

A Safety Note from Your Cooperative



No. 05-2018

A Partnership in Safe Power

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Try this: Count all the things you touch from the moment you get out of bed until you leave the house in the morning that are powered by electricity. It would start with your alarm clock or your cell phone's alarm, then the light for your bedroom as you then stumbled into the bathroom (another light), to use your electric toothbrush, etc. Although we might not know the number, it quickly shows us why having power to our homes and businesses is so important.

In May, we recognize the safety of this power through National Electrical Safety Month to remind our members and the public of the importance to always respect electricity. For when we don't, it can be unforgiving; it can be deadly.

Yet, we can't do it alone. We need your help in keeping electricity safe, from the lines overhead to the outlet in your kitchen. Here are key actions YOU can take to be a partner in safe power with us.

- Look for overhead power lines on your property and remind everyone to stay clear of them. And never forget that downed power lines are dangerous. Never approach a downed line for they can energize the ground. Instead, notify your co-op immediately.
- Don't forget about underground lines too; always call 811 to get a locate. Digging can be deadly and, besides, it's the law!
- Use Tamper Resistant Receptacles for a permanent solution to outlet covers; they have built in shutters to prevent foreign objects from being inserted into the outlet. "A study by Temple University found that 100% of all 2-4 year olds were able to remove one type of plastic outlet cap within 10 seconds." (cited from ESFI.org)
- Install Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs) to prevent electrocution; know how to properly test them. Yet, inside your home is not the only place. Docks and boats can be sources of electricity due to faulty wiring or damaged cords. It energizes the surrounding water and you can become a victim of electric shock drowning. Make sure these areas use GFCIs.
- If you need to use a portable generator, make sure it has a transfer switch so backfeed does not harm others working on the line.
- Talk to your family members about electrical safety because if we have never told them, then how do they know. Contact your co-op for information appropriate to their age.
- Never use an extension cord as permanent wiring. If you need to use a cord on a temporary basis, inspect and use it properly.
- Know where your service panel is so you can properly shut down the power when working on electrical items in your home, such as installing a ceiling fan, etc. And, realize you may have more than one panel in your home or on your property.
- Plan ahead if you will be residing your home and your meter is located on your house. Never pull a meter yourself. Call the co-op to have it removed properly.

So, as we join together to keep electricity safe, we thank you. For this is a partnership for life - your life and mine and everyone else. Stay safe!