

CROCKETT ENERGY-SAVING INITIATIVES BRING SURPRISE CHECKS FROM GIBSON ELECTRIC



Above: Crockett County Director of Schools P. A. Pratt receives notification from Gibson Electric Membership Corporation Key Accounts Representative Cynthia McClure that the school district will be receiving more than \$32,600 from the TVA EnergyRight program for its initiative to replace school incandescent lighting with new LED illumination. (Photo by Crystal Burns)

By Ron Barry

When the phone rings in P. A. Pratt's office, the Crockett County Director of Schools often takes a deep breath before he picks up the receiver, steadying himself for the next problem he's going to be asked to solve.

But every once in a while...

Pratt found out earlier this week from Gibson Electric Membership Corporation that, because of Crockett's Board of Education initiative to replace old incandescent lighting in its school facilities with more energy-efficient LED illumination, the School District would be receiving a series of checks from the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) incentive programs.

The move to LED lighting was a decision by the Board to invest \$763,000 to replace the old lighting, for two major reasons: (1) the lights would be brighter and would enhance the learning environment for the students; and (2) it would result in an estimated \$45,000 saving per year in electricity costs. Over the life expectancy of the LED lighting, the energy-cost savings would basically pay for the project.

"First, it was necessary to get better lighting in the school buildings," Pratt said of the project. "The energy-savings part was obviously an incentive to go ahead and do it now. And we knew because it was an energy-saving initiative, we might be rewarded with some kind of reimbursement. I was expecting something very small, honestly, like a couple of thousand dollars."

But when Cynthia McClure, Gibson Electric's Key Accounts Representative contacted him this week, Pratt finally received that increasingly rare "good news" phone call.

"It wasn't going to be just a couple of thousand dollars," he said, "but around \$32,000! And with the possibility of some more by applying for an additional school grant or two. Needless to say, I was very pleasantly surprised, and we're exceedingly grateful that Gibson Electric contacted us and delivered the money."

The Crockett County Board received \$12,191.03 for its lighting improvements at the high school; \$6,722.02 for the middle school; \$4,915.95 for Friendship Elementary; \$2,608.64 for Gadsden Elementary; \$4,947.28 for Maury City Elementary; and \$1,243.90 for the high school athletic building. That totals to \$32,628.83.

The TVA EnergyRight program is designed to help businesses save money and energy by offering financial incentives on qualifying equipment purchases, working in cooperation with local power companies.

Gibson Electric Membership Corporation is an electric cooperative owned by its members, serving more than 39,000 customers and over 3,500 miles of line in eight west Tennessee counties (Crockett, Dyer, Gibson, Haywood, Lake, Lauderdale, Obion and Madison) and four west Kentucky counties (Carlisle, Fulton, Graves and Hickman).