

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2018

## SAVE THE DATE

Feb. 6–9  
**Transformer School**  
 Livingston, Sam Houston EC

Feb. 13  
**Sizing Single-Phase Transformers**  
 Webinar

Feb. 20–23  
**Regulator Recloser Capacitor School**  
 Tahoka, Lyntegar EC

Feb. 27–March 2  
**Metering School**  
 McGregor, Heart of Texas EC

March 5–9  
**Staking Technician Training Seminar, Phase I**  
 Georgetown, TEC Training Facility

March 13  
**Sizing Three-Phase Transformers**  
 Webinar

March 13–15  
**Supervisor/Foreman School**  
 Tahoka, Lyntegar EC

March 13–16  
**Transformer School**  
 Merkel, Taylor EC

March 20–23  
**TEC Loss Control Conference**  
 San Marcos, Embassy Suites

Find photos from [Loss Control schools](#) on the TEC website.

## ALWAYS THINK SAFETY

Gloves | Grounds | Cover Up

## JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Use the [TEC Safety and Loss Control discussion list](#) on the TEC member website to share and gather information.



**Texas Electric Cooperatives**  
 A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

A BIMONTHLY PUBLICATION  
 FROM TEC LOSS CONTROL

# Plan To Attend TEC Loss Control Conference

The 2018 TEC Loss Control Conference & Exhibit Show, where safety takes center stage for the hundreds of electric utility industry professionals who attend, is March 20–23 at the Embassy Suites in San Marcos.

In addition to a TEC Loss Control program update by Danny Williams, TEC Loss Control manager, and an industry update by Mike Williams, TEC CEO and president, the conference will feature sessions on these topics:

- ▶ 811 Texas.
- ▶ Use of infrared cameras.
- ▶ Capturing better smartphone photos and videos.
- ▶ Legal requirements of AED use.
- ▶ Self-defense and personal safety.
- ▶ Speaking out about unsafe practices.
- ▶ Department of Public Safety inspections of pulled-over vehicles.
- ▶ NRECA International.

“I think the most important thing that people understand is the importance of safety, regardless of what their job may be at their organization,” Danny Williams says.



Attendees visit with vendors during the 2017 conference.

The conference’s annual golf tournament and auction of donated items are the primary fundraisers for TEC Loss Control Scholarships. The tournament and auction contributed nearly \$42,000 to the scholarship fund in 2017. TEC awarded 69 \$850 Loss Control Scholarships last year.

Register for the conference on the [TEC Event Calendar](#).

## Fatigue Affects Every Workforce

Those alarming words appeared in a [2017 report](#) by the National Safety Council based on a study of more than 2,000 working adults.

Among 100 U.S. workers who usually sleep fewer than five hours per day, an estimated 7.89 are injured annually, compared with 2.27 among 100 workers who tend to sleep between seven and eight hours, according to a report in [Safety+Health magazine](#). The NSC also estimates that 13 percent of workplace injuries can be attributed to fatigue.

“Fatigue is a hidden subject that is managed

by each organization,” says Scott Corley, a TEC Loss Control specialist. Corley says the culture in the electric utility industry has changed, and that working days on end—even during outages—is no longer the norm.

Victoria EC lineman Rusty Robertson agrees. He said lineworkers know they need to catch catnaps when they can—while waiting for equipment to arrive or by taking turns driving to jobs.

“It’s just what you’ve got to do,” says Robertson, who experienced 16-hour days when Victoria EC worked to restore power to 22,467 meters after Hurricane Harvey last year. “We’ve kind of got each others’ backs.”

Sleepiness is when we *first* notice fatigue, but it affects performance before then with decreased vigilance, attention, memory and concentration.



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Continued on next page

## Fatigue Affects Every Workforce, continued from Page 1

The NSC cites these fatigue risk factors:

- ▶ Shift work; working even occasionally at night or early in the morning.
- ▶ Jobs that require sustained attention or are physically or cognitively demanding.
- ▶ Working 10 or more hours straight or working 50 or more hours per week.
- ▶ Sleep loss—less than 7–9 hours daily.
- ▶ No rest breaks; returning to work after less than 12 hours away from work.
- ▶ Long commutes.

**How do you know if your workforce is at risk?** The best way to identify fatigue risk is to conduct an assessment and include fatigue in incident reporting.

One study suggests that a person who loses two hours of sleep from a normal eight-hour schedule performs similarly to someone who has had two to three beers.

**What can you do?** Visit [nsc.org/fatigue](http://nsc.org/fatigue) to:

- ▶ Continue to learn about the causes and consequences of fatigue.
- ▶ Take precautionary measures to manage fatigue.
- ▶ Find posters and infographics for your workplace.

TEC's Corley puts the discussion in perspective: "A 30-minute nap costs about \$30. A bucket truck costs \$250,000 plus the cost of the accident. How many naps does it take to replace a bucket truck or digger truck?"

