

PARTNERING TO



SUSTAIN THE ENVIRONMENT

The LCEC Environmental Funding Program began in 2013 as a means to positively impact and support sustainability throughout Southwest Florida. More than \$186,000 has been awarded since the program's inception.

Criteria considered for funding:

- Serving LCEC customers
- Projects/programs related to the environment or the utility industry
- Demonstrate a need for funds

Applications are accepted twice a year in March and September. To learn more, visit the Environment page at www.lcec.net.

Check out LCEC on social media!

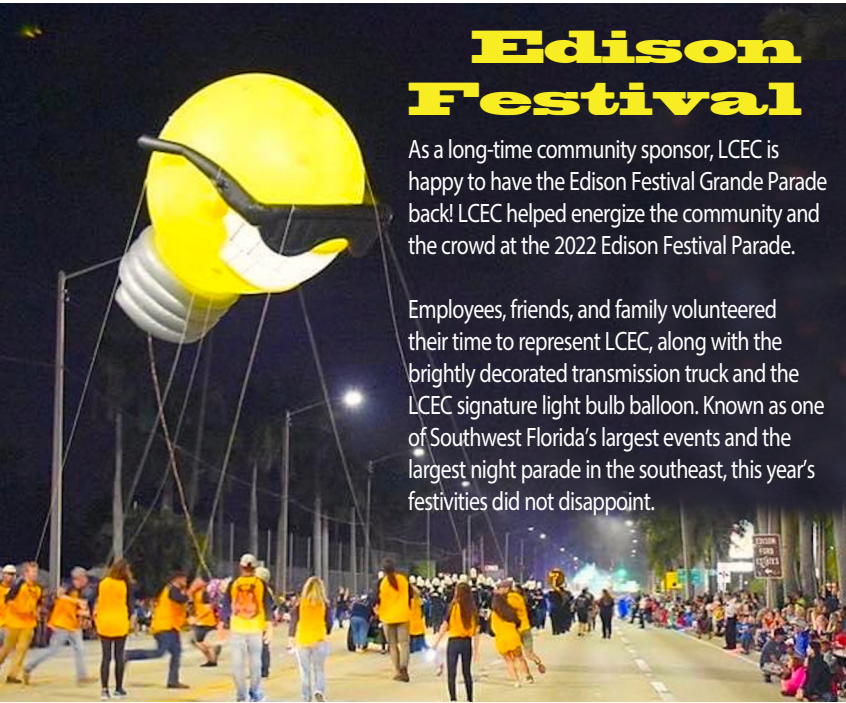
Hey, LCEC community! If you enjoy the tips in our newsletter, you can get more through our social media channels! Find LCEC @LCECSWFL on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube. It's a great place to receive the latest news about safety, savings, and tools related to your electric account!



Subscribe to the LCEC YouTube Channel!
Visit

www.youtube.com/c/LeeCountyElectricCooperativeLCECSWFL/featured

Edison Festival



As a long-time community sponsor, LCEC is happy to have the Edison Festival Grande Parade back! LCEC helped energize the community and the crowd at the 2022 Edison Festival Parade.

Employees, friends, and family volunteered their time to represent LCEC, along with the brightly decorated transmission truck and the LCEC signature light bulb balloon. Known as one of Southwest Florida's largest events and the largest night parade in the southeast, this year's festivities did not disappoint.

Conservation awareness through art

LCEC awarded ArtFest 2022 with funding for an art installation conveying the importance of conserving limited natural resources and inspiring re-use and upcycling. Local middle school students create sculptures displayed in a special educational area at the event.



CUSTOMER SURVEY WINNERS

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

Last month's winners were Sarah Matthews of North Fort Myers, James Vigeant of Cape Coral, and David Downes of Cape Coral.



LCEC is a nonprofit corporation. Established in 1940, LCEC delivers power to more than 233,150 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

LCEC NEWS

MARCH 2022

Proactive maintenance = OUTAGE AVOIDED

An LCEC substation team performing routine maintenance identified critical equipment located within the substation that had probably been damaged during contact by a contractor vehicle. The damage was not clearly visible and could have easily gone undetected. Resources from several departments were gathered to develop a solution to avoid a potential outage in the future. Repairs were made without an interruption of service to customers. Proactive maintenance and repairs not only reduce the time customers are without power, they also reduce costly emergency equipment replacement.



SmartHub enrollments continue to rise

There are now 139,551 LCEC customers enrolled in SmartHub! These customers are reaping all the benefits that SmartHub has to offer, including the ability to:

- View payment history
- Pay the bill
- Request a payment extension
- Receive bill reminders
- Set usage alerts
- Monitor energy usage
- Report an outage

Visit lcec.net to enroll in SmartHub today!

City of Cape Coral eliminates public service tax exemption

Government has the authority to impose a public service tax in accordance with Florida Statutes. The tax is levied on utilities such as electricity. LCEC is obligated to collect the tax and remit payments to the City of Cape Coral. LCEC does not retain any of the tax funds.

