

THANKS TO YOU



The employees, management and board members of South Louisiana Electric Cooperative Association wish to thank the many linemen and supervisors who assisted us in restoring power in the aftermath of Hurricane Gustav. We would also like to express our gratitude to the SLECA members we serve for their patience and understanding as we endeavored to restore power as quickly and safely as possible.



Gustav coverage

Watch for next month's issue of Louisiana Country which will include more coverage of Hurricane Gustav and also an honor roll of all those fellow cooperatives and their linemen, as well as contractors, who assisted SLECA in our power recovery effort. We'll also include a complete update on the damage sustained to our power delivery system and other related updates.



SLECA News



Mike Guidry, Manager
Alexander Doyle, President
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A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

HURRICANE GUSTAV 408 additional utility workers assist SLECA with recovery effort

Recovery work was completed at a rapid rate along South Louisiana Electric Cooperative Association's (SLECA) 1,400 miles of electric power line after Hurricane Gustav slammed the Terrebonne and Lafourche areas with winds over 110 mph, shredding the state's power grid.

Except for isolated camps, SLECA's distribution system has been fully restored according to General Manager Mike Guidry who commented, "Hurricane Gustav was a first for me. Never in my long career here have I ever seen every meter on the SLECA system stopped by any hurricane. Neither Hurricanes Katrina nor Rita did this much damage to our five-parish service area and not since Hurricane Andrew have we seen this kind of damage." (Acct. No. 7303274300)

SLECA lost power to all of its 20,375 member-owners after Hurricane Gustav battered Terrebonne, Lafourche, Assumption, St. Mary and St. Martin parishes on September 1. SLECA's own linemen were at work the day after landfall and 408 additional utility workers were already on their way to SLECA even before Hurricane Gustav made landfall.

Utility recovery across South Louisiana was further complicated because all 14 of the transmission lines Entergy Corp. operates between Baton Rouge and New Orleans as well as much of coastal regions of the state were knocked out by the hurricane. Transmission lines carry high voltage bulk power to distribution substations where the voltage is reduced and routed along feeder lines to homes and businesses in the different areas.

Following Hurricane Gustav, SLECA found many of its power poles were broken or leaning with power lines down or tangled in fallen trees across a five-parish area. As soon as weather permitted, SLECA workers flew over the service area to survey damage while crews assembled to begin repair work.

SLECA follows a detailed Emergency Work Plan that is reviewed annually and tested on a regular basis. Under this plan,

vehicles were relocated to Baton Rouge as a precaution. This insures equipment is not damaged or destroyed by the storm wind or flooding.

"Utilities learned hard lessons during Hurricanes Rita and Katrina when vehicles left in danger zones were flooded or too badly damaged to function. Keeping crews in such areas can also cause problems since fallen trees and limbs commonly block roadways and handicap movement," Guidry added. "A group of volunteer SLECA employees, however, remained at the SLECA offices in Houma and Amellia, answering phones and maintaining contact with our members."

SLECA's employees returned from evacuation by Tuesday night, Sept. 2, as roadways were cleared. Meanwhile, utility crews from electric cooperatives in Kentucky, Alabama, Arkansas, Texas, Ohio, Oklahoma and Florida were already in route to aid SLECA while arrangements were being completed to house and feed the 408 additional workers and fuel their vehicles.

"We sincerely appreciate the patience and cooperation of our members during this emergency," Guidry added. "We were dealing with major logistical challenges

in housing and feeding additional workers in the middle of a disaster area while safely restoring power to our members as quickly as possible." Guidry also praised the rapid response of fellow Louisiana electric cooperatives that sent crews and equipment to assist SLECA during its recovery.

