Along These Lines

DEMCO responds to historic flood event
Manager’s Report

By John Vranic
DEMCO CEO and General Manager

Faith, strength and character will get us through these difficult times

Our emergency work plan here at DEMCO covers a wide range of action items and contingencies.

It includes specific assignments and tasks for each department and every staff member when a severe hurricane or ice storm strikes.

It includes proper protocols and procedures for restoring power and for acquiring the material we’ll need to get the lights back on as quickly and safely as possible.

It includes a system for tapping into our national co-op mutual aid network to secure the crews and manpower we’ll need to recover.

But it doesn’t account for the human misery and profound suffering that take place during a disaster.

Many here at DEMCO felt Hurricane Gustav in 2008 was our equivalent of the floodwaters for flooding in low-lying South Louisiana. Over and over we heard people exclaim that they had never seen the type of flooding that took place in East Baton Rouge, Ascension and Livingston parishes.

Just weeks after drawing national attention as the site of the shooting that claimed the lives of three law enforcement officers, Baton Rouge was once again in the spotlight as tens of thousands in the metro area scrambled for their lives when the floodwaters continued their relentless rise across the Amite and Comite river basins.

And just as no one anticipated a 1,600-year flood to take place in their lifetimes, we were all unprepared for the level of pain, heartache and physical and mental anguish that our people have experienced over the past few weeks.

On top of that, our power delivery system sustained millions of dollars of damage as expensive control and electronic equipment at many of our substations succumbed to the floodwaters. Even our underground infrastructure - which is often hailed as being more reliable than overhead lines and poles during hurricanes - became damaged in the flood.

As difficult as these days and weeks have been, we find strength, hope and optimism in response to hardship.

But we soon realized that temporary power outages were the least of our concerns as it became apparent that our own employees were being run out of their homes and losing their vehicles to the flood along with so many others in the community.

More than 50 employees, or about one-quarter of our total DEMCO workforce, were among the many who were displaced by the storm. Moreover, the region saw extreme damage to homes and devastation to so many. Some reports show that over 180,000 homes were affected by the flood in South Louisiana.

Amid the chaos that ensued when local rivers and tributaries began spilling over their banks, we took action to account for all of our employees and set about the task of doing whatever we could to get them from harm’s way.

After making sure everyone was safe, we then formulated a plan to help our employees and their families get back on their feet.

The new reality became long hot days of cutting out sheetrock, pulling out wet carpet, tossing out furniture and having to decide what personal pieces of our lives to keep and what to throw away.

This was a scene that recurred on many streets in the affected areas where neighbors helped neighbors and collective support came in the form of volunteers from around the country. They converged on a need right here in South Louisiana.

We were able to immediately tap into our statewide association’s emergency relief fund to provide quick assistance, thanks to a generous donation from our wholesale power provider, Cleco, and other donations that streamed in from fellow electric cooperative employees across the country who responded in our time of need.

As difficult as these days and weeks have been, we find strength, hope and optimism in response to hardship, the many instances we have seen of individuals helping one another, people pulling together to rush to the aid of others.

If you were fortunate and spared from the inundation of water you are probably providing shelter to family members or to neighbors who were impacted by this tragedy. It is safe to say that all of us have been impacted by this event.

Though our suffering is deep and widespread, and it will undoubtedly take a long time to return to some sense of normalcy, my personal belief in the human spirit to overcome hardship through faith, and character remains unbroken.

Co-ops helping co-ops

DEMCO received seven crewmen and two shipments of supplies from Washington-St. Tammany Electric after the historic floods. Pictured are Calvin Dufrene (WSTE), Mark Phillips (DEMCO), Willie Chauvin and Sherri Goss (WSTE), Anita McNeal and Corey Sharpe (DEMCO), and Chad Angelo and Kenny Boudreaux (WSTE).

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DEMCO recently received statewide recognition for its outstanding safety program.

At its annual membership meeting in July, the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives (ALEC) awarded a plague to DEMCO for working 749,523 hours without a lost time accident since September of 2014.

Accepting the award on behalf of DEMCO’s board, management and staff were General Manager and CEO John Vranic along with Manager, Safety Rickey Cummings and Safety Coordinator Jacob Overhultz.

