



Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife put environmental award to good use

Cape Coral is home to the largest known population of the Florida burrowing owl. These pint-sized birds burrow underground where they nest. A local organization in Cape Coral works to ensure the birds' welfare is represented through education and protection. For many years, LCEC has partnered with the Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife in an effort to educate and protect.

The 16th Annual SWFL Burrowing Owl Festival is on February 24, 2018, at Rotary Park. It is a family fun-filled event celebrating the beginning of nesting season. Visit www.ccfriendsofwildlife.org for details.

LCEC NEWS

LCEC
PEOPLE. POWER. POSSIBILITIES.

FEBRUARY 2018

NO RATE INCREASE for the eighth year in a row!

While prices for almost everything have increased, your electric rates have remained the same. Rates have decreased five times over the past four years! The cost of materials, labor, and many other utility essentials has risen, but LCEC has been able to improve processes and streamline operations so that rates have not been impacted. Continual system maintenance has also helped to mitigate repair and replacement costs. Even after spending more than \$30 million on Hurricane Irma restoration, rates will remain the same for 2018. As a cooperative, LCEC is eligible for partial FEMA reimbursement for disaster recovery. The portion not covered by FEMA will be recovered through electric rates.



Fighting the weather and HEART DISEASE



It was a chilly morning in December, but Team LCEC put one foot in front of the other to raise funds in the fight against heart disease and stroke. Team LCEC has contributed more than a quarter of a million dollars to the cause over the past 10 years.

Board of Trustees election in March!

As an LCEC account holder, you are a member of one of the largest electric cooperatives in the nation. Democratic member control is a cooperative principle which puts governance in the hands of those the organization serves. As an LCEC member, you will receive a ballot for the annual Trustee election in March. Members are encouraged to exercise their right to vote.

LCEC offers three convenient ways to vote: online, phone, and mail. Help keep costs low by voting the green ways—online or by phone. You can review information about each candidate at www.lcec.net/about-lcec/company-information/board-of-trustees beginning March 1, 2018.

A 10-person Nominating Committee, independent from the Board of Trustees, nominates members who apply for inclusion on the ballot. The Nominating Committee is made up of LCEC members charged with interviewing and objectively evaluating applicants and exercising due diligence and great care to ensure the process is carried out with integrity. Their focus is on evaluating applicants' ability to represent fellow LCEC members' best interests in cooperative business and avoidance of situations that may present a conflict of interest.

Characteristics of a qualified Board of Trustees candidate:

- Ability to represent the total membership on an impartial and equitable basis, ability to attend required meetings.
- Desire to keep LCEC rates competitive, service reliable, and budgets reasonable
- Capability of overseeing policies governing investment of LCEC funds
- 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

ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

You are invited to attend the Annual Meeting on Thursday, April 19, 2018, at 8:30 a.m., at the LCEC corporate office. Board President Russell Priddy and Chief Executive Officer Dennie Hamilton will review 2017 accomplishments, and the Trustee election results will be announced.

CUSTOMER SURVEY WINNERS

If you receive an LCEC customer survey, return it for a chance to win \$100. Last month's winners were Susan Bott of Marco Island and Barbara Wilson of Cape Coral.



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LCEC is a nonprofit corporation. Established in 1940, LCEC delivers power to more than 214,668 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



Special thanks to LCEC lender CoBank. Thanks to their generosity, a local veteran received a once-in-a-lifetime No Barriers expedition in Colorado last year. CoBank also came to the aid of utility employees whose lives were critically impacted due to Hurricane Irma.



Are space heaters safe?

Flipping the switch on central heating guarantees a spike in your electric bill. You can save on your energy bill by adding direct warmth to the room with a space heater. Modern space heaters have many safety features, but it is still important to select the right heater and use it wisely. Heaters equipped with a tip-over switch will automatically shut off if tipped over for any reason. An overheat protection switch has a temperature sensor to detect when internal components become too hot, and the unit will automatically shut off to prevent overheating.

It's important to have the proper amount of clearance: at least three feet away from furniture, window treatments, bedding, clothing, rugs, and other combustibles. Heaters must be plugged directly into an outlet with sufficient power capacity. Use of extension cords is not recommended.

Most importantly, never leave a space heater plugged in or on when you sleep or are away from the room. Many models feature programmable timers as an added safety feature.



Saving on your electric bill is a good thing; saving lives by taking the time to read operational manuals and practicing safety is a great thing.

FLICKERING LIGHTS... not always a bad thing

Although it can be annoying, brief power interruptions might mean that a protective device on the power system helped to avoid a prolonged outage. A momentary interruption of power can happen when a tree branch rubs against a power line, a bird or animal touches an energized part of facilities. Temporary faults can also be caused by lightning or other weather events occur. Protective devices on the system detect when there is a fault on the line and automatically open a switch several times to see if the fault has cleared. If the fault clears itself, an outage does not occur and there is no need to dispatch a line crew to the location for restoration. Without the protective devices and momentary outages, the line would be de-energized for safety reasons or to prevent extensive damage to the system. This results in the need to have a crew investigate the cause and a more lengthy outage.



VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ensures safe, reliable electricity

Tree contacts or fallen trees are one of the main causes of electric utility outages. This was never more evident than after Hurricane Irma ripped through Southwest Florida late last year.

The LCEC vegetation management plan entails cycle-trimming main circuits throughout the five-county service territory in accordance with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Millions of dollars are also invested in targeted vegetation management. Data analytics and business intelligence are utilized to determine areas that need attention more quickly. Vegetation management is not only critical to the restoration process, but it is fundamental to mitigating outages all year long.

ELECTRICAL FIRES are different

Never try to extinguish an electrical fire with water. Have an approved fire extinguisher in your kitchen, garage, and laundry room, and know how to use them. It is also important that everyone in the family knows how to manually turn off the electricity if needed. Following are extinguisher types.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
Water	✓					
Foam	✓	✓				
ABC Dry Powder	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Dry Special Powder				✓		
CO ₂ Gas		✓			✓	
Wet Chemical	✓					✓