. Back then, electricity was considered a luxury. Today, nearly everything we do depends on reliable electricity. Although the cost of living continues to increase, LCEC employees are working hard to keep operating cost down so that electric rates don't go up. In fact, since 2013, LCEC has decreased electric rates by nearly 7 percent. Today, LCEC customers pay just over ten cents a kWh, which is below the national average and nearly the same price as the national average was 76 years ago!



Average Cost in United States: (source: Bureau of Labor Statistics)

	1940	2015
Gallon of milk	\$0.50	\$3.38
US Postage stamp - Domestic first class letter rate	\$0.03	\$0.49
Gallon of auto gas	\$0.20	\$2.28
Ticket to a movie	\$0.25	\$10.00
Electricity - cost per kWh	\$0.10	\$0.13
LCEC cost per kWh		< \$0.11
kWh per month - average consumption	30	1,100
Median annual U.S. wage	\$1,730	\$26,695

Striving for excellence... and earning it for three years straight



The LCEC customer contact center has been certified as a Center of Excellence for the third year in a row. To achieve certification as a Center of Excellence, a company must undergo a rigorous benchmarking process which compares the organization's operational metrics to those of its peers using the world's largest database of contact center metrics hosted by BenchmarkPortal. "Only the top 10 percent of those benchmarked annually achieve this distinction," said BenchmarkPortal CEO Bruce Belfiore.

During the certification process, a team of internally recognized professionals audit and verify key data from the contact center. Only five utilities in the nation have earned certification, and LCEC is the only cooperative to do so.

Look for your Board of Trustee election ballot in March

As an electric cooperative member, you have the right to elect your Board members every year. It's one of the benefits that sets a cooperative utility apart from investor-owned or government-run municipal utilities. Board members are customers too. The Trustee positions in Cape Coral and Immokalee are up for election in March. Seats are staggered to allow for continuity on the Board.

The Nominating Committee, comprised of LCEC customers from throughout the service territory, will be interviewing candidates in January. Committee members will recommend candidates who they feel have the ability to represent the total membership on an impartial and equitable basis. In addition, they look for characteristics related to financial oversight and compliance, risk management, business ethics, problem solving, independent thinking, cohesiveness, integrity, awareness of local issues, and ability to study data and information related to the utility industry.

Vote the green way! When you cast your vote online or by phone instead of mailing your ballot, you help to keep rates low.

Reliability has improved thanks to analytics, planning, and hard work

We realize that our customers expect a high level of service from their electric provider. LCEC continues to utilize sophisticated distribution reliability analytic tools and planning models to help build, maintain, and operate the complex electric system. Armed with information, LCEC can consistently deliver electricity at the lowest cost possible and address the growing demands on the electric system. These demands change from minute to minute based on weather, environmental forces such as vegetation, evolving usage patterns, and increasing adaptation of renewable energy. Having the tools and data to analyze the impact of these changes helps LCEC planners allocate resources and funds where they are needed most.



A team of committed, knowledgeable employees can also be credited with improved service performance over the years. Dedication to providing service all day, every day, is a way of life for LCEC workers who also understand the importance of utility training and safe work practices.

SAFETY FIRST

Electric cooperatives own more than forty percent of America's electric distribution lines, nearly 2.5 million miles of line covering three quarters of the nation's landmass. In the utility industry, safety always comes first. LCEC employees are trained to be safe, and stringent safety goals are set and met each year. Sharing safety tips with our customers is also one of our goals. Each month we focus on specific safety information, and we encourage you to contact us at pr@lcec.net if you have safety questions.

Four safety tips for using space heaters

Living in paradise doesn't require the use of heat often. When things do get a little chilly, space heaters are an energy-efficient way to stay warm.



1. Only use safety heaters with emergency tip-over shut-off features.
2. Make sure the unit is clean and in good condition.
3. Place heater on a level, hard surface in low traffic area.
4. Do not leave space heaters unattended.



The 2015 Leadership Marco Island class

Leading the way to LEADERSHIP

LCEC is proud to support leadership programs throughout the service territory. Not only is it an opportunity to share information with community leaders but it is also an opportunity to answer questions, and learn more about our members!



Leadership Lee County recently made an adventurous visit to LCEC headquarters.

Start the new year right with one of LCEC's

CONVENIENT PAYMENT OPTIONS:

Auto Pay is a time-saving option that will automatically deduct your payment from your bank account the day before the due date of the bill.

Pay by Phone is an easy way to pay your bill over the phone: 239-656-2300 or 800-599-2356.

Pay online with PowerPay when you log in to Account Access on www.lcec.net.

Authorized walk-in stations are conveniently located throughout our service territory.

Mail in your payment in the envelope enclosed with your bill.

Visit www.lcec.net for details on each of these payment options.



Warm your pool without burning your wallet

The following tips can help keep your pool warm and your spending cool:

- Set your thermostat no higher than 84 degrees. Each degree higher adds 8 to 12 percent to your electric bill!
- If your pool won't be used for three to four days, consider setting the thermostat at 70 degrees. The cost to reheat your pool for a visit from the grandkids is less than keeping your pool at a consistent temperature all week!
- Protect your pool from the wind. A simple seven-mile-an-hour wind can increase heat loss in your pool by 300 percent! A quality pool cover can help reduce heat loss. In addition to keeping your pool warm, a cover can help keep the water clean and prolong the life of chemicals.
- Fountains and other aesthetic pool features can cause heat loss.

For more info on pool pumps, solar pool heaters and spas, visit www.lcec.net.

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 Wendy Barhydt of Ochopee.