"The skilled assistance of our fellow cooperatives and many contractors under very difficult conditions demonstrated the effectiveness of our Emergency Work Plan and professional training our employees receive. SLECA was able to hit the ground running even before Hurricane Gustav had passed. I can't thank our members, employees and the professionals who came to our aid enough," Guidry proclaimed. (Acct. No. 3255032400)



Across the Board

July 7, 2008

Present were directors Alexander Doyle, president; David Luke, vice-president; Brian Rivet, secretary; Terry Trahan, treasurer; Tracy Duval, J. D. Boudreaux, Eroy Acosta, Roger Dale DeHart, Larry J. Daigle and Lloyd Gibson, advisor. Also attending were Michael Guidry, general manager; Bill Schoening, TESI CEO; James Funderburk, attorney, and Elaine Robertson, member services supervisor.

After the invocation and pledge, the board approved 126 new members, the minutes of the June 2 regular board meeting and the ALEC report (Acct. No. 2501197800).

The financial report, approved by the board, highlighted interest earnings, cash on hand, rate comparison showing SLECA having the lowest rates compared to other area utilities, line loss, kilowatt hour sales for the month, cumulative sales to date, cost of service, equity, TIER, electric and total revenue versus cost per kilowatt hour.

Following an update on upcoming schools, meetings and events, Mr. Guidry reported on the following: (1) SLECA continues to have the lowest rates in the area; (2) The Department of Energy said the reduction of coal-fired generation will cause natural gas prices to skyrocket and will use up the growth in liquefied natural gas and have a severe impact on the nation's economy; (3) Forecasts are predicting the price of natural gas will be \$11.75/MM Btu and regular gasoline will be \$3.45/gallon at year's end while the cost of electricity will average 11.3 cents; (4) Two of the three arbitrators have been selected for the La Gen arbitration; (5) SLECA's boat shed lease will likely be terminated; (6) A call-in campaign in opposition to the Lieberman-Warner SB 2191 was spearheaded by NRECA and resulted in many senators stating they would not support the bill due to its being detrimental to the electric cooperatives in their respective districts; (7) LEPA General Manager Cordell Grand stated the formula for much higher summer electric costs includes transmission restraints, rising natural gas prices and summer peak demands; (8) Five new directors were elected to the Pedernales board and the only incumbent seeking re-election was soundly defeated as a result of financial irregularities; (9) Operational Policy #40 is being instituted that will allow SLECA to pay employees for mileage on their personal vehicles when they are called in to work after hours; (10) Jackie Jones and Reggie Pontiff were chosen by the safety committees to represent employees at the Monday night banquet of the ALEC Annual Meeting; (11) The sale of the Magnolia Street office is on hold pending receiving an appraisal of the building; and (12) SLECA experienced a cumulative fuel savings of \$4,991,769 as a result of the board's decision to go with the actual fuel rate instead of a fixed rate.

Next, the board approved the low bid to replace unit 202; decided to retain Mr. Daigle as voting delegate and Mr. Rivet as the alternate voting delegate for the Region VIII meeting; and gave permission to go out for bids to replace the pontoon crossing near the bridge on Grand Caillou Road.

The board then approved the manager's report and expenses, the safety report and the attorney's report and fees.

The meeting was then adjourned.

You may obtain copies of the minutes by contacting SLECA, P.O. Box 4037, Houma, LA 70361 or by calling (985) 876-6880 or 1-800-256-8826.

Gustav forces cancellation of SLECA's Farmers' Market & Craft Festival

SLECA's 20th annual Farmers' Market and Craft Festival scheduled for Sept. 27 has been cancelled due to Hurricane Gustav and continuing hurricane recovery work in the Houma area. The event was scheduled to be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at SLECA's Houma office, 2028 Coteau Rd. (Hwy. 660).

The popular and well-attended event established in 1988 has attracted thousands of visitors (Acct. No. 1451320504).

Festival Coordinator Elaine Robertson, SLECA's Member Services Supervisor, noted "The success of this event has been a tribute to the many SLECA employees who give up their free Saturday to work at the fair, but this year most of those employees as well as the residents of Houma may be dealing with lingering hurricane damage."

Your Cooperative Connection

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SLECA provides rapid response after Hurricane Gustav

