

News Release



Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas

Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas linemen electrify additional Guatemalan villages

Little Rock, Ark. — March 1, 2018 — Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas linemen recently completed a three-week mission to electrify two remote Guatemalan villages near the Mexican border resulting in approximately 105 villagers having electricity for the first time.

During the mission, the electric cooperative linemen from Arkansas worked with EMRE, a municipal electric utility, to expand service to rural areas including Las Tortugas and San Jorge communities. Their efforts included the construction of approximately 7.5 miles of power lines in jungle-like conditions. This span will ultimately provide power to hundreds of other rural Guatemalans.

The crew members were presented with plaques at a celebration event in Las Tortugas to commemorate the delivery of electricity to the village.

Linemen and their respective cooperatives that participated in the project included: Kenneth Byrd and Zac Pettis with Arkansas Valley Electric of Ozark; Terry Harkey with Craighead Electric of Jonesboro; Shawn Hammonds, Zack Lewis and Chris Wiles with First Electric Cooperative of Jacksonville; Keith Uselton with Mississippi County Electric of Blytheville; Joey Burk and Billy Smart with North Arkansas Electric of Salem; Richard Freeland with Ouachita Electric of Camden; Doug Evans and Jamie Reeves with Petit Jean Electric of Clinton; Kyle Thomason and Brandon Winer with Southwest Arkansas REA of Texarkana; Daniel Baker with Woodruff Electric of Forrest City; and Kevin Riddle with Arkansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. of Little Rock.

NRECA International coordinated the project.

Combined with previous projects Arkansas electric cooperative linemen have assisted in providing electric service to more than 1,200 rural Guatemala and Bolivian residents that otherwise would not have service.

The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas comprise 17 electric distribution cooperatives; Arkansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. (AECI), a Little Rock-based cooperative that provides services to the distribution cooperatives; and Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corp. (AECC), a generation and transmission cooperative. The distribution cooperatives provide electricity to approximately 500,000 homes, farms and businesses in Arkansas and surrounding states.

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