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Power co-ops eyed as TESDA-accredited training centers for line workers

To address the need for more skilled line workers and barangay electricians in the countryside, the National Electrification Administration (NEA) is pushing for the accreditation of electric cooperatives (ECs) as training and assessment centers by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA).

The NEA, through its NEA-EC Training Institute (NETI), identified seven ECs for accreditation by TESDA as assessment and training centers in carrying out lineman training programs.

These ECs are the Benguet Electric Cooperative, Inc. (BENECO), Cagayan I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CAGELCO I), Camarines Sur II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CASURECO II), Nueva Vizcaya Electric Cooperative (NUVELCO), Pampanga I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (PELCO I), South Cotabato II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SOCOTECO II), and Zamboanga del Sur I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ZAMSURECO I).

Nora Rivera, department manager of NETI, said the TESDA accreditation of the ECs aims to ensure compliance with the standards prescribed under the promulgated training regulations of Electric Power Distribution (EPD) Line Construction NC II and EPD Operation and Maintenance NC III and IV.

"This is in consonance with NEA's pursuit of offering quality and responsive programs for ECs and capacitating a pool of certified line workers and trainers," Rivera said.

NEA Administrator Edgardo Masongsong said this will also help address and fulfill the demand for qualified electricity distribution workers, especially during calamities.

"The establishment of TESDA-accredited training centers is part of our ongoing efforts to ensure that our line workers in the countryside are fully equipped with skills and knowledge," Masongsong said.

In 2017, the NEA and TESDA signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for the provision of training programs for line workers and barangay electricians, especially in rural communities.

Under the MOU, TESDA will assist in the review of curriculum on Electric Power Distribution Line Construction NC II; conduct competency assessment to the graduates and issue a national certificate to the passers; and assist in the capability of trainers and assessors.

The NEA, meanwhile, will conduct the training programs for Lineman NC II and Electrical Installation and Maintenance NC II in coordination with the ECs; and identify qualified applicants who will undergo the competency assessment and certification program.

To optimize the delivery of these training programs, TESDA sought the assistance of NEA for the identification of ECs that will serve as training and assessment centers in accordance with TESDA's operating procedures.

Presently, there are five ECs that are TESDA-accredited assessment centers, namely Agusan del Norte Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ANEKO), Cagayan II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CAGELCO II), Ilocos Sur Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ISECO), Surigao del Sur I Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SURSECO I), and Zambales II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ZAMECO II). ###

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