

Safety is no Accident



Darren Maddox serves as CAEC's Training and Safety Coordinator.

“Safety is no accident” are four seemingly simple words, but in reality, they speak volumes when it comes to the diligence required to keep our employees safe.

As CAEC's Training and Safety Coordinator, it is with great honor, that during Electrical Safety Month, I can report CAEC has had zero lost-time accidents for the past three years.

This kind of accomplishment does not come without hard work and planning. Each employee plays a very important role in our safety culture—watching out for the well-being of coworkers. Each individual is asked to keep a constant watch for situations that may pose a hazard.

Employees are trained to recognize these situations through regularly-scheduled safety meetings, annual safety training via online resources and tests, as well as hands-on workshops. Incidents described as “near misses” are reported, documented and thoroughly discussed with employees and management—all in an effort to better educate ourselves on areas we may need to investigate and/or improve upon when it comes to safety.

We also continually review equipment and state-of-the-art safety tools. Recently, we invested in new pole climbing harnesses (shown in the picture above) with a built-in fall restraint system. While not yet required by the Occupational Safety and

Health Administration or OSHA, your co-op has integrated this life-saving equipment as a standard part of operational procedure.

Our dedication to safety is also exemplified by our 2008 Rural Electric Safety Accreditation Program (RESAP) score. In 1999, the cooperative was recognized for its safe work practices by RESAP when it received an accredited status for the first time. This three-year accreditation status has since been achieved in 2002, 2005 and most recently, 2008 with a score of 92 on a 100-point scale. This scale is scored by 161 elements in on-site observations and 83 elements for the application, including employee training for CPR, a written safety policy and employee training in hazard recognition. There are presently 437 RESAP-accredited co-ops in the country.

Not only does our RESAP score and three years of no loss time accidents signify that our hard-working employees go home to their families each and every night, it also allows us to keep our operational costs low. A good safety record not only helps us keep costs down by having lower insurance rates, but our productivity and efficiency levels are higher as well.

We continue to embrace an environment of safety that is based on the premise that all incidents, no matter how insignificant they may seem, must be addressed. Safety is no accident—it takes training, teamwork, close attention to detail and dedication to keep everyone safe. 



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CAEC Selects Youth Tour Representatives

For the past 40 years, CAEC has supported youth leaders across our service territory by sponsoring the Youth Leadership Tour. Through three different tours, local students are given the tools they need to help make a difference in their communities.

Montgomery Youth Tour and Alabama Cooperative Youth Leadership Conference

Eight high school juniors participated in the 2009 Alabama Rural Electric Association's (AREA) Montgomery Youth Tour, March 3-5. Elizabeth Finley, Stanhope Elmore High School; Kurt Kamena, East Memorial Christian Academy; Marissa Miller, Chapman Christian Academy; Owen Mims, Prattville Christian Academy; Shannon Mobley, Autauga Academy; Daniel O'Neal, East Memorial Christian Academy; Jacob Otstot, East Memorial Christian Academy; and Stephen Robertson, East Memorial Christian Academy, represented CAEC and joined approximately 130 students from across Alabama to attend the three-day conference.



2009 Montgomery Youth Tour participants with CAEC Board Members David Kelley, Patsy Holmes, C. Milton Johnson and Jimmie Harrison Jr.; and Representatives Jimmy Martin and Mac Gipson, and Sen. Wendell Mitchell.

The students toured the State Capitol, the State House, State Archives, the Alabama Supreme Court Building and the Rosa Parks Museum. They also met State Senators Wendell Mitchell and Scott Beason, Representatives James Fields, Mac Gipson and Jimmy Martin.

"I learned so much more than expected about the history of Montgomery and I have an even better understanding of our state government," said Mobley.

All students will also be invited to attend the Alabama Cooperative Youth Conference held at

the 4-H Youth Development Center in Columbiana, Ala., July 7-9 where they will learn about different kinds of cooperatives and the role they play in our everyday lives. They will take advantage of leadership exercises and activities.



