

WCEC Donates Equipment to the Philippines



WCEC employees Chuck Baucum, left, and James Reddicks finish loading a truck that will take breakers to port, where they will be shipped to the Philippines.

Wood County Electric Cooperative (WCEC) recently partnered with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) International Foundation to send a donation of electrical breakers to the Philippines. The foundation's mission is to contribute to economic development and to improve the well-being of rural populations by helping to develop affordable electric power supplied by sustainable, well-managed utility systems.

The three donated breakers are units that were used in substations for many years and then replaced during an upgrade of two of WCEC's substations. Two of the units are in full working order and will be serviceable for the technology currently employed in the Philippines. The third unit will be used for spare parts. The units will be given to a cooperative program between Big Rivers Electric (Kentucky) and the Filipino electric cooperative Dasuresco.

These entities will receive the breakers and sell them to other local co-ops in the Philippines. The proceeds from the breakers will help villages receive electricity and will provide funds for livelihood or job

development projects such as furniture building, sewing cooperatives and other enterprises. Income will also be used to provide low-interest loans to people who would not otherwise be able to afford electric connection costs. To date, the program has electrified 29 villages, and this year six other villages are expected to receive electricity.

"It's gratifying to know that with a little bit of work on our part, and the donation of these repurposed breakers, we will be assisting in the electrification of rural communities in the Philippines," said WCEC General Manager and CEO Debbie Robinson. "The impact will be enormous when one realizes what electrification brings to the table. Beyond the modern conveniences for home, the ability to use computers will offer more advanced educational possibilities, and the ability to use electric machinery will enhance economic development. This donation is one that will have constructive ripple effects for years."

More information about the NRECA International Foundation and various projects can be found online at www.nrecainternational.coop.

KEEP THE POOL SAFE AND COOL

Few things refresh like a quick dip in a cool pool on a hot summer day. Keep your family's summer fun safe.

Kids require constant supervision as drowning can happen in mere seconds. And any place that water and electricity potentially meet can quickly become a hazard. Pools and spas often have electric underwater lights, circulating pumps and heaters. Improperly installed or poorly maintained wiring can pose a danger.

Here are a few tips for poolside safety:

- Build a fence or other barrier to separate the pool from the house and yard. Padlock fence gates to keep your children safe and to prevent neighborhood children from wandering into the pool area.
- Never leave children alone near the pool or any water source.
- Install ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) on all outlets that power outdoor electric equipment. When a GFCI detects an electricity leak, it immediately shuts off power to prevent an electrical shock.
- Never use extension cords to power pool equipment.
- Hire a licensed electrician or qualified pool professional to check that your pool's wiring and installation are up to code and pose no hazards.



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ASHLEY ESSARY
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LEO HERRERA
MOUNT VERNON



SUSAN HOLDEN
LINDALE



CHELSEY HUIZINGA
MOUNT VERNON



KIM JOHNSON
QUITMAN



LAUREN RODGERS
GRAND SALINE



CANDACE RUSHING
QUITMAN



JOSH WEEMS
QUITMAN



SPENCER BOYD
YOUTH DIRECTOR
COMO

This June, the East Texas Rural Electric Youth Seminar (ETREYS) was held at Lon Morris College in Jacksonville. Here, more than 125 high school students participated in weeklong activities focused on leadership development, problem-solving and interpersonal relationships.

Wood County Electric Cooperative annually offers this all-expense-paid trip to high school sophomores and juniors in the WCEC service area. Participants were chosen on the basis of overall excellence and involvement in extracurricular activities, including leadership positions and academic accomplishments.

This year's representatives were: Nickolai Elkins, Alba; Ashley Essary, Quitman; Landon Grimes, Alba; Leo Herrera, Mount Vernon; Susan Holden, Lindale; Chelsey Huizinga, Bogata; Kimberly Johnson, Quitman; Lauren Rodgers, Grand Saline; Candace Rushing, Quitman; and Josh Weems, Quitman.

"We are very pleased to offer the opportunity for these exceptional students to participate in an event that will positively enhance their abilities for years to come," WCEC CEO/General Manager Debbie Robinson said. "If they are like other past ETREYS graduates, we know we will see good things from them in the future."

HAVE YOU REPLACED YOUR WINDOWS?

Most homes have single-pane windows, which means there's not much separating the inside of your home from the outside.

During summer, the sun's hot rays can beam right through a flimsy, single-pane window, making your air-conditioning system work overtime. In winter, leaky windows can account for 10 percent to 25 percent of your heating bill, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.



Installing energy-efficient windows can lower your electric bill.

Consider replacing your windows with energy-efficient, double-pane models. While you shop, look for windows with a high R-value, which measures how much heat can get through the window in an hour. The greater the R-value, the greater your energy savings will be.

The Department of Energy recommends a double-pane window with a high-performance coating, which can have an R-value of 5. Choose a window with a low-emissivity (low-E) or spectrally selective coating, which will prevent the heat from penetrating the glass in the summer. R-values as high as 10 are for homes in super-cold climates.

Choose windows that bear the Energy Star label, which means they meet strict energy-efficiency standards. If you are building a new home, installing energy-efficient windows might save you money by allowing you to purchase a smaller heater or air-conditioning unit.

SURGE PROTECTION NOT JUST FOR STORMS

It takes only a second for a power surge to destroy your computer, plasma TV or other expensive electronic equipment. Power surges happen when electricity flow is quickly disrupted and restored or when something sends electricity flowing back into your home. Some power surges are internal and happen every day when large appliances start up and shut down.