When the City of Cape Coral approved a public service tax on electricity in 2013, they allowed an exemption for the first 500 kWh on residential bills. City Council approved elimination of the exemption beginning April 1, 2022.

Trustee Election Ballot in the mail

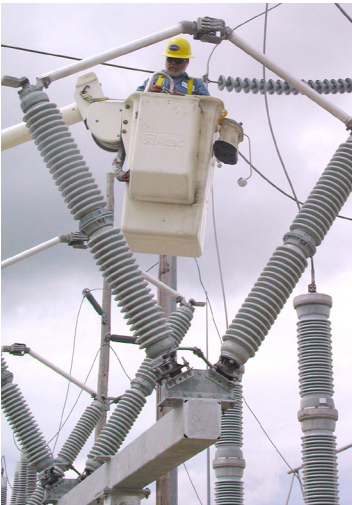
Members will receive a Trustee Election ballot in March and have the opportunity to vote for one candidate in each of the four seats slated for the 2022 election.

Please consider using the online or telephone voting options to help keep costs lower.

Protective devices that ensure reliable electric for YOU

LCEC takes reliability seriously. Protective devices on the system help deliver on the promise of safe and reliable power. Following are a few of the protective devices LCEC utilizes:

- **SMART RELAYS** in LCEC substations monitor conditions, open breaker(s), and gather data to aid in analysis of faults.
- **FAULT INDICATORS** on lines and equipment assist field personnel in troubleshooting outages.
- **AUTOMATIC VOLTAGE REGULATORS** help deliver power at proper voltage to customers.
- **TRANSFORMER MONITORS** keep silent watch on large (substation) power transformers.
- **AUTOMATIC RECLOSERS** can restore momentary loss of power (blinks) and avoid a longer outage.
- **DISTRIBUTION AUTOMATION SWITCHES** can automatically open to reduce the number of customers affected by an outage. They are also used to reroute power around faulted lines, reducing the number of customers affected and sometimes restoring ALL affected customers in a short amount of time.
- **FUSES** are used to protect system equipment by removing power from a faulted line device or transformer.



Protection is key to reliability, and LCEC is proud of the many ways employees work to ensure customers, workers, and equipment are safe!



Like all electric cooperatives, LCEC operates at cost with funds provided through member rates. Since cooperatives are not-for-profit, any revenue remaining after expenses is shared with members.

Equity represents members’ investment in the electrical system in the form of substations, poles, lines, transformers, and other facilities.

Although it isn’t equivalent to cash or liquid assets, you do receive a retirement when the financial status is strong. The Board of Trustees determines every year if a portion of equity can be retired.

LCEC is proud of the financial strength that has allowed us to return equity to our customers in the past. Over the years, LCEC has returned more than \$303 million to active and inactive members.

DO NOT attach to POLES

For safety reasons, please do not attach anything to power poles.

Placing nails, posters, staples, garden hoses, cameras, or flags on utility poles may seem like a small gesture, but it is dangerous. Attaching these objects can cause injury to utility workers. A small nail can puncture fire



retardant clothing, gloves, or safety gear, and make linemen vulnerable to falling or possible electrocution.

When performing routine maintenance or responding to an outage, any unauthorized attachments will be removed to keep workers safe.



More than one refrigerator in your home could be pricey

In a day and age where an ENERGY STAR®-rated refrigerator can cost as little as ten cents a day to operate, it is wild to think that an estimated 35 million households own at least two refrigerators. Even more surprising is that an estimated six million households own even more than two refrigerators! Whatever the reason for hanging onto that second or third refrigerator, now is the time to consider buying the perfect fridge to fit all your needs while keeping energy costs low.

According to the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy, the average “second refrigerator” is likely between 15 to 25 years old and uses about 750-1000 kilowatt-hours every year, which amounts to between \$97 to \$130 on the annual electric bill. In contrast, today’s ENERGY STAR® refrigerators cost about \$40 a year to run.

For information on how to properly dispose of an energy-guzzling second fridge, speak to your local waste management or department of public works. A local scrap metal company can recycle unwanted refrigerators.

Keep the kiddos safe around electricity

Children are naturally curious. Teaching them the basics about the power of electricity helps to keep them safe.

Following are three lessons to share with your children:

1. Electricity has the power to cause burns, shocks, and even death.
2. Appliances and power cords can be dangerous if not used with proper safety precautions.
3. Electricity flows easily through water, and it will travel through the body since it is made of 70 percent water.

Tree care clearance distance

LCEC has a strong focus on tree planning and care. Contact with power lines is extremely dangerous and, in some cases, fatal.

As a guideline, there should be an **8- to 10-foot** clearance on either side between tree branches and power lines.

There should be a **10-foot** clearance between the top of trees and the primary power line.

Only qualified Line Clearance Arborists may work within **10 feet** of energized lines

To learn more about LCEC's commitment to safe tree care practices, visit lcec.net.