One of the most rewarding aspects of Youth Tour is meeting youth leaders from across the state and the country.

Washington D.C. Youth Tour

Another part of the Youth Tour program is the Washington D.C. Youth Tour, scheduled for June 13-18, 2009. After interviewing with a panel of CAEC Trustees, four of the Montgomery Youth Tour participants were selected to attend this upcoming conference: Mims, Mobley, Otstot and O'Neal were selected, and Kamena was named as first alternate. These representatives will join approximately 1,500 high school juniors from electric cooperatives across the country.

"I think going to Washington D.C. will be an awesome experience that will help me become a great leader in the future. It puts me in a great position to learn and be a good example in my community," stated Otstot.

This tour provides the once in a lifetime opportunity for young leaders to increase their understanding of the value of rural electrification and to become more familiar with the historical and political environment of the nation's capital through visits to monuments, government buildings and cooperative organizations. They will also be able to visit with elected officials to increase their knowledge of how the federal government works.

Congratulations to all of our students who participated in the Montgomery Youth Tour and those chosen to participate in the Cooperative Youth Leadership Conference and the Washington D.C. Youth Tour. 



A Partnership with Nature

Plant life, namely trees, is one of the top causes of unplanned electrical service outages—ranging from momentary interruptions to fairly long periods without power.

Trees growing close to power lines and related equipment, such as poles and transformers, can and do cause electrical faults. They also hinder access to equipment during inspections, for maintenance and operation, and when emergency repairs are needed. In addition, trees in close proximity to or touching energized conductors may pose potential safety hazards to the public and to utility personnel.

To help combat the possibility of interruption that trees and plant life pose to our power system and our members, CAEC's policy is to trim trees near power lines so the branches will not interfere with the lines before the next trimming cycle. The amount cut depends on how much a particular species grows in the four- to five-year trim cycle.

Through a system-wide Integrated Vegetation Management program, your cooperative is continually working to cost-efficiently control trees and brush. This strategic approach focuses on three specific areas:

1. Removal of problem trees
2. Proper and effective pruning of existing trees
3. A selective herbicide program

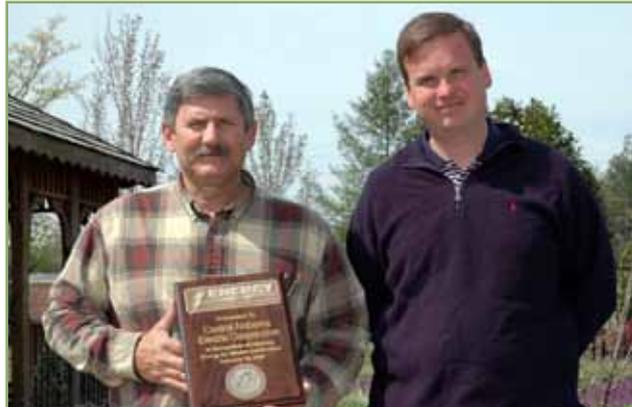
For example, in 2008 crews trimmed 820 miles of vegetation and treated another 1,791 miles with herbicide. The crews cut down 10,336 trees with an estimated 80 to 85 percent of those being dead trees—which are more likely to collapse onto power equipment during a storm or in high winds.

Vegetation selected for removal often has certain characteristics, such as dead or dying trees that have the potential of hitting primary electrical lines or trees that grow faster than the typical trim cycle.

While we strive to deliver reliable power, the importance of wildlife habitat cannot be overlooked. Since 2004, CAEC has partnered with the National Wild Turkey Federation

(NWTF) to develop plans to manage its rights of way and other land that provide ideal habitat for wildlife. Through the Energy for Wildlife program, staff members work directly with utility companies to integrate NWTF standards in the utility's land management programs.

Through planning, continual monitoring and partnerships, trees and electrical equipment can coexist without infringing on one another while service interruptions can be kept to a minimum. 