The most dangerous and noticeable ones usually happen during storms, when trees topple onto power lines. These surges can cause instant damage to anything plugged into your home's power circuit. But even smaller surges over time can slowly damage your appliances and shorten their useful life.

The most common surge protectors are those that plug into the wall and have multiple outlets, much like a power cord. However, not all power strips offer surge protection. If you are buying on the open market, look for surge protectors with a "joule rating" of 400 to 600. This measures the device's ability to absorb surges.

But note, these devices can protect your equipment only to a certain degree. If the surge is larger than that joule capacity, anything plugged into the protector can be damaged. Some of the best protection around can be found with the use of Wood County Electric's SmartGuard system.

SmartGuard provides two levels of



The right surge protection can keep your valuable equipment safe.

protection. It features a meter-base surge protector coupled with in-home plug-in devices to protect sensitive electronics and appliances from either natural or man-made power surges. The meter base unit stops large surges of electricity before they enter a building or home. The plug-in wall devices then filter power to catch smaller surges and spikes, including those that originate from inside the home.

And, SmartGuard protection is so effective that it comes with a 10-year manufacturer's warranty and insures electronics up to \$50,000 in the event of surge-related loss. Enjoy peace of mind and SmartGuard your home.

To learn more, call WCEC's SmartGuard expert, Jay Murdock, who can explain the various options. Jay can be reached at (903) 762-2203, ext. 219.

SAVE ENERGY IN FIVE QUICK STEPS

Energy bills on the rise? Here are five ways to take control:

KEEP THE HEAT OUT. Half of all of the heat that enters your home comes in through the windows. Invest in a thick shade or window film to block out the summer sun. Save up to 15 percent on your cooling bill by shading west-facing windows, which absorb the most afternoon sun. For the hottest parts of your house, consider installing an awning or planting trees in front of the window for shade.

CHANGE THE FILTERS. A filter for your air-conditioning system costs only a few dollars (about \$10 for a high-quality, pleated filter), but can save you much more if you change it every month during the summer. Dirty air-conditioning filters prevent air flow and make the air-conditioning system work harder—that means a higher bill.

CRANK UP THE THERMOSTAT. For every degree you turn your thermostat up during air-conditioning season, you'll save up to 2 percent on your cooling costs. Try setting your thermostat at 78 degrees and turn on a ceiling fan to help circulate the air.

INSTALL CEILING FANS. Fans don't cool the air, but they make the air feel cooler by moving it around the room and against your skin, which creates a sort of "windchill" effect. When the fan is running, you can move your thermostat 3 to 4 degrees higher without noticing a difference in your comfort level.

CHANGE THEM OUT. Replace every light bulb in your house with a compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulb. They cost more at first than incandescent bulbs, but they use 75 percent less energy and pay for themselves and then some over their long lifetime. Plus, CFLs emit less heat than incandescent bulbs, so they don't add heat to your home's air or make the air conditioner work harder.

DOWNED POWER LINE? STAY AWAY

If you see a fallen power line, call your electric cooperative immediately. Call 911 if it is a medical or life-threatening emergency. Never touch a downed power line. Always assume all power lines to be energized. Stay at least 100 feet away.

Remember, if a power line is touching someone, stay away. If you attempt rescue, you could easily become a victim yourself. Call for emergency help.

If a downed power line falls across your vehicle, stay in the vehicle. Do not get out unless the vehicle is on fire! If you must get out of the vehicle, try to do so without touching the vehicle and the ground at the same time.

Celebrate Safely—Leave Explosions to the Experts



Beautiful and dangerous—even sparklers can cause severe burn injuries.

Fireworks are an Independence Day tradition, but lighting them is a job better left to the professionals.

Mishandled fireworks can cause serious fires and life-threatening burns. Exploding fireworks are especially dangerous if they come into contact with power lines.

The National Council on Fireworks Safety reports that more than 9,000 people are treated for fireworks-related injuries every year. Even tiny sparklers—a favorite of little kids—can reach a staggering 1,800 degrees, quickly causing dangerous burns even with minor skin contact.

Keep kids entertained with safe alternatives. Buy inexpensive glow sticks or glow-in-the-dark necklaces and bracelets that will stay lighted all night. Battery-operated fiber-optic sparklers will put on a colorful show year after year without the danger of fireworks.

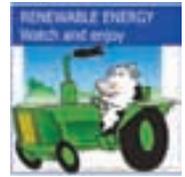
Instead of putting on an amateur show at home, take your family to see a local display that's put on by experts

and supervised by fire officials.

If at-home fireworks are legal in your community and you do choose to light them, follow these safety tips from the National Council on Fireworks Safety:

- Check that all fireworks come from a reputable source. Follow all safety directions on the package.
- Light fireworks outdoors only and keep a bucket of water nearby in case of fire.
- Never let small children touch, hold or light fireworks.
- Prepare an area for shooting off fireworks and keep spectators far away.
- Never relight a “dud.” Wait 20 minutes, then drop it in a bucket of water.
- Alcohol and fireworks do not mix.
- Only use fireworks as intended. Never alter or combine them.
- Never throw or point fireworks at someone, even in jest.
- Soak all fireworks in a bucket of water before throwing them in the trash can.

Hey, Kids!



For games, coloring pages and lots of fun, check out



Go to

wcec.org

and click on the **Touchstone Energy Kids Zone** icon.



Happy Independence Day!
Wood County EC will be closed
Friday, July 4, for the holiday.