


Western Cooperative Electric NEWS



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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May 2008

Western Encourages Electric Safety Year-Round

May is National Electrical Safety Month – time to begin year-round electrical safety awareness efforts. Western Cooperative Electric is encouraging home owners to take an active roll in identifying hazards and in safeguarding their families from the dangers these hazards pose.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, faulty home electrical wiring is responsible for 40,000 fires a year and results in the loss of 350 lives, thousands of injuries from electrical shocks and burns and more than \$2 billion in personal property damage. It's estimated that more than 50 million homes and buildings have outdated or inadequate electrical wiring.

“Electrical hazards have a tendency to remain hidden until it's too late to avoid disaster. Don't let the small cost of prevention stand in the way of protecting your family and your property,” says Rick Schrant, Manager of Electrician and Wiring Services for Western. “There are many things you can inspect on your own to ensure electrical safety in your home.”

- Check electrical outlets for loose fitting plugs that can shock or be a fire hazard.
- Check the cords of the appliances in your home as well as the plugs and connectors.



Dennis Deines, Director of Member Services for Western, presents a safety demonstration at an area elementary school.

- Extension cords should be used on a temporary basis only because they are not intended for use as permanent household wiring.
- Check your electrical panel to make sure that the breakers and fuses are properly rated for the circuit that they are protecting.
- Check light bulbs and appliances to make sure the wattage matches

fixture requirements.

- If an appliance repeatedly blows a fuse, trips a circuit breaker or gives you an electrical shock, immediately unplug, repair or replace it.
- Check for or install ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs).
- Consider installing arc-fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs).
- Inspect all outdoor connections, appliances and tools for frayed cords, broken plugs and cracked or broken housings.

To help in identifying hazards and assist homeowners in safeguarding themselves against these hazards, Western Cooperative Electric offers safety demonstrations.

The demonstration ranges from high voltage safety to recognizing hazardous situations within the home. For information regarding these safety demonstrations contact Dennis Deines at 800-456-6720.

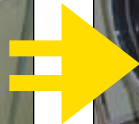
Annual Meeting 2008

Please join us on Wednesday, May 14th for Western's Annual Meeting at the cooperative headquarters (I-70 exit 128 and Hwy 283, 635 S. 13th Street, WaKeeney). Registration will begin at 5:30 p.m. and a catered meal will be served at 6 p.m. The business meeting is scheduled to begin at 7 p.m.

We hope to see you there!

Door Prizes • Free Meal • Ice Cream • Prize Drawings • Trustee Elections

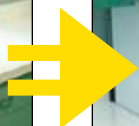
Energy Efficiency - Did You Know?



If you replaced your top-loading washing machine with a new front-loader, you'd save \$100 a year in energy, water, and detergent.



If you replaced your 75-watt incandescent light bulb with a 20 watt compact fluorescent, you'd get the same amount of light but save 3.5 pounds of CO₂ and \$0.15 per day.



If you replaced your 1972 refrigerator with a new energy efficient model, you'd cut CO₂ emissions by 1,100 pounds a year and save \$80 a year on your energy bill.

Source: Public Policy Research Education and Advocacy

Tamper Resistant Outlets Can Prevent Injuries

Approximately 2,400 children receive emergency room treatment every year for injuries caused by inserting objects — paper clips, pens, safety pins, screws, nails, wire, forks, keys, knives, coins, and more — into electrical receptacles. This equates to approximately seven children each day.

Injuries range from electric shock to burns; pediatric burns can be particularly serious. Roughly 89 percent of injuries occur in children less than six years old.

One way to prevent these tragedies involves installing tamper-resistant outlets that prevent foreign objects from touching electrically live components. A shutter mechanism prevents children from sticking things into receptacles, while a spring-loaded system lets electricity flow only when equal pressure is applied simultaneously to both shutters (such from an electrical plug).

The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) recommends retrofitting older homes with these safety devices. Installation of tamper-resistant outlets can be done for as little as \$2 each.