CAEC Utility Arborist Manager Jacoby Dennison and Vice President of Engineering and Operations Jimmy Gray display a plaque honoring CAEC's involvement with the NWTF Energy for Wildlife Program.

If members have a tree on their property that they believe may cause a problem with their lines, they can make arrangements with CAEC to have the service or security light wire dropped at no charge – the member can then safely remove or trim the tree.



Efficiently Serving *You!*

CAEC is taking measures to efficiently serve its members for years to come

With rising costs all around us, it seems that everyone is trying to be more energy efficient—and that includes your Electric Co-op.

As stewards of our members' finances and as an example of utilizing energy wisely, CAEC recently implemented several actions to help save power, and money, in its everyday operations. While you may not notice these new measures when



The new motion-activated light switches automatically turn off the lights after 15 minutes of inactivity in a room.

you stop by to make a payment, they're there, saving energy dollars.

Improvements made to employee offices account for the majority of savings. Traditional light switches were replaced with motion-activated models. These sensors detect when someone enters a room (turning the lights on and keeping them on), but after 15 minutes of inactivity (when someone leaves the room), the lighting is turned off.

To coincide with the new switches, updated lighting structures will replace the current fluo-

rescent lighting in offices as those lights and ballasts wear out. After full replacement is achieved, the savings will amount to \$3,000 annually. Also reducing the amount of energy used in offices is a computer setting that shuts off monitors after 20 minutes of inactivity, which should save an additional \$3,000 annually.

Another energy efficiency step that CAEC is measuring involves office heating and cooling after a Variable Refrigerant Volume (VRV) System was installed at the Prattville Headquarters. This system allows the co-op to have more control when it comes to the temperatures in offices (or zones), thereby reducing the need for constant heating and cooling in areas that may not require it.

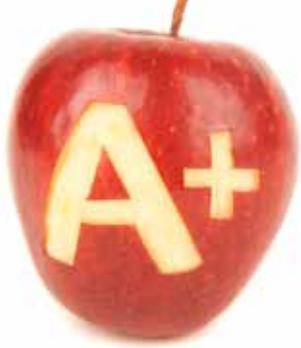
The new system will use approximately 8,100 kWh per year (as compared to a 10-ton traditional system that uses approximately 81,000 kWh per year) resulting in an estimated savings of \$5,800 annually.

Your Co-op is also working to be more efficient when it comes to fuel costs. At the beginning of 2009, when a pool vehicle was scheduled to be replaced, a hybrid car was purchased. This hybrid vehicle averages 45 mpg city and 40 mpg highway, a 52 percent increase in mpg over our previous vehicle.

We are working to control energy costs just as you are. Whether they are small or large, the actions we take now can help save energy dollars for many years to come. ☘



An improved heating and cooling system will help the Prattville office run more efficiently, using approximately 10 times less kilowatt-hours than a traditional 10-ton unit.



Don't *Fail* the Test...

when it comes to Electrical *Safety!*

CAEC believes it is very important that you know how to be safe around electricity. Just like there's no such thing as being too safe, there's also no such thing as too much information about electrical safety. Take our quiz to test your knowledge.

1. **True or False:** It's acceptable to use black electrical tape to repair a frayed power cord, or to splice a power cord, as long as you cover all exposed wire.
2. **True or False:** It's safer to run an extension cord out in the open than it is under a rug.
3. If you're working on an outdoor project that requires digging a hole of any size, what should you do?
 - A. Dig wherever you want as long as it's a small hole.
 - B. Call 811 before you dig.
 - C. Guess where underground lines are and avoid those areas.
4. **True or False:** It's dangerous to cut off the third prong on a plug to make it fit into a two-prong outlet.
5. **True or False:** It is safe to climb a tree located near a power line as long as the limbs aren't touching the line.
6. **True or False:** It is safe to touch a power line with a pole, as long as the pole is made of plastic.
7. If using a portable generator during an outage, where should it be located?
 - A. Outside or in a well ventilated area where it's protected from rain and water.
 - B. In a garage, basement or crawlspace.
 - C. In an unused room inside your home.
8. If you see a downed power line or low-hanging power line, you should:
 - A. Move it out of the way and call the authorities and power provider.
 - B. Stay clear and call the authorities and power provider.
 - C. Don't worry about it because the power provider already knows about it.
9. Which of the following can conduct electricity?
 - A. Metal
 - B. Tree limbs
 - C. Human body
 - D. All of the above
10. **True or False:** Power lines coming from the outdoor pole transformer to your house should not be touched.

