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MMWEC Brings Electrical Safety Program to Ludlow Boys and Girls Club

Ludlow, Mass. -- Children participating in summer camp programs at the Randall Boys and Girls Club in Ludlow this year are learning how to be safe around electricity. Ludlow-based Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC) sponsored a three-day safety education program, conducted by safety expert Ray Gouley, at the Boys and Girls Club.

Approximately 200 children, ages 3 to 14, participated in this year's program, which has been brought to the club each summer for the past nine years. MMWEC also has presented this electrical safety program in Ludlow public schools and at the Ludlow Senior Center.

Gouley, of the R.F. Gouley Company, presents an age-appropriate program to each group of children. His program aims to keep kids safe around outlets, cords, electrical appliances, power lines, and other everyday electrical hazards.

Gouley brought various items to show the children how dangerous electricity can be, from a baseball bat struck by lightning to a water gun that sustained burn damage after a child used it to spray a power line.

Children also learned how to detect a natural gas leak, and smelled "scratch and sniff" cards emitting a rotten egg odor similar to the smell of natural gas. In addition, they learned about storm safety, such as how to keep themselves safe from lightning, and how they should stay away from downed power lines.

Gouley kept children engaged through cartoon videos on electric safety, followed by interactive games with small prizes so kids could test their knowledge.

The presentations are updated regularly to reflect new electric and natural gas technologies and the increased use of electronics by children today.

Campers received educational booklets to take home and share with their parents at the program's conclusion.

Gouley said it's important to teach kids about electrical safety starting at a young age.

"We're planting the seeds for safety with the children," he said. "We're helping the older children make good choices by giving them the foresight on what to do to be safe."

Ronald C. DeCurzio, MMWEC's chief executive officer, said feedback from the program has been extremely positive.

"The children and staff look forward to this engaging, informative program every year," DeCurzio said. "MMWEC is proud to serve the community in such a meaningful way."

Jennifer Aldworth, president and CEO of the Randall Boys and Girls Club, said the children retain what Gouley has taught them.

"He does a great job explaining the cautions children should take with electricity, and does it at their developmental level," she said.

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