The number of work hours without a lost time accident includes emergency restoration work performed after storms, floods and hurricanes, and during other adverse conditions.

“Safety is a true team effort, and the credit goes to all of our employees who make safety a priority in performing their day-to-day tasks,” said Vranic. “Our success begins with our member-elected board leadership and runs through the entire co-op. Every individual plays a critical role in creating a program we can all be proud of.”

Vranic said the locally-owned electric cooperative places a premium on safety not only with the intention of protecting the health and well-being of employees, members and the public, but also because it simply makes good economic sense.

“When you can create an effective culture of safety on the job, everybody wins,” he said. “Not only do all of our employees get to drive out of our parking lot and go home to their families at the end of the work day, but it also keeps our costs down when it comes to insurance rates, broken equipment and many other expenses.”

Recognition for exceptional safety performance is determined by using a comprehensive formula that accounts for safe operation on the job including field work, warehouse work, transportation and all other aspects necessary to deliver reliable, affordable power to DEMCO members.

“Our safety record is just incredible, when you stop and think about it,” Vranic said. “When you consider all the rain and bad weather and difficult conditions our employees have to handle while they’re on the job, it’s a real testament to the attention our employees give to safety. We believe consistent training and education have an impact on our safety culture.” (Acct. No. 80122069-001)

The award was presented to the cooperative by Mike Bergeaux, Director of Safety and Loss Control at ALEC.

“I want to applaud the co-op, the board of directors and all of the employees for a job well done,” Bergeaux said. “While many cooperatives have good intentions with their safety programs and do very well, it’s extremely difficult in this line of work to maintain and sustain this kind of safety performance over time. This is a well-deserved honor.”

Bergeaux also expressed appreciation for DEMCO and its tremendous contribution to the Louisiana Lineman Training Program, which trains electric cooperative linemen from throughout the state on safe practices in the field.

Vranic serves on the statewide organization’s Safety and Loss Control Committee while Cummings also serves on the Committee as an advisory member.

Additionally, DEMCO provides an outdoor and indoor training facility for the statewide safety program and provides instructors to teach classes.

UTILITY POLES ARE NOT BULLETIN BOARDS

Think before you post that sign!

Staples, nails and tacks used to hang signs and fliers create dangerous obstacles for electric lineworkers.

Their jobs are dangerous enough – help us keep them safe!
DEMCO rallies to respond to historic flood event

As soon as it became apparent the storm system that settled directly over DEMCO’s seven-parish service area wasn’t going anywhere, co-op officials knew this was not going to be a run-of-the-mill weather event. It wasn’t long before reports came in that not only were utility substations going under water, but many DEMCO employees were scrambling for their lives like thousands of others as the floodwaters rose to historic levels throughout the Greater Baton Rouge area.

When the torrential rain finally stopped after three days and 31 inches of heavy precipitation, DEMCO personnel found nine substations substantially damaged, along with sensitive monitoring and switching equipment and miles of underground distribution lines.

Complicating matters was the fact that the roads and streets leading to those substations were impassable due to the flooding. At peak, roughly 28 percent of more than 107,000 meters lost power.

Despite the challenges, DEMCO was able to restore service to all structures and meters capable of receiving power within one week.

According to DEMCO CEO and General Manager John Vranic, this emergency restoration project was accomplished without a lost time accident (DEMCO recently received recognition for working 749,523 consecutive hours, in fair weather and foul, without a lost time accident) and despite the fact that 55 employees experienced flooding of their primary residences.

This represents 26 percent of the cooperative’s workforce, Vranic emphasized.

“This creates an enormous challenge, working to get the lights back on as quickly and as safely as possible while at the same time you’re trying to figure out if your employees are even going to have clothing, a home or a way to get to work with all the chaos that’s going on around us,” Vranic said. “For a time, largely because cell phone communication was unreliable, we didn’t even know if some of our employees and their families had made it through this thing alive.”

Those employees who were able, from the general manager on down, organized and coordinated a plan to arrange for temporary housing accommodations, transportation and other needs for displaced employees.

The cooperative also activated a key component of its emergency plan by rallying 126 outside line workers personnel to assist in the recovery.

