

Safety Awareness—From the Field to Your Home



“I will not become complacent.” That was one commitment made by a CAEC employee during our January Training Day, at which your co-op celebrated its fourth consecutive year of no lost-time accidents. Each employee was asked to recommend one

action they would take to help maintain CAEC’s safety record, and throughout the day, employees voiced their pledges to me.

Our safety goals at CAEC revolve around the employees, their families, our members and the public. And as I listened to the employees give their ideas, I realized how so many of their suggestions would actually apply in the home as well as the workplace.

Since May is Electrical Safety Month, this is the perfect opportunity to emphasize safety with our families. A few of the employee responses (seen in the statements in bold) are excellent ideas for using at home with your families:

“Follow all safety rules.” In the work place there are almost always regulations in place, but what about in the home? This is a great tip to utilize – if there are rules in place. If safety rules have not been established in your house, this is a good time to start, and the quiz on page 6 of this magazine can help you get started, or you can visit www.caec.coop for more resources.

“Report anything that looks dangerous.”

Once the rules have been outlined, encourage your family to keep an eye out for unsafe conditions and to make you aware of them.

“Tell everyone to be safe and keep up the good work.” As a manager, it’s easy to forget to give recognition for a job well done, and the same goes at home as a parent. Remembering to give accolades when you notice cautious behavior is a great way to emphasize safety to children.

“Discussion - We talk sports, money, life; why not continue to talk about safety?” This statement is key when it comes to adults and children. Kids pick up on everything, so the next time you’re at the dinner table, or in the car on the way to practice, consider a conversation about safety.

I am proud of all the action steps our employees generated regarding safety, especially those that will help us guard against complacency. As we have mentioned before, safety is no accident; it takes lots of training (see page 7), discussion, and most of all, a commitment from each individual to do his or her part.

I hope that these concepts from our employees will have as much influence on you and your family as they have had for me and mine. ☘

Tom Stackhouse, CAEC President and CEO

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CAEC Board Lowers Power Bills

Tracking the cost to generate and deliver the electricity you purchase has been challenging in recent years. Rapid price fluctuations, particularly for fuels which include natural gas and coal, have made predictions of future costs more difficult.

The Board of CAEC establishes goals, including financial, by setting rates to match the revenue needed to cover power cost and expenses. In 2008 when fuel costs soared, the board raised the Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) to cover the summer peak and then lowered it this past September when expenses came back in line. You may have noticed more recently the PCA credit, beginning with bills sent out in April.

Two reasons for the charges to be lowered at this time: First, fuel cost is lower than projected in our 2010 budget. Secondly, the cold weather in January and February created large margins for the cooperative. If left as they were, this would have produced higher than needed margins by year end. The \$6.50 reduction per 1000 kilowatt hours (kWh) that began in April 2010, combined with the \$4.27 decrease per 1000 kWh in September 2009 equates to a savings each month of \$10.77 per 1000 kWh to CAEC members as compared to this time last year.

“Unlike for-profit utilities, higher profit margins for cooperatives do not help the members.”

Your trustees follow the equity management plan they adopted in 2004, which calls for a 34 percent equity level. This equity percentage reflects the members’ portion of ownership in the cooperative, and as a not-for-profit organization, the goal is to generate enough margins to sustain the desired equity while satisfying obligations to financial lenders and allowing retirement of capital credits to the members.

“...equates to a savings each month of \$10.77 per 1000 kWh to CAEC members as compared to this time last year.”

“Unlike for-profit utilities, higher profit margins for cooperatives do not help the members,” said Board Chairman Chase Riddle. “This was the last year for this Equity Management Plan and the Board will be developing the next plan this spring. During the last five years, the process has worked well and the Board feels good about the sound financial position of the cooperative, which is why we can forgo excessive margins.”

As a board, the trustees know the two most important commitments to members are providing reliable power and remaining good financial stewards, only collecting what is needed to maintain the operation of the organization. ☞



Don't Be in the Dark When it Comes to Electrical Safety

Take the following quiz to see how much you know about electricity and safety.

1. To keep an extension cord from being a tripping hazard, you should:

- a. Staple or nail cords to baseboards or walls.
- b. Run the cord under a rug.
- c. Run along baseboards and out of high foot traffic areas.

2. True or False: If you see a power line on the ground, the best way to know if it's energized is to look for sparks or smoke emitting from the line.

3. If you see someone who is receiving an electrical shock or is being electrocuted from an appliance, you should:

- a. Use a piece of wood to push the appliance away.
- b. Turn off the home's main switch at the circuit breaker.
- c. Grab them and pull them away from the appliance.

