



NEWS RELEASE

MASSACHUSETTS MUNICIPAL WHOLESALE ELECTRIC COMPANY

Contact: Kate Roy, Director of Communications & External Affairs
(413) 308-1351
kroy@mmwec.org

MMWEC Supports Safety Program for Randall Boys & Girls Club Campers

Ludlow, MA – July 21, 2021- Campers at the Randall Boys & Girls Club in Ludlow now have a leg up on the ins and outs of electrical safety, thanks to an educational program taught by safety expert Ray Gouley from the R.F. Gouley Company. The program is sponsored by the Ludlow-based Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC).

This year, 100 children aged three to 13 from the towns of Ludlow, Chicopee, Holyoke, Huntington, Indian Orchard, Longmeadow, Springfield, Three Rivers, Thorndike, and Wilbraham participated in the program. MMWEC has sponsored the workshop for more than 13 years and also holds a similar electrical and gas pipeline safety presentation with the Ludlow Senior Center annually. This year's safety presentations were adapted to comply with COVID standards. Instead of indoor lessons, all of the safety sessions were held outdoors so Gouley and the campers could socially distance.

Gouley begins the safety presentations by playing campers an interactive instructional video where they can participate with cartoon characters to identify nine electricity-related dangers such as flying kites near a power line or overloading electrical outlets. After the video portion, Gouley shows the campers props from actual electrical accidents, such as a super soaker water gun that melted after it was aimed at a power line, and shares real life stories of electrical incidents. To reinforce the importance of electric safety practices, Gouley finishes the presentation by quizzing campers against one another on the safety knowledge they learned and presents awards for correct answers.

The presentations are catered for different age groups. Preschoolers, the youngest age group, are taught a simple phrase "Stop, Think, and Stay Away" to use in response to electrical emergencies. They are also introduced to a cartoon character called "Mr. Ouch" who identifies where the electric danger is in certain situations. Older campers are given more detailed instructions of what to do in the event of an electrical accident or emergency, such as remaining three poles away from a downed wire or how and when to call 911.

The safety presentations concluded with a visit from employees from the South Hadley Electric Light Department (SHELD). Peter Jesionowski, working foreman, and Curtis Hoyer, lineworker apprentice, brought SHELD's bucket truck to the Boys and Girls Club so preschoolers could see the truck in action. Jesionowski and Hoyer demonstrated to the campers how the bucket truck works and how they use the truck to fix power lines in the event of electrical accidents and power outages.

Randall Boys & Girls Club President and CEO Mechilia Salazar said the safety presentations leave a lasting impression on the campers, including her own son.

"The best indicator that a lesson worked is when you hear a child incorporate a part of a lesson hours or even days later into a real life situation," Salazar said. "With all the thunderstorms we've been having, I was reminded of this when I was

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preparing my seven year old son for bed one night. As soon as he saw lightning out of our window, he started repeating some of the safety tips that he had learned from safety presentations at the Boys and Girls Club.”

MMWEC CEO Ron DeCurzio said this year’s presentations were especially timely since more children and adults are staying home and using more electricity due to the pandemic.

“Educating children of all ages about electrical safety is crucial to help avoid potentially dangerous situations,” DeCurzio said. “MMWEC is proud to sponsor such a vital program for the youth of Ludlow and the surrounding communities.”

MMWEC is a non-profit, public corporation and political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts created by an Act of the General Assembly in 1975 and authorized to issue debt to finance a wide range of energy facilities. MMWEC provides a variety of power supply, financial, risk management and other services to the state’s consumer-owned, municipal utilities.

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