



Rio Grande Electric Cooperative, Inc.

UP DATE



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A Message From The General Manager/CEO

By Daniel G. Laws

“What Is A ‘Perfect Storm’?”

“Perfect” and “storm” would seem to be uncomfortable companions in any sentence. In fact, one might say they would be the ideal example to use when explaining the term oxymoron. Nevertheless, the words have been used in a movie by the same name and now we are using them as the theme for our annual report to the membership. With sterling endorsements like that, it must really mean something when these two words are used in concert.

“Perfect” is used to describe something that is so right, that one could not tell it apart from the original. “Perfect” describes something so close to the standard, that it casts exactly the same shadow. Needless to say, the word “perfect” has a very positive connotation. “Storm”, on the other hand, is synonymous with catastrophe, calamity and even chaos. A storm is the dark side of nature’s personality, the side we wish we had never seen. It is the experience so terrible it is never forgotten, a recollection that forces us to relive an event. Unlike “perfect”, “storm” has very negative connotation.

So what is a “Perfect Storm”, then? Presumably, it is a storm that comes so close in every respect to our darkest expectations that the two are inseparable. A storm so complete in its destructive impact that it can only be described as being faultless in its negative result. With that understanding, there is most certainly multiplied thousands living in east Texas, as well as the Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama Gulf Coast region, who would describe hurricanes Katrina and Rita as “Perfect Storms”.

There was the obvious destruction at ground zero. I don’t imagine any of us will ever forget the devastation that virtually took away lives while leaving its victims breathing. All of their history, their homes, their memories and their jobs were gone in an instant, leaving them with just enough life to continue to suffer. But the devastation didn’t stop there. It found its way into America’s economy, continuing its destruction. These two “Perfect Storms” pushed energy prices to new all time highs, creating deficits that are still being paid more than six months later.

I feel compelled to say that, in the aftermath of the “Perfect Storms”, there is a force that is much more perfect in its creation than they were in their destruction. It is the love of God being poured through human hearts to human hearts, as an entire region is rebuilt one life at a time. Troublesome times will come our way, that is inescapable, but it’s good to know there is One who sees and cares. Please continue to pray for those who are still putting their lives back together. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is predicting that the 2006 hurricane season will be as bad as, or worse than, last year’s.

The pages that follow will give you a sense of what challenges we faced in 2005. You will catch a glimpse of the talent and skills possessed by those who are on the front line dealing with matters that directly impact you each and every day. I hope our theme “Perfect Storm” helps you understand why there has been such a drastic increase in your energy costs over the last several months. I can assure you, we are doing everything that can be done to hold costs down. Enjoy the pages that follow.