Though DEMCO’s headquarters office on Wax Road in Central was spared, the district office in Denham Springs received five feet of flood water. The office is located on Range Avenue near I-12 where the entire commercial corridor from U.S. 190, past the interstate and all the way south into Plantation Estates, was under water.

The damage at the Denham Springs facility also included tenants of the Dixie Business Development Center such as Ashley Home Furnishings and the DEMCO Foundation office.

Chanon Johnson, member relations representative at the DEMCO Foundation, said she has been able to find office space at the headquarters facility in Central to continue serving members who apply for assistance through the Foundation.

Johnson was one of the 55 employees to sustain extensive flood damage to her residence off Flannery Road.

Along with tens of thousands in the Greater Baton Rouge area, Johnson is still struggling to deal with home reconstruction, insurance adjusters, work and family life.

“This has been such a difficult time for so many people in our community,” Johnson said. “It’s heartbreaking to see so many people having to endure such grief and anxiety over losing everything they’ve ever worked for.”

Johnson mentioned the older folks who live in her neighborhood and how the disaster has impacted them.

“You really feel bad for the senior citizens who are having a hard time coping with this and trying to find a way just to survive day-to-day. Many of them have health issues. Some have family to help them, but many of them don’t. It’s hard on everybody, but it’s really taking a toll on them.”

Vranic said this event was different from all the other summer storms, ice storms and hurricanes he’s experienced over the past 37 years.

“Each event is unique, but the way this flood destroyed so much and impacted every part of our society, it’s unprecedented and almost unbelievable,” he said, noting that the end of hurricane season won’t come until November. (Acct. No. 4190001-001)

He said the recovery for both co-op employees and the community at-large will be long and arduous, but DEMCO has worked hard and smart to find its footing and stands ready for the next challenge.

“It’s times like these that you really find out what you’ve made of, and our communities have had to pass an incredible test of will and perseverance,” Vranic said. “But this co-op has been around for 80 years and we feel battle-tested and prepared for whatever comes our way.”
Important information for flood victims from FEMA

Registration deadline is Oct. 13

Homeowners, renters, and business owners who suffered disaster-related damage as a result of the recent historic flooding should register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The registration deadline is 10/13/2016.

Register online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov or call toll-free at 800-621-3362 (FEMA).

Those who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability and use TTY, may call 800-462-7585. If survivors use 711 or Video Relay Service (VRS) call 800-621-3362.

Businesses, private nonprofits, homeowners and renters may also be eligible for the SBA Disaster Loan program.

Apply online at www.disasterloan.sba.gov/ela or call the SBA Customer Service Center 800-659-2955 (TTY 800-877-8339).

Cooking Efficiency Tip

Every time you open the oven door to check on a dish, the temperature inside is reduced by as much as 25 degrees, increasing cooking time - and energy use! Try using the oven light instead.

TOP TEN
HURRICANE EMERGENCY KIT ITEMS

- Emergency food, drinking water
- Flashlights and batteries
- Cash and credit cards
- Medicine/prescriptions
- First aid kit
- Personal identification
- Matches and lighters
- Gas for generator or vehicle
- Radio (battery-operated)
- Cooler (with ice)

Payment Arrangements Anytime

Through DEMCO’s upgraded automated phone system, members can conveniently make payment arrangements 24/7*. That’s just one more way DEMCO is making its members’ lives a little easier.

225-261-1177
1-800-262-1170

*Certain restrictions apply.
What’s good for members is good for the co-op

The uniqueness of the electric cooperative business model as a service organization speaks to its effectiveness and vitality.

One of the amazing facts about electric co-ops is that they have operated in the United States for more than 80 years, and during that time the basic model hasn’t changed.

Members and co-op staff don’t want to miss a single opportunity to keep the cost of power to a minimum. For us, that goal involves minimizing expenses and maintaining a quality system that delivers the kind of service members expect and deserve.

DEMC0 focuses on minimizing expenses without compromising service, and members can also play a role. The most effective way to lower your monthly bill is through energy conservation.

