



news & views

from Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A trip of a lifetime:

Layla Atherton represents LEC on the 2026 Youth Tour

FOR Lincoln Electric Cooperative Youth Tour winner Layla Atherton, traveling to Washington, D.C., wasn't just a vacation — it was an unforgettable experience that opened her eyes to our nation's history, government and the cooperative difference.

"To the students considering this trip, it is honestly one of the best opportunities I've ever had," Layla said. "There are a few steps like the application and interview process, but it's nothing compared to the experience of a lifetime. Living in rural Montana, we don't always have the same opportunities as students in larger cities. This trip that Lincoln Electric sponsors is truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and I would highly recommend it."

The adventure began on Saturday, June 13, when Layla traveled to Great Falls to meet the other Montana delegates participating in the Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association (MECA) Youth Tour. After getting acquainted and learning what to expect from the week ahead, the group was ready for their journey.

On Sunday, the Montana delegation flew to Washington, D.C., where they met students from electric cooperatives across the country. After dinner, they learned more about electric cooperatives, how they serve their communities and what the exciting week ahead would include.



Exploring the Capital

The schedule was packed from the very beginning.

On Monday, the group visited some of America's most iconic landmarks, including the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial. They also

toured Arlington National Cemetery, visited the new World Museum, and enjoyed a Major League Baseball game between the Washington Nationals and the Kansas City Royals.

"The cemetery was so beautiful and huge," Layla recalled. "A few of us got lost, but we found our way back and had a great time."

Tuesday included visits to even more historic sites, including the Smithsonian Museums, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, the Washington Monument, the Reflecting Pool, the Air Force Memorial and the Museum of Illusions.

"There were so many photo opportunities. We had so much fun."

Learning about government

One of the highlights of the week came on Wednesday, when the Montana delegates met with Montana's congressional delegation to discuss issues affecting their communities.

Layla took the opportunity to ask about one of today's fastest-growing technologies.

"I asked what they were doing about artificial intelligence, how they planned to use it and where they saw it heading."

The group also toured the U.S. Capitol, walked through the underground tunnels connecting congressional buildings and observed congressional meetings in session. That evening, they enjoyed a Potomac River dinner cruise

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FINANCIAL OVERVIEW	YEAR TO DATE JULY 2026	YEAR TO DATE JULY 2025
KWh SALES	77,854,703	80,939,257
REVENUE	\$9,530,798	\$9,098,284
COST OF POWER	\$3,907,585	\$3,883,256
OPERATING EXPENSE	\$3,726,826	\$3,475,334
MARGINS	\$791,151	\$632,387
NUMBER OF MEMBERS	5,412	5,339
NUMBER OF METERS	6,901	6,769
MILES OF LINE	1,045	1,021
TOTAL UTILITY PLANT	\$43,413,326	\$42,449,662
MEMBER EQUITY	\$17,184,472	\$16,113,211
JULY AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL USE (KWH)	945	900
JULY AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL BILLING	\$140.63	\$128.07

KEY REMINDERS

- Youth Tour 2027 Applications are online at lincolnelectric.coop under the Community tab. Applications and supporting documents must be submitted by end-of-day on November 19.
- Lincoln Electric's "Night at the Games" will take place on Thursday, October 15 at the Lions Football Game and Thursday, October 22 at the Lions Volleyball Game. Both evenings will also feature Senior Night, celebrating our outstanding senior athletes. As a special thank you, Lincoln Electric will be handing out food tickets for a free hotdog or hamburger from the LCHS Boosters concession stand. Come out, enjoy the games and cheer on the Lions!
- Interested in learning more about how LEC provides programs and services to help its members? Visit our website at lincolnelectric.coop or call our office to speak with an LEC representative.

