

DECEMBER/JANUARY 2019

SAVE THE DATE

Jan. 8-11

Transformer School

McGregor, Heart of Texas EC

Jan. 22-25

Regulator Recloser Capacitor School

Merkel, Taylor EC

Feb. 5-8

Transformer School

Livingston, Sam Houston EC

March 19-22

TEC Loss Control Conference

San Marcos, Embassy Suites

PHOTO CHALLENGE

The TEC Loss Control Photo Challenge is open to all employees of electric cooperatives, municipal electric utilities and contractors participating in the TEC Loss Control program. Photos will be judged by popular vote at the 2019 Loss Control Conference.

Theme: Life on the Line**Entry period:** Jan. 1-Feb. 28**Photo limit:** Three pictures per person.**How to participate:** Email high-resolution digital images to tknipstein@texas-ec.org.

ALWAYS THINK SAFETY

Gloves | Grounds | Cover Up

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

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 Loss Control Conference

Hector Hernandez and his dog Malo return for the 73rd annual TEC Loss Control Conference & Exhibit Show with their presentation Preparing for Dog Encounters. Hernandez's demonstrations were one of the highlights of the 2017 Loss Control Conference.

The 2019 conference, March 19-22 at the Embassy Suites in San Marcos, will deliver safety messages to hundreds of electric utility industry professionals. The conference will include a commercial driver's license test preparation workshop. Noted motivational speaker John Drebing, who incorporates magic into his message, will offer strategies to create a culture in which employees take action to protect themselves and those around them.

Award presentations will recognize organizations and individuals for safety achievements. And an exhibitor reception will give co-op employees an opportunity to meet with vendors about industry products and services.

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 more than \$42,000 to the scholarship fund in 2018. TEC awarded 61 \$950 Loss Control Scholarships this year.

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



Attendees check out auction items at the 2018 Loss Control Conference. The auction raised nearly \$36,000.

2019 TEC Loss Control Scholarships

High school seniors are eligible to apply for scholarships if they are children of electric cooperative, electric municipal or contractor employees who participate in TEC's Loss Control services, such as organizational safety meetings, schools or the Loss Control Conference. Scholarship applications are available on the [Loss Control](#) page of TEC's website, texas-ec.org. Application deadline is Jan. 18, 2019. For more information, email Tami Knipstein at tknipstein@texas-ec.org.

Texas Co-ops Assist Florida After Hurricane Michael

Three Texas cooperatives, Jackson EC, Lamar EC and Mid-South Synergy, sent lineworkers to Florida in October after Hurricane Michael, the strongest ever to hit the Florida Panhandle, knocked nearly 2 million meters offline, including about 375,000 belonging to co-op members. Even before the storm's landfall ravaged electric cooperative systems in six states, Texas co-ops reached out to TEC with offers of mutual aid.

Ultimately, Jackson EC sent 14 lineworkers, Lamar EC sent seven and Mid-South sent 18 to assist West Florida EC, which suffered catastrophic damage. The

storm took offline all of WFEC's 28,000 meters and the co-op's phones.

Dozens of people lost their lives in the storm and its aftermath, including three lineworkers restoring power in Chipley, Florida, who were struck by a hit-and-run driver suspected of drunk driving. Two of the victims were from a contract firm in North Carolina. The third, Bo Ussery, 60, was a veteran lineman at West Florida EC who worked closely with the Lamar EC linemen. The driver has been charged with DUI manslaughter and vehicular homicide.



Bo Ussery

Rodeo an Eye-Opening Experience for Stubbs

Farmers EC's David McDowell and Danny Moss make a fine duo when it comes to lineman's rodeos. While the third member of their crew has changed over the years, McDowell and Moss together have won the Texas Lineman's Rodeo's senior division (for lineworkers 45 and older) five times in the past nine years.

When they needed a crewmate who was at least 50 years old to join them at the International Lineman's Rodeo in October in Kansas, they took a giant leap of faith on the greenest of co-workers: Mark Stubbs. Stubbs, 58, is general manager at Farmers, in Greenville. Sure, he's spent more than 30 years in the utility industry—but all behind a desk. McDowell and Moss asked him to don a hard hat and hoist tools and equipment as a groundman in a timed test of skills.

Stubbs agreed, and practice started at sunup in August.

"I had many of the linemen tell me they sure did appreciate me doing this and being a part of it," Stubbs said. "It wasn't fun getting up at 5:30 in the morning and sloshing through the mud, but I just thought it was important, and they realized it."

As the team's groundman, Stubbs' main job was to hoist tools and equipment up to the other two on the pole. But he had other tasks to complete during the competition. "There were two big events that I was nervous about," Stubbs said. "One was throwing rope over the neutral, which I did not accomplish, but the other was raising a stick 40 feet in the air and opening a fuse, taking it down with this long stick and putting it back up without dropping it. And with the wind, it was not easy."

McDowell was quick to point out that Stubbs wasn't the only groundman who failed to get the rope over the neutral line. "A bunch of people that's been doing it for years didn't get it over," McDowell said. "He tried. You get three attempts. After that, we just take a deduction and go on about our business. He done great for his first time."

Stubbs said performing lineworker duties, even on a temporary basis, was eye-opening.

"I learned some things that I did not know," he said. "It really is a brotherhood. Safety matters. But what they do matters, and probably as much as anything, each other matters. I was honored to get a glimpse into that."

The top five finishers in Kansas received trophies. The Farmers EC trio finished sixth out of 11 teams, less than 1.5 seconds behind the fifth-place team.



Mark Stubbs, general manager at Farmers EC, worked as a rookie groundman on a senior division team at the International Lineman's Rodeo.

TEC UPDATE

TEC Seeks Safety Data and Awards Nominations

Complete and return your organization's 2018 Injury/Incident Report by Jan. 25 to tknipstein@texas-ec.org or fax to (512) 763-3390. The 2018 Injury/Incident Report is located on the [Loss Control page](#) of the TEC website, as are nomination forms for awards to be presented at the Loss Control Conference.

- ▶ **The Safety Achievement Award** recognizes employees who have achieved 30, 35, 40 or 45 years with no lost-time accidents as of Dec. 31, 2018.
- ▶ **The Ray Pantel Meritorious Service Award** recognizes an individual who offers outstanding dedication and service to the TEC Loss Control program.
- ▶ Candidates for a **Lifesaving Award** courageously, knowingly and willingly come to the aid of another person who is or could be in a life-threatening situation.
- ▶ Candidates for a **24/7 Good Samaritan Award** are employees who prove to be a good Samaritan by helping a person in need and demonstrate a willingness to do so 24/7.

Pedernales EC Linemen Excel at International Rodeo



Nick Morris

Nick Morris led the way as Pedernales EC linemen took four of the top five spots among cooperative apprentices at the International Lineman's Rodeo in October in Kansas. Morris took first place among co-op apprentices—second among all apprentices, including those from municipals and investor-owned utilities. He was the champion among co-op apprentices in 2017, too. PEC's Darren Donhauser placed second, Caleb Brodock fourth and Neil Dodson fifth among co-op apprentices.

In the co-op journeyman division, PEC's team of Chris Gerchman, Thomas Logan and Randy Williams finished third. Co-workers Andy Mann, Clayton Riedel and Michael Thyberg finished fourth.

Bandera EC, Mid-South Synergy and Trinity Valley EC also sent linemen to the international rodeo.

Click [here](#) to see complete results from the 2018 International Lineman's Rodeo.

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