Factors that affect the level of your energy consumption include the energy efficiency of your home, the number and type of electric appliances used and your household’s lifestyle. As a conscientious co-op member, you may want to look at these three areas to find ways to minimize your consumption.

1. Energy Efficiency: The type of home you live in represents a decision to consume a certain range of electricity each month. The energy efficiency of a structure plays a major role in determining how much electricity is actually used.

With less than required insulation, inefficient heating and cooling systems, inefficient appliances, and leaky doors and windows, a smaller home may use more energy than a larger, more energy-efficient home. Weatherstripping and caulking are inexpensive ways to stop air infiltration and are something you can do yourself.

2. Quantity and Type of Electric Appliances: It’s especially important to make sure that appliances—including air-cooling and heating systems—have high energy efficiency ratings. As computers and other electronic appliances have become a greater part of household life, their presence adds to the demand for energy.

Without really thinking about the increased energy use, families might add TVs, video game systems and computers to the home; over time, the sum total of those additions can drive up the demand for power. The newest technologies and devices may make our lives easier, but keep in mind that part of the cost involves the electricity necessary to keep them running.

It’s important to have your heating and cooling system serviced by a qualified professional to make sure it’s in top working order. And don’t forget to change the filters at least monthly while the system’s in use.

3. Lifestyle and Energy Use: If you’re “hot natured,” you may prefer to run the air conditioner more often than other people. If that’s the case, be aware that your choice has an impact on your electric bill. Similarly, having a lot of people running in and out of the house leaving doors open, taking long, hot showers or baths and leaving lights or appliances on when not in use—all these actions can drive up the demand for kilowatt-hours. Even with our low cost per kWh, consuming more power means creating a higher electric bill.

DEMC0 strives to make sure our members have all the power they need for their busy lives and to control costs as much as possible, but your choices and habits play a big role in your electric bill each month.

For more tips on how to manage your electric use, visit www.togetherwesave.com.

Think outside the range for your family’s meals

It’s been a long, hot summer, and there’s still a while to go before we see cooler fall temperatures.

For at least another month, nobody wants to stand over a hot stove or oven to prepare a good meal.

The good news is that a little creativity can make the rest of the kitchen pull its weight.

Smaller countertop appliances—toaster ovens, microwaves, slow cookers and more—are capable of making the dishes usually cooked on the stove or in the oven, without adding extra heat.

Slow cookers are a great alternative for making one-dish wonders. They allow you to put in all the ingredients for a dish in the morning, turn the cooker on for the day and come home to a finished meal in the evening.

You can even consult a slow-cooker cookbook to learn how to make surprising things in them, like bread, yogurt and desserts.

Electric pressure cookers have more safety measures in place than the stovetop sort, and most of them can take the place of slow cookers and rice cookers.

Some models on the market can even cut out stovetop steps like browning meat with a sauté function.

Pressure cookers are also good for quick steaming, and that includes things you would normally boil or bake.

Using an electric pressure cooker is generally easy once you learn the various release methods—natural, quick and 10- or 5-minute—and their correct applications.

Rice cookers make cooking rice effortless and are good for steaming and for cooking other grains, such as quinoa.

With the help of a cookbook, rice cookers can make entire one-pot meals, or quick versions of complicated dishes.

A steaming tray or basket is essential in many pressure and rice cooker recipes. A lot of rice cookers come with steaming baskets, but also they can be bought separately.

A good toaster oven can do much of the work of a full-sized oven, such as roasting vegetables or baking casseroles and cobblers.

Microwave ovens also can do a lot more than heat up your leftovers. Microwaves work by spinning water molecules, which means they steam things easily.

Additionally, they can melt chocolates and cheeses more easily than a double boiler or an oven, with a lot less excess heat.
Field of football dreams turns into a rain-soaked nightmare

For seven months, folks in Livingston Parish had been waiting for some football. And the smattering of brave souls gathered at Live Oak Stadium for the annual Junior High Football Jamboree weren’t going to be deterred by a steady downpour.

For a spell, it looked as though the train showed no signs of abating and a flash of lightning cleared the field.

But the coaches were determined to play. So after two more delays, the teams were called back onto the saturated turf. The PA announcer tried her best to lighten the mood by playing every rain related song imaginable – Purple Rain, Blame it on the Rain...you get the idea.

