

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

LCEC was thrilled to participate in the 15th Annual Festival of Trees benefiting Goodwill Industries of SWFL. LCEC has been decorating and donating a tree for this event since the program's inception. The theme of this year's LCEC tree was "Glamping Through the Holidays" and included an array of camping supplies to make the winner's next camping adventure as glamorous as possible!



An LCEC Community Partnership

Giving back for the future

LCEC was among the top Pacesetter contributors to the United Way of Lee County at last month's kickoff event. LCEC and its employees work year-round to raise funds to energize the community. LCEC also partners with United Way for the Power to Share Program to help qualified customers in need of electric bill payment assistance. Customers can share in the efforts by rounding up their bill to the nearest dollar! Visit www.lcec.net to find out about Power to Share by Rounding Up!

THE RELIABILITY ROADMAP for 2022



LCEC plans 10 years out to ensure reliable electric service for customers. Along with the day-to-day projects associated with delivering electricity to more than 231,000 customers, LCEC has the following projects planned for 2022:

- Two new distribution feeders in Cape Coral
- Rebuild two distribution feeders near Immokalee
- Convert 16 distribution reclosers to new technology
- Rebuild approximately 15 distribution taps
- Begin construction of a new substation in northwest Cape Coral
- Prepare for a future substation in Lehigh Acres
- Upgrade equipment protection at six substations
- Replace 2,250 distribution poles
- Replace eighteen transmission structures

Providing reliable electricity is on the forefront of all we do because keeping your lights on is, and will forever be, our priority!



Run for fun and funding!

The 10th Anniversary Goblin Gallop set new records with 261 participants in October. The event, held along the river at Jaycee Park, started out with a few raindrops, but it didn't stop the fun, and the event raised more than \$5,000 for United Way.

BENEFITS OF A COOPERATIVE MEMBERSHIP

For 81 years, LCEC members have been receiving the benefits of belonging to a strong cooperative.



Unlike investor-owned utilities, cooperatives are not-for-profit businesses, and the people and businesses receiving electricity from LCEC are more than just customers; they are members too. Like other electric cooperatives, LCEC is owned by those they serve.

Members contribute to the operation of the business through electric payments. In return they earn equity in the poles and wires. Members receive an equity credit, and when the financial position allows, a portion of equity is retired.

We are proud to be one of the leading electric cooperatives in the allocation and return of equity.

LCEC is a nonprofit corporation. Established in 1940, LCEC delivers power to more than 232,013 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



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Subscribe to the LCEC YouTube Channel!
Visit www.youtube.com/c/LeeCountyElectricCooperativeLCECSWFL/ featured and check out LCEC news, safety tips, shared content, and more! Check out the other LCEC social media channels too!

No Base Rate Increase 2022!

2022 will mark the 14th year that LCEC has maintained the same base rates! However, due to rising power costs, the Power Cost Adjustment part of the bill will most likely increase during the first quarter next year. This is consistent with similar increases by other electric utilities in response to rising fuel costs.

LCEC prides itself on living up to our mission of providing efficient, reliable, and cost-competitive electricity to our customers. Our focus is on managing the part of the bill that we can - operating and maintenance costs, which

are recovered in base rates. Employees are able to impact base rates by constantly improving processes and efficiencies, utilizing technology when it makes sense, and by working in a fiscally responsible manner.

Costs managed through base rates - no increase since 2008

1. Costs of service for customer groups, including residential and business customers.
2. Costs to provide electric service, including a minimum rate of return required by our lenders.
3. Opportunities to improve processes and leverage technology to offset increasing expenses for material and labor.

Costs related to purchased power - will be increased in 2022 due to fuel costs

1. Cost of purchased power and adjust the pass-through expense to recover costs appropriately.



LCEC will continue to keep customers informed prior to the change.

UNDERSTANDING EQUITY

Equity ownership is one of the benefits of belonging to a financially strong electric cooperative. There are more than 895 electric cooperatives in the nation, and the same principles apply to equity administration to ensure compliance with laws, fairness, and consistency among members. LCEC continually reviews equity management and adjusts in the best interest of all members when needed.

