

Jefferson Energy Cooperative Earns Statewide Award For Workplace Safety, No Lost Time

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Wrens, Ga. - Due to its impressive workplace safety record of three years with no accidents requiring time off work, Jefferson Energy Cooperative was honored with the "No Lost Time" Award at the Nov. 13 annual meeting of Georgia Electric Membership Corporation (GEMC).

The "No Lost Time" award is presented by Georgia EMC to electric cooperatives that exhibit outstanding work habits resulting in no lost-time accidents during the preceding year (October 1, 2005 through September 30, 2006). Typically, the EMCs that earn this distinction have implemented individualized safety programs that lead to fewer injuries, fewer lost workdays and significant reductions in workers' compensation costs.

Jefferson Energy is one of six Georgia EMC member organizations to receive recognition for no lost time this year.

"The 'No Lost Time' award is a testament to our commitment to provide a safe working environment for our employees, which plays into our overall commitment to providing reliable service to our consumers," said Kenneth Cook, President and CEO of Jefferson Energy. "This award signifies that there is a safer working environment for our co-op as a whole, plus, in the long run, it helps keep insurance premiums at a minimum, ultimately reducing costs for consumers."

In 2005, a total of 1.2 million injuries and illnesses required recuperation away from work beyond the day of the incident, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In the utilities sector, which includes providers of electricity, natural gas, water and sewage removal—the injury and illness incidence rate in 2005 was 4.6 cases per 100 full-time workers, according to the Bureau. However, there were only 4.0 cases per 100 workers in electric power generation, transmission, and distribution compared to an average of 7.6 cases per 100 workers in water, sewage and other utilities.

Because working with electricity can pose work hazards, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has developed safety standards to protect employees who are exposed to dangers such as electric shock, electrocution, fires and explosions. The guidelines provide ways to minimize potential hazards by ensuring that equipment and systems are properly designed and used.

“Georgia’s EMCs have done extremely well in executing and presenting safety programs to their employees who appreciate the training and do a fantastic job with it,” said Jim Wright, Georgia EMC vice president of training, education and safety. “Jefferson Energy and the rest of Georgia’s EMCs stand in good ranking from a national standpoint in terms of safety training and benefits resulting from it.”

Jefferson Energy Cooperative is a consumer owned cooperative providing electricity and related services to over 30,000 customers in parts of eleven different counties in the CSRA.

Georgia EMC is the statewide trade association representing the state’s 42 electric cooperatives, Oglethorpe Power Corp. and Georgia Transmission Corp. Through this statewide network, the EMCs provide electricity and related services to four million people, nearly half of Georgia’s population, across 73 percent of the state’s land area.