It all seemed funny at the time.

For the Gibson family, the wait was especially nerve-racking as our sixth-grader would be taking the field for his first live action in a tackle football game.

When the Yellow Jacket coach finally worked his way low enough down the roster to send Austin into the fray, only a few minutes remained and everyone was water-logged and ready to head home.

Austin decided to go out with a bang. Lining up at running back, he took the hand-off and charged toward left guard, making a quick cut and scrambled for a 12-hand-off and charged toward left guard, making a quick cut and scrambled for a 12-yard gain. Whoop, whoop! Now, let’s get outta here and dry out.

We didn’t know then that the rain that was slamming us that night would only intensify over the next 48 hours and cause flooding never experienced anywhere in Metro Baton Rouge – and that Austin’s field of football dreams would soon be completely under water along with much of the five-parish area.

Just weeks after Baton Rouge was in the national news following the killing of three police officers and several days of street protests, the capital city was once again in the spotlight as the site of a completely unexpected disaster.

The anticipation of football season soon gave way to pandemonium as 31 inches of precipitation fell over two days. Questions over the sturdiness of Saints quarterback Drew Brees or the prospects of the LSU Tigers quickly yielded to concerns about the safety of loved ones, widespread mental anguish, the financial and emotional burden of extensive personal property damage, scarcity of resources, business closures, tap water contamination and shuttered school systems.

Looking back, I distinctly remember our local weatherman predicting, at most, 6-8 inches of rain. Even during hurricane season when folks across the Gulf Coast are usually on guard, this shot of misery and mayhem caught everyone by surprise.

The first night of intense, unceasing showers seemed likely to produce the maximum amount predicted. The second night of a steady torrent brought anxiety.

But through the third night, the thousands of souls residing beneath the 60-mile vortex of precipitation that churned stubbornly and relentlessly over our heads were keeping the same vigil: pacing, checking the radar every 10 minutes only to see the system was stalled, praying for the downpour to cease, checking outside markers through the windows and calculating when or if the water would come splashing against the walls.

Stayed up all night, listening to the rain roll off my roof and slam down onto the concrete patio outside my back door, it was like a Chinese water torture...only the drips were heavy crashes that only seemed to change from intense to more intense.

Some people had a reasonable amount of time to make a break for safety, some literally ran out of their homes gathering whatever keepsakes they could grab as the floodwaters climbed by the minute. But no one escaped the misery. Those whose homes didn’t flood knew plenty of friends, family and neighbors who did as an estimated 80 percent of the homes in my parish were damaged. All hands on deck. Help when and where you can.

I’m getting old enough to where I’m using all my fingers and a few toes to tally the number of tragedies I’ve lived through. Loaded into my memory bank of past events are particular moments when the whole experience became encapsulated in a single passage of time.

As for the Great Flood of 2016, I’ll always remember following a co-op crew assigned to change out a transformer behind the home of a member who was on oxygen. Unable to place a bucket truck near the pole that stood along a canal, the six-man crew had to complete this job old-school, without the use of hydraulics. It took nearly a full morning of hard work and a lot of sweat in a heat index of 103 degrees to finish.

Well, on this particular morning, I was capturing photos of two men preparing a pulley system atop the pole when I noticed an intermittent violent crashing down coming from somewhere about 30 yards behind me.

I turned and recognized the bearded, sweat-soaked face of a young, wiry lineman named Braxton Womack, who was one of a group of guys from the Northshore area who had come to the assistance of a local co-op.

At that moment, as the ground crew was waiting for the pulleys to be prepped, Braxton saw an opportunity to tackle a side project. He noticed a thick curtain of green kudzu hanging from the lowest line of a three-phase span, so he went to his truck and pulled out a long machete with a five-foot handle and commenced attacking that kudzu with every bit of strength and sinew he could muster.

In the sauna-like heat, Braxton could have been taking a break. He could have been looking for a shady spot to rest. He could have adopted the attitude that this wasn’t his system, this wasn’t his home, these weren’t his members and those weren’t his lines to worry about...that old-timer with the oxygen mask waiting for power to be restored wasn’t his concern.