4. How far should ladders be from power lines?

- a. It doesn't matter if it's a wooden ladder.
- b. At least 10 feet.
- c. At least 5 feet.

5. After using a portable generator during an emergency, the safe and correct way to shut it off is to:

- a. Shut down the generator, then turn off and unplug the appliances that were connected.
- b. Turn off all appliances powered by the generator before shutting down the generator.

6. True or False: If an appliance that is switched off but still plugged in falls into water, do not reach in and pull it out.

7. A lamp or light fixture's recommended bulb wattage means:

- a. It's fine to use a bulb of that wattage or lower.
- b. It's fine to use a bulb of that wattage or higher.
- c. You must use a bulb of that wattage only.

8. If you lose something over the fence of a substation (like a ball) you should:

- a. Use a stick to poke through the fence to try to get it.
- b. Climb over the fence.
- c. Call CAEC or the power provider to have them retrieve it for you.

9. What should you do if something gets stuck in the toaster?

- a. Unplug it and use something wooden to remove the item.
- b. Make sure the toaster is off, then use a fork to retrieve the item.
- c. Shake the toaster upside down.

10. True or False: If an appliance repeatedly blows a fuse, trips a circuit breaker or gives you shock, unplug it immediately and have it repaired or replaced.

Go to page 35 to see if you made the grade.



CAEC Position Spotlight: Job Training and Safety Coordinator

We continue our series on the many people and jobs it takes to operate your cooperative with a look at CAEC's Safety and Training Program.

In 2008, more than 3.6 million Americans were involved in non-fatal injuries while on the job, and of these, 1 million cases caused workers to remain off work for an average of seven days. These "lost-time" accidents or injuries result in a loss of productivity and can lead to higher health care costs.

We are proud that none of our cooperative employees were a part of those statistics, and this is

due, in part, to our company-wide safety program. Maintaining a safe work environment is one of our main objectives, and Darren Maddox, CAEC's Job Training and Safety Coordinator, oversees this effort. Maddox organizes training curricula, verifies procedural compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Admin-


and school groups, Maddox also chairs the cooperative's safety committee, which includes a group of employees who reviews all accidents, incidents and near misses on a bi-monthly basis.

Overseeing the quality of equipment is also an important task. Trucks and vehicles go through regular inspections and personal protection equipment such as hard hats, goggles, boots and gloves are evaluated before each use.

"In the office, we check first aid kits monthly," said Maddox. "Employees are trained on how to use the items in these kits as well as the AEDs (Automated External Defibrillator) that accompany them." The photo below shows employees receiving first aid and CPR/AED training.

Other job responsibilities include investigating property damage claims and providing assistance to the Engineering and Operations department by reviewing projects (such as the construction of a substation) for safety considerations.

Maddox earned his Certified Loss Control Professional (CLCP) designation in April 2009, and with less than 300 CLCPs in the entire country, he became part of a very elite group of quality safety specialists.

Safety is, and always will be, a priority at CAEC and the Job Training and Safety Coordinator plays a vital part in preserving a culture of safety. 



Maddox inspects one of the co-op's AED machines which are located in each office.

istration (OSHA) standards and provides safety education in the community.

Organizing safety training for over 100 employees is a substantial part of Maddox's duties. Safety courses, which are customized by job duties and required to be completed on a yearly basis, are presented in classroom settings and online.

"I feel that my job is as much about helping to influence and reinforce an attitude of respect for safety practices as it is to plan training activities," said Maddox. "But they do go hand in hand because we train to be safe and we're safe because we train." In addition to coordinating CAEC's electrical safety demonstrations for organizations



CAEC employees practice CPR and other life saving methods as part of the co-op's safety program.

2010 Youth Tour...Educating Tomorrow's Leaders

Seven local high school juniors from schools in CAEC's service territory participated in this year's Alabama Rural Electric Association's Montgomery Youth Tour and four delegates from the group were selected for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Washington Youth Tour. Both programs are grassroots efforts designed to help today's youth learn more about their government, leadership skills and the cooperative business model.

Montgomery Youth Tour and Alabama Cooperative Youth Leadership Conference

The selected students participated in the 2010 Montgomery Youth Tour, March 2-4. Tyler Alexander, Autauga Academy; Taylor Boysen, Autauga Academy; Kaison Darden, Wetumpka High School; Jordan Dersch, East Memorial Christian Academy; John Gasson, Thorsby High School; Matthew Golson, Autauga Academy; and Wendy Pittman, Autauga Academy, represented CAEC and joined nearly 130 students from 17 Alabama electric cooperatives at the three-day conference.