## Beware Frostbite and Hypothermia

In addition to closing schools and setting state winter records for power usage, as happened twice in January, the harsh cold puts people who work outdoors at risk of frostbite and hypothermia. Both conditions are caused by excessive exposure to low temperatures, wind and moisture.



Rare snowfall outside of Rio Grande City

**Frostbite** is an injury caused by freezing of the skin and underlying tissues, usually occurring on fingers, toes, nose, ears, cheeks and chin. If you suspect frostbite, get indoors immediately and seek medical attention.

**Hypothermia** occurs when the body's temperature drops below 95 degrees. Severe shivering is one of the first signs of hypothermia. But as hypothermia progresses, shivering gives way to drowsiness or exhaustion,

confusion, shallow breathing, irregular heartbeat, slurred speech, loss of coordination and, eventually, unconsciousness and even death.

If you suspect hypothermia, call 911. The Mayo Clinic advises gently moving the person inside if possible. Jarring movements can trigger dangerous irregular heartbeats. Carefully remove wet clothing, replacing it with warm, dry coats or blankets.

## BY THE NUMBERS 246,379

TEC's Loss Control specialists drove 246,379 miles on the job in 2017. They conducted 52 schools for a record 1,105 students. In addition, they directed 900 safety meetings at 100 organizations across the state. Loss Control specialist Ronnie Wiggins has been on the road 12 years for TEC. He drove 32,955 miles last year. "You get used to it," he says. He listens to music, news and audio cassettes while driving. "I also use the Great Courses audio CDs that are classes taught by college professors. I prefer history and literature."

## TEC UPDATE

### APPA SAFETY MANUAL

TEC has the 16th edition of the American Public Power Association's Safety Manual available to order for \$30 each. The APPA's Safety Manual is updated every five years to reflect important changes in the industry, including National Electric Safety Code and Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards.

To order, email [tknipstein@texas-ec.org](mailto:tknipstein@texas-ec.org) indicating the quantity, whether you prefer spiral-bound or hole-punched manuals (binders are not included), and the shipping address. TEC will invoice your organization.

### Enter the 2018 Photo Challenge

**Theme:** Storm Restoration: From Fires to Floods

**Entry deadline:** Feb. 28; limit three photos per person

**Voting period:** March 21–22 at the Loss Control Conference in San Marcos

**Winners announced:** First-, second- and third-place winners will be announced March 23 at the close of the conference.

**How to participate:** Email all photos to [tknipstein@texas-ec.org](mailto:tknipstein@texas-ec.org). Entries should be high-resolution digital images—at least 4x7 inches at 300 dpi. Please do not downsize or reduce the original image quality. If there are recognizable people in your photographs, you might be contacted about securing photo releases.

**What happens to entries:** The winning photo will be displayed in *Safety Watch*.

## THINK ABOUT IT

"Every interaction with another person gives you a chance to make a positive difference in their life."

—Richard Hawk, in *Safety+Health*

## STAFF

**Martin Bevins**, VP, Comm. & Member Services  
(512) 486-6249, [mbevins@texas-ec.org](mailto:mbevins@texas-ec.org)

**Danny Williams**, Loss Control Manager  
(512) 413-0509, [dwilliams@texas-ec.org](mailto:dwilliams@texas-ec.org)

**James Busby**, LC Regional Supervisor  
(325) 451-7238, [jbusby@texas-ec.org](mailto:jbusby@texas-ec.org)

**Curtis Whitt**, CLCP, LC Regional Supervisor  
(512) 694-0232, [cwhitt@texas-ec.org](mailto:cwhitt@texas-ec.org)

**Tami Knipstein**, LC Program Coordinator  
(512) 486-6271, [tknipstein@texas-ec.org](mailto:tknipstein@texas-ec.org)

**Tom Widlowski**, Editor  
(512) 486-6246, [twidlowski@texas-ec.org](mailto:twidlowski@texas-ec.org)

**Scott Corley**, Loss Control Specialist  
(512) 713-4606, [scorley@texas-ec.org](mailto:scorley@texas-ec.org)

**George Flournoy**, Loss Control Specialist  
(512) 942-9351, [gflournoy@texas-ec.org](mailto:gflournoy@texas-ec.org)

**Phillip Henricks**, CLCP, Loss Control Specialist  
(806) 438-0067, [phenricks@texas-ec.org](mailto:phenricks@texas-ec.org)

**David Nance**, CLCP, Loss Control Specialist  
(512) 804-6748, [dnance@texas-ec.org](mailto:dnance@texas-ec.org)

**B.J. Varnadore**, Loss Control Specialist  
(512) 573-9333, [bvarnadore@texas-ec.org](mailto:bvarnadore@texas-ec.org)

**Ronnie Wiggins**, CLCP, Loss Control Specialist  
(512) 709-1177, [rwiggins@texas-ec.org](mailto:rwiggins@texas-ec.org)