Instead, Braxton took hold of that machete and went Medieval on that vegetation, swinging from the heels with every stroke, sweat flying from beneath the brim of his hard hat. It was forceful, it was loud, it was vigorous, it was affirmative, it was convicted and it was inspired. It was, to me, an accurate and compelling characterization of the thing we call the Cooperative Spirit.

The next meeting of the DEMCO Board of Directors is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 15, 2016, at 6 p.m.

Some choices may include:

- Insulate Attic
- Add “Insulate Attic” to Your To-do List this Fall
- Interior blinds made from heat-reflective material, which can reduce heat gain by up to 45 percent when you close the slats; or draperies with white plastic backings, which can reduce heat gain by 33 percent when they’re closed.
- If you shade the exterior of your windows with wooden or vinyl blinds, overhangs, awnings, shutters or storm panels, you’ll keep the sun from heating up your home’s interior.
- Replacing old, single-pane windows with double-pane models can keep your home much more comfortable and shave hundreds of dollars off your energy bills, according to Energy Star.

**Is insulation drooping in some spots? Insulation can’t do its job properly if it isn’t touching the surface that it’s meant to insulate.**

**So hire a trusted handyman to reattach and add insulation up there. Or you can even do this yourself; it’s a pretty simple job.**

**A bonus: A properly insulated attic also will stop cool, air-conditioned air from escaping through the roof during the summer.**

**Add “Insulate Attic” to Your To-do List this Fall**

As long as you’re blowing leaves and caking around windows this fall, put one more chore on your to-do list: Add some attic insulation.

The time to get your home in shape for heating season is early fall, long before you actually need to turn the heat on.

If your home’s attic doesn’t have enough insulation—or if, over the years, it has managed to come loose—it won’t keep your home’s comfy, heated air from pouring up and out through the roof.

Heat rises, so the warm air in your home wafts upward to your attic. Without proper insulation, it winds up flowing outdoors and ends up wasting your money.

In fact, your home probably loses more heat through the attic than anywhere else.

So take a few moments to poke your head up into your attic and take a quick look around.

Do you see bare patches on the attic floor or ceiling, where insulation is missing?

**Here’s how:**

1. **If you shade the exterior of your windows with wooden or vinyl blinds, overhangs, awnings, shutters or storm panels, you’ll keep the sun from heating up your home’s interior.**
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**Lucky Account Number Contest**

The Lucky Account Number Contest continues this month with four winners included in this edition of Along These Lines. Before you continue looking through this edition for your winning number, look for your account number printed above your mailing address. Locate this number anywhere in this issue and win the $25 prize. To claim your prize, please call 225-262-3072.
Extreme weather conditions are not unusual in Louisiana, but the hot, humid summer months require special precautions so the heat doesn’t get the best of your health as well as your wallet, according to DEMCO Public Relations Manager David Latona.

Throughout South Louisiana, air-conditioning units and other home appliances are working overtime to meet the demand of consumers trying to get some relief from another long, hot summer. And the bills are just coming in from energy consumed over the peak weeks and months of summer.

“Our members are just now receiving their bills reflecting power usage from the hottest part of the summer season,” Latona said. “Most of that is due to the increased usage as air conditioning systems are tested to the fullest.”

Latona offered suggestions on how to keep energy costs as low as possible as the summer heat persists:

- **Don’t add heat:** Cook outdoors in late afternoons when possible and bake as little as possible. Save washing, ironing and other “hot” chores until late evening or early morning. Use the microwave oven rather than the conventional unit. Take short showers and baths and use exhaust vents to remove humidity.
- **Fans can help:** Use box, oscillating or ceiling fans to supplement or replace air conditioning demands.
- **Air conditioning:** For every thermostat degree set below 78, three percent is added to the cost of cooling your home. Change air filters once a month. Have your air conditioning system checked and serviced regularly to reduce the chance of expensive break-downs. Keep debris such as grass clippings away from outside units.
- **Keep the sun out:** Close curtains, blinds or shutters during the day to reduce sunlight invading your home. Strategically planted trees can be your best ally in this effort.
- **Avoid “phantom load”:** Get your family in the habit of turning electronics on and off via power strips as they move from one activity to the next. As electronics and appliances become more technologically savvy, they often draw power even while turned off. A good indicator of this—called “phantom load”—is to check the device for a light that stays on all the time.
- **And more:** Do you have enough insulation in your attic? What about those leaky hot water faucets? Is the damper in the fireplace closed? How often do you unnecessarily open and close the refrigerator and freezer doors?

