

Stay Safe Around Electricity



KITES AND MODEL PLANES

Never use metal strings or any metal when building a flying toy!!

Don't fly kites or planes anywhere near overhead power lines.

Don't fly them in wet weather or use strings that absorb moisture.

If your kite or plane gets caught in an overhead line, DON'T pull the string or try to climb up after it. Keep others away and call your local electric cooperative immediately!

TREE CLIMBERS

Stay away from trees near overhead lines. The wind or your own weight could make a limb touch a line and carry the electricity to you. Even the slightest touch could cause injury or death.

Never climb or stand under any tree in bad weather.

SAFE SIDE OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Don't climb on or near substations or utility poles. If any pad-mounted electric transformers (those green boxes that sit on the ground) appear to be opened or damaged, stay away and call your local electric cooperative immediately!

If you see a downed line, stay away from it and keep others away too. Call your local electric cooperative immediately!

HOME SAFE HOME

Don't touch anything electrical if your hands are wet or you are standing on a wet surface.

Never put anything except a plug into a wall outlet. Check with your local electric cooperative to see if they have outlet covers and place them over your outlets. This will help protect you and children.

Don't set radios or appliances where they could fall into the bathtub, shower, or sink.

Unplug small appliances such as toasters, coffeemakers, etc., when not in use.

Want some more electrical safety tips for the home?

A DEADLY RECEPTION

Careless installation of antennas is the number-one cause of home electrocution. Our advice is to have your television or CB antenna professionally installed.

If you feel you are qualified to install your antenna yourself, follow these simple tips:

Assume that electrical wires are dangerous.

Survey your work area and overhead clearance before you begin.

Never install an antenna close enough to wires that it can accidentally make contact.

Safety is our top priority. Don't put your life on the line.

GROUND RULES

Do you own a home computer, microwave oven, or videocassette recorder? These sensitive appliances can malfunction unless they are properly grounded and wired. Read your appliance owner's manuals carefully. They'll tell you about power supply requirements. Outlet testers, which cost less than \$10 at electronic equipment stores, can also be used to check your wiring and grounds. If you have questions, check with a qualified electrical contractor to make sure you've laid the groundwork for appliance efficiency and reliability.

FARM/HOME SAFETY TIPS

Replace 2-wire 115 volt outlets with new 3-wire grounded outlets. The third prong fitted into a grounded outlet completes the grounding system and protects you against current from defective appliances and equipment.

Inspect overloaded wiring. Additional wiring may be needed to handle increased electrical loads, whenever toasters or heaters are slow, lights dim or TV picture temporarily shrinks. Prevent overloads by using the right size and type fuse.

Stay out of a flooded basement while electricity is still on. Call your cooperative office. Disconnect utilities yourself only if the basement is dry. Also, turn off the gas. A light switch can ignite gas in a flooded basement.

Before using equipment, gas and wiring again have them checked by a qualified serviceman.

Replace extension cords with permanent wiring and outlets wherever you regularly plug in appliances or lamps. Extension cords provide temporary service, but develop tripping, fire, and shock hazards when used in one location for several months.

Label entrance panels. Show what use is made of each circuit. When a fuse blows or breaker opens the source of trouble can be quickly identified if labels tell which lights, outlets or equipment are on each circuit.

Use twist covers or plastic inserts. Keep little children from sticking a knife, fork or bobby pin into wall circuits. They protect curious children from being shocked, yet can be easily removed by an adult.

Fly kites away from power lines and trees. They should be constructed from wood and paper only and used with a dry, non-metallic string. Notify your utility if a kite is caught in the power lines.

USE A GROUND-FAULT CIRCUIT-INTERRUPTER WITH EVERY POWER TOOL

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) recommends the use of a ground-fault circuit-interrupter (GFCI) with every power tool to protect against electrical shock hazards. Each year, CPSC learns of approximately 20 to 30 electrocution deaths associated with power drills, saws, sanders, hedge trimmers, and other electric power tools. Most of these deaths could be prevented by the use of a GFCI.

A GFCI constantly monitors current flowing in a circuit to sense any loss of current. If the current flowing through two circuit conductors differs by a very small amount, the GFCI instantly interrupts the current flow to prevent a lethal amount of electricity from reaching the consumer. The consumer may feel a painful shock but will not be electrocuted. Grounding may provide some protection for power equipment, and double insulation of newer power tools presents lower risks of electrocution. However, GFCIs are the most effective means for protecting consumers against electrical shock hazards.

Since 1973, homes built according to the National Electrical Code have varying degrees of GFCI protection.

GFCIs were first required in outdoor circuits in 1973, bathrooms in 1975, garage wall outlets in 1978, some kitchen receptacles since 1987, and all receptacle outlets in unfinished basements and crawl spaces since 1990.

Three common types of GFCIs are available for home use: circuit breaker, receptacle and portable types. The circuit breaker type needs to be installed by an electrician. The receptacle type may be installed by knowledgeable consumers familiar with electrical wiring practices or have a licensed electrician install one. The portable GFCI needs no special knowledge to install. Just plug the portable GFCI into a wall receptacle and then plug the electric power tool into the GFCI. It is generally priced below \$30 and is available at hardware stores, building supply centers and electrical supply houses.

USE POWER TOOLS SAFELY

Power tools make life easier and are safe if you follow common sense rules:

Check tools for wear and corrosion. Clean them regularly and inspect grounding connections.

Use heavy-duty wiring with grounded three-pronged plugs for safety. Keep your workshop and storage space clean and dry. Sparks can ignite scraps, and solvents.

For More Information on Electrical Safety, please contact:

Covington Electric Cooperative, Inc.

P.O. Box 1357

Andalusia, AL 36420

334-222-4121

1-800-239-4121

