

## May is Electrical Safety Month

**T**here are plenty of different ways to practice electrical safety. If you are in an accident involving electrical equipment, practicing electrical safety means staying inside your vehicle unless you are in other imminent danger and making sure others stay away from your car as well. At least until utility crews can make the scene safe.

At home, on an average day, electrical safety can mean making sure you don't have outlets overloaded, unused outlets have covers on them to keep curious little fingers out, and you call Diggers Hotline before you start any projects that include digging.

During summer storms, practicing electrical safety means having items on hand to sustain you and your family during an extended outage, and knowing to stay away from downed powerlines and other broken equipment. With summer on the horizon, we wanted to take a moment to remind you of some of the more important storm safety tips. The first being, have our phone number (715-232-6240) saved in your cell phone to make calling in an outage less stressful. You can also report your outage through SmartHub if you use our online account management tool.

### When a storm hits

When stormy winds blow, follow these weather-related reminders from FEMA and the Red Cross:

- Never seek shelter under an isolated tree, tower or utility pole, since lightning tends to strike tall objects.
- Immediately vacate elevated areas such as hills and mountain ridges and peaks.
- Get away from ponds, lakes and other bodies of water.
- Stay away from objects that conduct electricity, including wires and fences (and golf clubs!). (Approximately 5 percent of annual lightning deaths and injuries in the United States happen on golf courses, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.)
- Never lie flat on the ground.
- Pick a safe place in your home, away from windows and doors, for family members to gather during a thunderstorm.
- Know the difference between a watch and a warning for extreme weather such as a tornado or severe thunderstorm.

A watch means that the weather is possible in and near the area. A warning means that severe weather has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar. A warning is more serious than a watch and means that there is imminent danger to life and property.

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## WHAT TO LOOK FOR AFTER A STORM

When the skies clear and the birds sing, know that the storm's fury could have created **electrical hazards that you may or may not be able to see**. Conditions in which stray electricity could energize the area, a person or objects include:

### DOWNED POWER LINES

- On the ground.
- Under storm debris.
- Draped over or touching a metal fence.
- Covered by standing water.
- Across or by the road.
- Hidden in tree branches.

### OTHER POSSIBLE DAMAGE

- Drooping or sagging lines (never try to move one).
- Split or broken utility poles.
- Damage to a padmount transformer (green box).
- Lightning strike to a substation transformer.
- Damaged or unstable guy wires.

**NEVER GO NEAR** downed power lines or other damaged electrical equipment to assess damage or clean up the area. **STAY AWAY** and call 9-1-1 to report damage.

Power lines and other electrical equipment **do not have to be sparking, arcing (giving off a flame) or on fire to be energized**.



### March 2021 Board Meeting Highlights



#### Monthly Reports:

Operations reported on some of the things the crews have found during our line inspections. Correcting these issues now prevents outages in the future. 110 poles have been changed out in the Downsview area. We've had 23 requests for new service so far this year with 4

installed. Two apprentice linemen have started with the Cooperative this spring to prepare for future retirements on our crews. Bids were reviewed and accepted for our five 2021 work plan projects.

IT and Administration discussed recent technology replacements at the Cooperative and the possible use of a different cellular network for phone communications.

February financials showed operating revenue for the month about 3% over budget due to a cold February. Expenses were 2% under budget for the month. This resulted in margins better than budgeted.

The CEO/General Manager discussed adding an electric vehicle to the Cooperative fleet in the months ahead, planning for the June 19th, 2021 annual meeting, the upcoming NRECA legislative conference and gave an update on our COVID-19 response plans.

#### The following items were approved:

- Minutes of the February 2021 Board meeting
- Capital credit estate payout for deceased members.
- Audit committee report of all checks, ACH payments, wire transfers, credit card statements, and investments accounts.
- A power cost adjustment credit (PCA) for March
- Seating of the 2021 Nominating Committee
- 2021 work plan project contract
- 2020 RUS Form 7

#### Other Business:

Director Zwiefelhofer reported on Dairyland Power activities for the month.

Director Amble reported on the NRECA Annual Meeting and Directors Conference he attended virtually.

Reviewed the monthly report of new Cooperative members.

## May is Electrical Safety Month...continued

#### After the storm

Once the storm is over, follow these safety tips from Safe Electricity:

- Never step into a flooded basement or other standing water. The water could be covering electrical outlets, appliances or cords. Never touch (or use) electrical appliances, cords, wires or switches while you are wet or standing in water.
- After a storm, a downed power line could be covered by standing water or debris. Never go near a downed line and warn others to stay away. If you see a downed line, call 9-1-1, and a crew will be dispatched to de-energize the power and address the problem safely.
- The same safety know-how applies to a downed power line you might encounter while driving or after an auto accident. In either case, do not get out. Instead, call 9-1-1

to report the downed line (pull over first if you are driving). If you must exit your vehicle after an accident because of a fire or smoke, make a solid, clean jump out, landing with both feet together. Then make solid hops with your feet together, hopping as far away as you can.

- If your home has been damaged by a flood, turn off the power to your house if it is safe to do so. (Do not turn power off at the breaker box while standing in water or in damp conditions.)
- If the wiring, electrical system or appliances have been damaged by water, have your home inspected by an electrician; also, have appliances serviced by a qualified technician before using them.

For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



This newsletter is published for the members of Dunn Energy Cooperative. If you have questions or comments please give us a call. Visit the Energy Professionals at your local energy cooperative.



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