“High heat of summer reflected on September utility bills

Phantom load will add a few watt-hours to energy consumption, but a few watt-hours on each of your many electronic devices adds up. To avoid this power draw, unplug the device or invest in a “smart” power strip, which allows certain electronics—like a cable box, which takes time to reboot after it’s been unplugged—to continue using electricity while others can be shut down.

Feel free to contact us, or visit www.demco.org, if you wish to receive more information on how to keep your electricity bill as low as possible.”
Meeting of July 21, 2016

The board of directors of DEMCO held its regular meeting Thursday, July 21, 2016. Board President Richard Sitman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

The board then approved the minutes of the previous meetings, new member list, Treasurer’s report and Operations Committee report as written. The board then resolved to renew DEMCO’s membership in the Baton Rouge Area Chamber.

From the Purchasing Committee meeting, Randy Lorio, committee chairman, presented the report. The board then approved resolutions accepting bids for the following: CA-PAR Electric, Inc. for the Black Bayou Bridge @ LA Hwy. 44 Overhead; V-Tech, Inc. for the Catalpa Lane Underground; WILLBROS for the LA 1026 @ LA 1030 Roundabout Overhead; T & D Solutions for the Dyer Road Substation Transformer Addition; Chain Electric Company for the Maple Grove Underground; and Distrant Steel, LLC for the Juban Marketplace Transmission Line Relocation Steel Poles. The board then passed a resolution to approve Deep South Communications (a sole source supplier) to install a microwave link that will connect the Clinton tower to the Elm Park tower. Next the board resolved to approve Substation Services Company to repair and assemble the Zachary transformer. Then the board passed a resolution authorizing management to approve Amendment #14 to the 2013-2016 Construction Work Plan to re-conductor 2.3 miles of 3-phase distribution line from number 2 Awg aluminum to 1/0 Awg aluminum (work is within existing maintained right-of-way).

From the Finance Committee report Steve Irving, committee chairman, reviewed the Interest, Fuel Cost Adjustment and Financial Summary reports. The board approved a resolution reclassifying those accounts disconnected in March 2016, as uncollectable. Next the board adopted a resolution amending Board Policy 103.005: Delegations from the Board of Directors to the CEO/ General Manager and Board Policy 206.005: Purchase of Materials, Supplies and Equipment for Cooperative Use. The board then approved a resolution to authorize management to establish a new monthly Finance Committee report.

Danny Berthelot gave the ALEC report then the board approved a resolution to re-elect Mr. Daniel “Danny” Berthelot to represent DEMCO on the ALEC Board of Directors for a three-year term which expires in July 2019.

Leslie Falks presented the Dixie Business Center and DEMCO Foundation reports with no action taken.

John Vranic presented the Manager’s report with no action taken.

Jim Ellis presented the Attorney’s report with no action taken.

Meeting of August 25, 2016

The board of directors of DEMCO held its regular meeting Thursday, August 25, 2016. Board President Richard Sitman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. (Acct. No. 1885705-001)

The board then approved the minutes of the previous meeting, new member list, Treasurer’s report and Operations Committee report as written.

As committee chairman of the Purchasing Committee, Randy Lorio presented the committee’s report. Next the board approved a resolution authorizing management to renew Cox Communications Services (including phone, long distance, internet, and TV service for Central) for the period of August 2016 through August 2019. The board then approved resolutions for the following purchases: Ellis Electric Company for the Greenleaves Subdivision Underground and for the Nickens Lake Subdivision Underground.

