

DECEMBER–JANUARY 2024

SAVE THE DATE

Dec. 12
Interconnection of
Distributed Generation
Webinar

Dec. 12
Workshop: Risk Assessment
and Internal Control
Implementation
Georgetown, TEC
Training Facility

Jan. 9–12
Transformer School
McGregor, Heart of Texas EC

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

Feb. 13–16
Metering School
McGregor, Heart of Texas EC

March 5–8
Transformer School
Merkel, Taylor EC

March 12–14
Supervisor/Foreman School
Tahoka, Lyntegar EC

March 19–23
TEC Loss Control Conference
& Exhibit Show
Frisco, Embassy Suites

Visit register.texas-ec.org
for more information about
upcoming schools

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.



A BIMONTHLY PUBLICATION
FROM TEC LOSS CONTROL

PEC's Gough Repeats as Top Apprentice at Rodeo

The simple Facebook post said so much: “Good luck up there. Be safe and bring it home.”

Up there is Overland Park, Kansas, site of the **International Lineman's Rodeo**. It's also atop a pole, where lineworkers keep the electric grid going and, in competitions, prove their mettle.

Pedernales EC, behind the Facebook encouragement, took more than luck up north Oct. 11–14. Zackery Gough finished in first place with a near-perfect score among 440 apprentices, duplicating his success in 2022.

“It's an honor to receive such a high achievement against the best in the world two years in a row,” Gough said. “We put in a lot of work to become the best lineworkers we can be for our members and our communities, and although we don't do it for the accolades, it is nice to be recognized for our efforts.”

Among co-op apprentices, PEC's Daniel Wilson and Matthew Mabry finished third and fourth. Three of PEC's four journeyman teams finished in the top 10 among co-ops.

Joining PEC in Kansas were apprentices and journeyman lineworkers from GVEC and Bluebonnet, Deep East Texas, Farmers and Trinity Valley ECs. New Braunfels Utilities and the city of Seguin also represented Texas at the rodeo.

See complete results [here](#).



Zackery Gough explains his approach for defending his title as the No. 1 apprentice at the International Lineman's Rodeo: “Being as smooth and precise as possible and putting in my best effort using everything I've worked on and learned.”

2023 BY THE NUMBERS

61 total schools ■ **1,190** total students
■ **835** total safety meetings for **98**
organizations (**56** co-ops, **31** municipal
utilities and **11** contractors) ■ **254,400**
miles driven by staff



CAYLYN PHILLIPS | TEC

About TEC Loss Control

The TEC Loss Control program is committed to focusing fully on training and education programs that reduce the risk of injury and harm to electric utility employees. The safety and training program is most effective when lineworkers can participate in hands-on learning, and when possible, TEC will utilize that style of instruction. Staff supplements hands-on training with webinars and uses newer technology to pass along safety knowledge.

The department fulfills its critical safety charge by dedicating resources to produce an annual safety school calendar and on-site safety meetings that provide cooperative, municipal and electrical contractor crews with convenient, high-quality safety training that meets TEC's unwavering standards.

Safe and Sound on Sam Miller's Watch

Sam Miller had already been a lineworker for a number of years when a tragic incident at Lubbock Power & Light forever changed his approach to workplace safety.

A younger co-worker was badly burned. The man survived, but Miller came to realize his accident was preventable.



Sam Miller started his career as a lineworker in an Odessa oilfield in 1976.

he is rightfully proud of. "I was a line crew foreman for LP&L for 15 years, and no one on my crew ever missed a day of work because of an injury," he says.

In November, Navarro County EC reached 15 years with no lost time. And at the 2023 TEC Loss Control Conference, the co-op earned the GE Safety Award for the third year in a row and fourth time in five years.

"The employees are the safety process," Miller said at the time. "They are the ones that take what we talk about in our weekly safety meetings and put it into practice."

Communication is a key strategy for Miller, who was a loss control specialist at TEC for five years before he moved on to Navarro County EC in 2009. "I am a facilitator," he says. "I facilitate information in a manner that they see it as a benefit to them. What you say makes a difference to the person next to you. How you say it. Why you say it."