BUSINESS AND BOARDROOM BRIEFS

The regular meeting of the board of trustees was conducted on August 17. A quorum of trustees was present, and the board took the following actions:

- Approved Rick Peterson and Dave Purdy to attend the NRECA Region 9 Meeting.
- Approved Tina Taurman and Myra Appel to attend the PNGC Annual Meeting.
- Approved travel for any trustee to attend the MECA pre-education course on 9/29/2026 and anyone not on a MECA committee to attend the MECA Annual Meeting.

FIND AND FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM under Lincoln Electric Cooperative, to stay up to date on breaking news, LEC events, promotions and local news.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE at www.lincolnelectric.coop for information on member services, billing, outages and safety, job postings, energy efficiency, community and general cooperative updates.

LINCOLN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

CONTACT

1-406-889-3301
info@lincolnelectric.coop
www.lincolnelectric.coop
 Secure Payments: 1-833-890-6258

ALWAYS REPORT OUTAGES TO:
 1-406-889-3301

OFFICE

312 Osloski Road
 PO BOX 628
 Eureka, Montana 59917

OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday
 7:00 AM - 5:30 PM

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Rick Peterson
 President

Joel Graves
 Vice President

Sandi Mason
 Secretary-Treasurer

Myra Appel
Larry Benson
Rodney Kane
David Purdy
Tina Taurman

Matt Quinn
 General Manager

Lincoln Electric's Board of Trustees holds regular monthly meetings at the boardroom in the cooperative office. These are typically scheduled on the third Monday of each month at 4 p.m. Members are encouraged to attend. If you have any items of interest, please contact the general manager prior to the meeting.

NEXT MEETING DATE:
MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2026



**Lincoln Electric
 Cooperative, Inc.**

HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?

SEND YOUR IDEAS TO:
memberservices@lincolnelectric.coop

Interested in serving as a Lincoln Electric trustee?

Nomination petitions must be submitted by December 10

LINCOLN Electric Cooperative is governed by an eight-member Board of Trustees made up of members who live within our service area. Trustees represent the interests of our members and help guide the cooperative's long-term direction, priorities and investments.

With trustee terms expiring at the 2027 Annual Meeting, Lincoln Electric is seeking members interested in running for the Board.

Why Serve?

Trustees bring different experiences, skills and perspectives to the boardroom. You don't need to be an expert in electricity or the utility industry. What matters most is a commitment to our members, our communities and the future of Lincoln Electric.

While LEC employees manage the cooperative's day-to-day operations, the Board provides oversight and makes important decisions involving:

- Cooperative goals and long-term direction
- Budgets and financial oversight
- Capital investments and system improvements
- New technologies and energy resources
- Community and charitable programs
- Economic development opportunities

As the electric utility industry continues to change, strong local leadership helps ensure Lincoln Electric continues providing safe, reliable and affordable electricity while making decisions that reflect the needs of our members.

How to Become a Candidate

Lincoln Electric's eight trustees each serve three-year terms, with trustee elections held annually by mail-in ballot leading up to the Annual Meeting.

To become a candidate, you must be nominated by petition and receive signatures from at least five current Lincoln Electric members from your district.

Nomination petitions are available at lincolnelectric.coop, at the LEC office at 312 Osloski Road in Eureka, or by emailing info@lincolnelectric.coop.

Completed petitions must be received by Lincoln Electric no later than noon on Thursday, December 10.

Trustees receive specialized training to help them understand the electric utility industry, cooperative business model, governance responsibilities and issues affecting the communities we serve.

SEEKING MEMBERS INTERESTED IN SERVING ON THE LEC BOARD

CALL TO ACTION

For a nomination packet or more information, please visit lincolnelectric.coop, stop by the office at 312 Osloski Road, Eureka, or email memberservices@lincolnelectric.coop.

Nomination petitions are due by noon December 10.

If you're interested in serving your community and helping shape the future of your cooperative, we encourage you to consider running for the Lincoln Electric Board of Trustees.