The students toured the State Capitol, the State House, the Civil Rights Memorial, the Rosa Parks Museum and the Alabama Supreme Court Building where they met with Supreme Court Chief Justice Sue Bell Cobb.



They also met with Senator Hank Erwin and Representatives Mac Gipson and Jimmy Martin. "Being able to ask the Chief Justice questions is something that not everyone can say they've done," said Pittman. "This was a wonderful opportunity and I'm appreciative to the cooperative for showing me a different side of Montgomery—one many people don't get to see."

All seven students are also eligible to attend the Alabama Cooperative Youth Conference held at the 4-H Youth Development Center in Columbiana, Ala., July 7-9, where they and students from

across the state will learn about different kinds of cooperatives and the unique role they play in our everyday lives. They will also take advantage of leadership exercises and activities.

Washington D.C. Youth Tour

Following the Montgomery Tour, the seven students were interviewed by a panel of CAEC trustees, and the following four were selected to attend the Washington D.C. Youth Tour: Boysen, Darden, Gasson and Pittman with Golson serving as the first alternate. These representatives will join approximately 1,500 high school juniors and seniors from electric cooperatives across the country in our nation's capital. "To have the opportunity to see our political delegates and be able to ask them questions concerning decisions they make that will affect millions of people is something I'm thankful for and looking forward to,"

Boysen said.

This tour provides the chance 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 have the opportunity 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 Tour and those chosen to participate in the Youth Leadership Conference and the Washington D.C. Tour.

Application information for the 2011 Youth Tour will be available in the September issue of *Alabama Living* magazine and at our Web site, www.caec.coop.





Water Heater Rebates Now Available

CAEC now offers rebates for water heaters. Purchase your new electric water heater from any store and receive a rebate for meeting the following criteria:

*Only electric water heaters
(cannot be tankless)*

Minimum energy factor of .92

*Participation in CAEC's Peak Shaving Program**

Water heaters will be inspected to verify:

Installation at member's address

Manufacturer's Information:
Name and spec information (which includes model and serial numbers and the energy factor).

Proof of purchase:
Copy of receipt and store name.

Rebates are available in the following amounts:

Under 80 gal: up to \$235


80 gal & up: up to \$375

For more information about our new rebate program, call (800) 545-5735, ext. 2118 or (334) 351-2118.

**To learn more about CAEC's Peak Shaving program, visit www.caec.coop.*



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Did you Pass the Test?

1. C. Run along walls, baseboards or low traffic areas.

Stapling or nailing an extension cord can cause damage to the wires inside, leading to a shock or fire hazard. Cords placed under rugs can retain heat and also prevent you from inspecting the cord for any damage, leading to a potential fire.

2. False.

There is no way for you to know if a power line is energized by looking at it and you should never try to find out on your own. Call the power provider or the local authorities immediately and stay away from the downed line.

3. B. Turn off the home's main switch at the circuit breaker.

By turning off the appliance's source of electricity, you can safely evaluate the person. Touching them while the item still has power could conduct electricity into your body as well, and while wood may not be a conductor, if it's wet or dirty it could still cause you electrical harm.

4. B. At least 10 feet (no matter what type of ladder you're using).

Use a clean, dry, wood or fiberglass ladder near power lines, do NOT use a metal ladder. And if working near the service-drop line (the connection of power from the distribution lines to your home), call and arrange for CAEC to disengage the line, allowing you to work safely.

5. B. Turn off and unplug all appliances then the generator.

This helps avoid a power surge to your household circuits.

6. True.

Electric current still remains in the power cord, and water conducts electricity that can cause severe shock. The best thing to do is turn off the power at the circuit breaker box.

7. A. It's fine to use a bulb equal or lower than the recommended wattage.

Using a higher wattage than what is recommended can lead to overheating or an electrical fire.

8. C. Call CAEC.

Substations are dangerous; never attempt to enter a substation or reach into the fenced in area. Contact CAEC or the appropriate power provider to come and safely retrieve the item for you.

9. A. Unplug the toaster and use a wooden item to remove the object.

Never use a metal object with a toaster and shaking the toaster can cause components within it to become loose.

10. True.

These could all be signs of a faulty electrical device which could lead to electric shock, overheating or a fire. Unplug the appliance immediately and either have it replaced or repaired.

For more safety tips, visit
www.caec.coop.