His legacy at the co-op is set.

"He has created the safety culture here," says Billy Jones, NCEC general manager and CEO. "I am doubtful that we will find anyone with his drive and ability."

"I just changed my whole outlook on how I looked at work and safety compared to what I was raised on—you know, 'Do this or else,' " says Miller, who will retire Jan. 31 after more than 14 years as the manager of safety, training and inspections at Navarro County EC.

While still at LP&L, Miller got to know Danny Williams, TEC's Loss Control manager. He remembers telling Williams, "One of these days, I'd like to do what you do."

"And [Williams] said, well, you know, get educated."

So Miller did. And he made safety a priority, building a record

TEC UPDATE

Apply for 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 program, such as safety meetings, schools or the Loss Control conference. Scholarship applications are available on the Loss Control page of TEC's website. The application deadline is Jan. 19, 2024. For more information, email Tami Knipstein at tknipstein@texas-ec.org.

Safety Data and Awards Nominations Needed

Complete your organization's 2023 Injury/Incident Report by Jan. 22 and return to tknipstein@texas-ec.org or fax to (512) 763-3390. The 2023 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 2024 TEC Loss Control Conference, March 19–22 at the Embassy Suites in Frisco.

- The **Safety Achievement Award** recognizes employees who have achieved 30, 35, 40, 45, 50 or 55 years with no lost-time accidents as of Dec. 31, 2023.
- 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** help a person in need and demonstrate a willingness to do so 24/7. The deadline for submitting nominations for these awards is Dec. 31.

Enter the Photo Challenge

The TEC Loss Control Photo Challenge is open to all employees of electric cooperatives, municipal electric utilities and contractors who participate in the TEC Loss Control program. Photos will be judged by popular vote at the 2024 Loss Control Conference.

Theme: View From the Top (of a pole)

Entry deadline: Feb. 15

Photo limit: Three per person

How to enter: Email high-resolution digital images to tknipstein@texas-ec.org.

In Remembrance

Bobby Ray Jolly Jr., the meter shop foreman and a 29-year employee of Lyntegar EC, died Sept. 30. Jolly, a longtime volunteer emergency medical technician for Lynn County, is survived by his wife, daughters and a stepson. He was 52.

Jacob "Jake" Waldrip, who worked more than 18 years at Grayson-Collin EC as a lineworker and staking engineer, died Oct. 1. Waldrip, who is survived by his wife and three children, was 43.

Allen Boehme, system operator and an employee at Medina EC since 1977, died Oct. 18. Boehme, who is survived by his wife, sons and extended family, was 65.

STAFF

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

Danny Williams, Loss Control Manager
(512) 413-0509, dwilliams@texas-ec.org

Curtis Whitt, CLCP, LC Assistant Manager
(512) 694-0232, cwhitt@texas-ec.org

Wesley Caldwell, LC Regional Supervisor
(512) 942-9351, wcaldwell@texas-ec.org

Phillip Henricks, CLCP, LC Regional Supervisor
(806) 438-0067, phenricks@texas-ec.org

Tami Knipstein, LC Program Coordinator
(512) 486-6271, tknipstein@texas-ec.org

Kyle Casey, Loss Control Specialist
(325) 370-5240, kcasey@texas-ec.org

Jay Esquivel, Loss Control Specialist
(737) 738-4474, jesquivel@texas-ec.org

Mike Finnell, Loss Control Specialist
(512) 942-9673, mfinnell@texas-ec.org

Chad McNeely, CLCP, Loss Control Specialist
(512) 948-8804, cmcneely@texas-ec.org

David Nance, CLCP, Loss Control Specialist
(512) 804-6748, dnance@texas-ec.org

Devery Rosenquist, Loss Control Specialist
(325) 668-8626, drosenquist@texas-ec.org

Ronnie Wiggins, CLCP, Loss Control Specialist
(512) 709-1177, rwiggins@texas-ec.org

Tom Widlowski, Editor
(512) 486-6246, twidlowski@texas-ec.org