Candidate Requirements

Thinking about running? Here's what you need to know:

A trustee candidate must be a current Lincoln Electric Cooperative member receiving electric service and have their primary residence and associated electric service within the district they seek to represent.

Candidates must submit a nomination petition containing signatures from at least five valid LEC members within their district. Candidates are encouraged to obtain additional signatures in case an endorsement cannot be verified as a valid membership.

The candidate must also sign the petition acknowledging the responsibilities of the trustee position and their willingness to serve if elected.

Candidate Bio & Photo

Candidates may submit a bio of no more than 200 words and a digital photograph for inclusion in LEC's trustee election communications.

The bio and photo must be submitted by the petition deadline to be included. Candidate bios will be published as submitted and will not be edited or proofread by LEC.

The deadline is noon Thursday, December 10. Completed petitions, along with an optional candidate bio and photograph, must be received by Lincoln Electric by the deadline.

RM

LION POWER!



Lincoln Electric
Cooperative, Inc.

LEC Night at the Games is Oct. 15, 22

LINCOLN Electric Cooperative is excited to host another "Night at the Games" at Lincoln County High School! Join us for two evenings of Lions athletics as we support our local student-athletes and celebrate Senior Night.

• **Thursday, October 15**

Lions Football vs. Cut Bank

• **Thursday, October 22**

Lions Volleyball vs. Thompson Falls

While you're at the games, be sure to stop by the Lincoln Electric Co-op booth. Our team will be there to visit with members, answer questions and share information about your cooperative's programs and services.

And come hungry! Lincoln Electric members and their families who stop by our booth can pick up a ticket for a free hot dog or hamburger and a drink from the LCHS Boosters concession stand.

Come enjoy the games, support our Lions, and spend some time with your cooperative and community.

We look forward to seeing you at the games! 



YOUTH TOUR

YOUTH TOUR 2027
FREE! All Expenses Paid Week Long Trip to Washington D.C.!

Date: June 17-24, 2027

Eligibility: Must be a Sophomore or Junior in the 2026-2027 school year who's parents are members of Lincoln Electric Coop.

Application Deadline: Thursday
November 19, 2026

APPLICATION IS ONLINE AT
WWW.LINCOLNELECTRIC.COOP,
OR CALL 406-889-3301

TRAVEL TO D.C.

Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.

LAYLA

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alongside Youth Tour delegates from Georgia and Kansas.

History Comes Alive

On Thursday, the group traveled to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, where they explored the famous Civil War battlefield, viewed the cannons, toured the museum and saw historic buildings that still bear the scars of the battle.

Friday included a visit to Mount Vernon, George Washington's historic estate, where the delegates toured the mansion grounds, gardens and farm. They also visited the National Museum of the Marine Corps.

That evening marked the closing celebration of the Youth Tour.

"We got to spend time with delegates from all over the country. We had a big dinner and a dance, and everyone was picking the music. We danced and had so much fun," Layla said.

A Powerful Ending

Before heading home on Saturday, the Montana delegation made two final stops: the International Spy Museum and the United States Holocaust

Memorial Museum.

At the Spy Museum, students were challenged with solving puzzles and learning real espionage techniques.

"We received our own spy identity cards and learned about real spies. I discovered I'm pretty good at solving puzzles and reading people's body language," Layla said.

The final visit to the Holocaust Memorial Museum left a lasting impression.

"It was a powerful experience I'll never forget," Layla said.

Looking back on the week, Layla is incredibly grateful for the opportunity.

"I want to thank Lincoln Electric Cooperative and MECA for sponsoring my trip to Washington, D.C. I learned so much about our cooperative, our government and our country's history. I would highly recommend this trip to any high school student. It's an amazing experience," she said.

Lincoln Electric Cooperative is proud to sponsor local students through the Youth Tour program each year. This unforgettable experience helps develop future leaders while giving students the opportunity to experience our nation's capital, meet elected officials and build lifelong friendships with students from across the United States. 