What is equity?

Equity is not cash in the bank. It is an investment in the cooperative. Members share in the responsibility of funding certain expenditures to ensure the system remains reliable and service is quality. Member contributions help keep rates competitive.

What does equity fund?

Equity is needed to pay for capital investments funded through rates. Revenues fund operating costs such as power purchases, fuel, salaries, debt service, and equity retirements.

Equity allocation

Once operating expenses are paid, the amount left at year-end is net margins. These are allocated (or credited) to member equity accounts.

Equity retirement

When the financial condition allows, LCEC retires a portion of the equity in members' and inactive members' accounts. LCEC has retired more than \$303 million in equity over the years.

For more info about equity, visit lcec.net/my-home/equity

SmartHub

Payment Reminders Communication

A new notification is now available to customers registered in SmartHub. Customers will receive payment due date reminders automatically through email, making it easier to pay their bill on time and avoid late fees.

The reminder goes out eight days prior to the due date, and customers can change the number of days in their notification settings within SmartHub.

- Customers can disenroll their email from payment reminders.
- Customers can also opt in through SmartHub to receive a text reminder.
- Customers with multiple accounts will receive the notification, and can modify these settings for each account through SmartHub.

Settings can be modified through both SmartHub Web and SmartHub Mobile App.



'Tis the season to trim the tree, but use caution when doing so. Simple steps can protect you and your family against a holiday disaster!

- Only use lights, electric decorations, and extension cords that are UL-listed.
- Inspect all holiday lighting and décor for signs of damage.
- Do not overload extension cords. Pay attention to safety instructions to avoid overheating or a fire.
- Always turn off all holiday lights and decorations while away from the house or before you go to bed.
- Water your holiday tree daily, and position it at least three feet away from candles, fireplaces, space heaters, radiators, and heat vents.

Happy holidays from the LCEC family to yours!

The National Fire Protection Association reports that between 2014-2018, U.S. fire departments responded to an average **160 home fires** that started with Christmas trees per year. These fires caused an average of two deaths, 14 injuries, and \$10 million in direct property damage annually.



Keeping up with technology



The LCEC telecom system was recently upgraded. This major upgrade was completed over a weekend with no interruption of service to customers. Continually updating LCEC software and systems reinforces the mission to provide reliable and competitive electric services and a quality customer experience.



Did you know you are getting solar power?

As an electric distribution cooperative, LCEC does not generate power. We purchase our power from FPL that has a diverse fuel mix, including solar. This cost-effective, long term power supply agreement benefits LCEC customers, since FPL's diverse fuel mix keeps rates low. In fact, FPL has the largest fleet of solar generation capacity in Florida! In addition to the solar you are already receiving, LCEC supports individual renewable solar generation and has a net-metering program in place that provides credit for excess generation.

SAVINGS - HOLIDAY LIGHTING

Use a Timer

A great way to alleviate the burden of turning your lights on and off, plus they save money in case you forget to turn them off at night.

LED Lights (light emitting diodes)

Create an amazing holiday display and produce savings with LED light bulbs. They have an average life span of 50,000 hours and use 6-8 watts. **Think solar**

Florida soaks up sun all year round. Take advantage by investing in solar-powered outdoor holiday lights. It can be a great energy-saving solution. **Trick the eye**

Strategically place reflective ornaments to bounce light in multiple directions to create a shimmering effect.

Consider Battery Operated

Using battery-operated-lights and candles in your front windows can also add light with limited energy use and cost.

FRONT PORCH FORUM

LCEC teamed up with Cooperative Research Forum to host three Front Porch Forums this year. These forums served as a direct line to our valued customers for their insight and feedback. The topics included billing statement evaluation, energy usage management, and communications. LCEC will continue these forums in 2022 as a means of openly communicating with our customers and putting their suggestions into action.

Customer Survey Winners

If you receive an LCEC customer survey, return it for a chance to win \$100.

Last month's winners were Don Tinker of Cape Coral, Karen Ayala of Lehigh Acres, and Tulip Tree House, LLC of Lehigh Acres.