From the Finance Committee report Steve Irving, moved that the board resolve to authorize management to renew corporation insurance coverage for the September 1, 2016 – August 31, 2017 Mr. Irving continued with a review of the Interest, Fuel Cost Adjustment, and Financial Reports. The board then approved a resolution reclassifying those accounts disconnected in April 2016 as uncollectable. Next the board approves Hawthorne, Waymouth & Carroll, L.L.P. to audit the consolidated financial statements of Dixie Electric Membership Corporation and Subsidiaries as of and for the year ending December 31, 2016; and to prepare DEMCO’s federal information return (FORM 990) for the year ending December 31, 2016. A resolution then passed by the board to authorize John D. Vranic, CEO and General Manager; Jimmie D. Varnado, Vice President; Finance; Kevin Commander, Manager, Financial Services; and Phillip V. Zito, Manager, Lands and Right Of Way to sign checks on the Red River Bank Right of Way account. The board then resolved to authorize Leslie A. Falls, Foundation Secretary; John D. Vranic, CEO & General Manager; Jimmie D. Varnado, Vice President, Finance; and Kevin Commander, Manager, Financial Services to sign checks on the Red River Bank Foundation account.

Danny Berthelot gave the ALEC report with no action taken.

Leslie Falks presented the Dixie Business Center and DEMCO Foundation reports with no action taken.

John Vranic presented the Manager’s report with no action taken.

Jim Ellis presented the Attorney’s report with no action taken.
**Standards Link:** Number Sense: Calculate sums using money amounts to $500.

Different places have different fines for littering. In some places, fines are $500. In other places, fines can be $5,000 or more. Pretend you got fined $500 for littering. Look through the newspaper and find things you could buy with $500, instead of paying a fine. Be sure to find items that add up to exactly $500.

**Standards Link:** Letter sequencing. Recognized identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

If a Mylar balloon, kite or any object becomes entangled in an overhead power line, call 9-1-1 or 1-800-743-5000. Do not try to remove it yourself.

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**Litter Can Kill**

Not only does litter look ugly, it can cause serious harm to wild animals – even to animals that live far away from where the litter was first dropped. Some litter looks like food. Other litter can tangle animals, leaving them trapped so that they can’t find food or escape predators.

Litter can wash into rivers and streams and be carried to oceans and bays. There, birds, sea turtles and even whales can become entangled. Sea turtles mistake plastic bags for jellyfish and try to eat them. Eating plastic bags is very dangerous for any animal.

Do you like helium-filled balloons? They are fun to carry and bat around. When these balloons are let loose, they float up into the air and seem to float away. But they don’t. Ultimately these balloons lose their float and fall back to earth as litter. Some end up in the ocean where marine animals, especially sea turtles, eat them. The swallowed balloons can block air passages or get caught in the animal’s gills. Either way, balloons can be dangerous.

Find the words that complete the story before they float away!

**Standards Link:** Reading Comprehension: Use context clues to understand the meaning of words and sentences.

**Standards Link:** Life Science: Living things cause changes in the environment and some of these changes are detrimental to other organisms.

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**Double Word Search**

Find the words in the puzzle, then in this week’s Kid Scoop stories and activities.

**Double Word Search**

TANGLE LITTER WASTE PARK PLASTIC CLEAN BLOCK ANIMAL WHALES FRESH FLOAT FOOD BAYS HELIUM EAT FINE

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**Write On!**

If I Were a Teacher

How would you set up your classroom? What rules would you have? What subject would you teach?
Check around & stay prepared!

HURRICANE PREPARATION CHECKLIST

☑ 3-day supply of water & non-perishable food

☑ Spare clothing, blankets and pillows

☑ Toiletries, first-aid kit and prescription medicines

☑ Special items/food for babies and the elderly

☑ Special items for your pet including vaccination records, toys, food and a cage/crate

☑ Flashlights, portable radio and extra batteries

☑ Extra set of car keys, credit cards and cash

☑ Important documents kept in a waterproof container or watertight plastic bag
  • Identification, copy of birth certificate, marriage certificate and Social Security card
  • Insurance documents and medical records
  • Bank account numbers, online passwords and log-in information
  • Emergency contact list

☑ Emergency tools

KEEPING CURRENT: TIP #39

Never operate a portable generator inside your home, garage or other enclosed areas. Only use your generator outdoors, away from open windows, vents or doors. And, always follow manufacturer’s guidelines for proper use.