How'd you do? Answers on page 34

*CAEC Offices will be closed Monday, May 25
in observance of Memorial Day*



Safety Quiz Answers: *from page 8*

1. **False.** The black tape – usually vinyl – is not rated to handle the heat generated by electricity running through wires. It will melt and burn.
2. **True.** If a cord runs under a rug, you can't inspect it for damage, and an overheated cord can ignite floor covering. Remember: an extension cord is not a substitute for household wiring. They are for temporary use only. Store the cords away when you're through using them.
3. **B.** Simply calling 811 a day or two before your outdoor project can save time, money and possibly your life. Homeowners often make risky assumptions about whether or not they should get their utility lines marked, but every digging job requires a call – even small projects like planting trees and shrubs.
4. **True:** The third prong provides a path to ground to protect the equipment and user from electric shock. You should never remove the third prong in an attempt to use a two-prong outlet.
5. **False.** It is not safe to climb a tree located near a power line at any time. Electricity has the ability to “jump” from power lines to trees, and could electrocute someone in the tree.
6. **False.** It is not safe to touch a power line with any object.
7. **A.** Never use a generator indoors or in enclosed spaces such as garages, crawl spaces and basements. Make sure the generator has three to four feet of clear space on all sides and above it to ensure adequate ventilation and keep the generator protected from water.
8. **B.** If you see a downed power line or a low-hanging one, you should stay clear and call the authorities and power provider immediately. DO NOT approach or touch it.
9. **D.** Metal, tree limbs and the human body can all conduct electricity.
10. **True.** Most power lines coming from the transformer to your house are covered but SHOULD NEVER be touched. Always stay away from power lines.



For more safety tips, visit our Web site www.caec.coop

CAEC Tax Dollars Serve Communities

While CAEC is a not-for-profit business, jointly owned and equally controlled by its members, we do pay property, sales, payroll and other taxes each year.

The property taxes are based on the assessed value of CAEC's electrical distribution system (consisting of such items as poles, wires, transformers, meters and property) located in the 10 counties we serve.

In 2008, CAEC contributed to regional, state and federal governments by paying more than \$7.9 million in taxes.

Of the \$7.9 million, \$634,000 was paid in ad valorem taxes. The revenue from the ad valorem taxes goes to school districts, volunteer fire departments and other vital parts of the communities we serve. In addition, CAEC paid \$230,930 in city business licenses. CAEC also paid \$65,000 in state and county sales tax for the year. The sales tax is paid when CAEC buys goods.

Payroll taxes, totaling \$1.9 million, were also paid. These taxes include employer funded state unemployment compensation as well as the social security and Medicare taxes funded by both the employee and the Co-op. CAEC also paid \$1.5 million in gross receipt taxes and approximately \$2.9 million in utility taxes.

Your electric cooperative is proud to contribute to a better quality of life enjoyed by the communities we serve. 



Taxes collected from CAEC help pay for community programs, such as volunteer fire departments and school equipment.

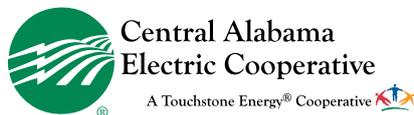


Showered with Energy Saving Ideas

You have the power to reduce your monthly power bill. For each ten-degree reduction in water temperature on your electric water heater, you can save between 3–5 percent of its energy usage. Conserving today means saving tomorrow.

Fact:

By keeping showers to 5 minutes, you can save up to 1,000 gallons of hot water per month.



www.caec.coop