



Power Pointz

news from
Garland Light & Power Co.

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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Country roads, take me home-Safely!

You might think you're snug and safe when you're driving familiar back roads near your home. Traffic is sparse; it seems like you're the only one out there. Besides, you know every bump and dip of the road by heart.

Yet the country roads closest to your home are the most dangerous when it comes to traffic accidents. Statistics show that of the thousands of traffic deaths that occur each year in the United States, two thirds take place within 25 miles of the victim's home.

1. Road characteristics and conditions. Too often you can't see what's over the next hill or around the next bend. Country roads may have steep hills, sharp curves and blind intersections. They're apt to be narrower than town streets and highways, with loose gravel or no gravel at all. Bridges may be poor, ditches deep and guard rails and lights sparse or nonexistent.

In addition, country roads are more vulnerable to weather conditions and deterioration due to age.

2. Driving speeds. People drive faster on country roads than they do on city streets. According to traffic accident studies, for every 10 miles an hour over 50 that you drive, your chances of being killed in a crash double. High speeds make it harder to come to a stop in an emergency. And when a high-speed chase occurs, odds of serious injury are greater.

3. A variety of vehicles. As summer settles in, the weather is often unpredictable. After snowfalls the plows can be out clearing county and rural roads. Road graters may take up where snowplows left off. As farming season nears, tractors and other slow-moving vehicles often share the road with cars, pickups, trucks, etc.

4. Not wearing safety belts. You may say, "I'm just going to drive a few miles to another field or make a trip into town. What could happen?" The answer is a lot!

As we travel the same roads again and again, we tend to start overlooking the hazards. The shorter the trip, the less likely we are to take the simplest precaution of all: wearing seat belts.

5. It takes longer to get help. Sparser population and greater distances increase the odds of delay in medical treatment, or even discover of the accident itself. Thus someone with life-threatening injuries, who may have been saved with immediate first-aid may instead die.

Use extra care on rural roads. The moral is, use caution when driving in the country, whether you live in town or in a rural area. Pay attention to road conditions. And be especially alert for unexpected objects on the road, from slow-moving vehicles to animals. Be prepared to stop suddenly, should it be necessary.

And no more excuses about wearing your seatbelt. Make it a habit to buckle up every time, every trip. Be applying all those safety suggestions, you, too, can join in a chorus of, "country roads, take me home-safely!"

Clean Up Your Cords

If you were to pull your desk or TV cabinet out from the wall, you'd probably find a tangle of cords, cables, wires and plugs.

That tangle isn't so good for your electronics.

Besides creating a tripping hazard, a mess of electrical cords could lead to a fire if they're all plugged into the same overloaded power strip.

Here's how to untangle, for safety's sake.

1. Unplug everything, your computer, scanner, phone charger, TV, speakers, and printer. As you do that, you'll likely find cords that aren't attached to anything, maybe they once were. Weed out those unneeded cords.
2. Remove all extension cords. They are not designed for permanent use. And they're unnecessary if your plug or power strip is close to your devices.
3. Dust the remaining cords, vacuum the floor and wipe down the wall round the outlets.
4. If you have more than one power strip plugged into a single outlet, move the extras to other outlets.
5. Invest in a few inexpensive, Velcro cable ties. Bunch your remaining few cords together like a bouquet of flowers and wrap the tie around them. This will keep them neatly together.
6. Drill a hole into the back of your computer table or TV cabinet big enough for all of the cords to pass through. That will keep the cords together and off the floor.



Don't Shoot

Safety and power reliability are top priorities at Garland Light & Power. Each year, many power providers experience outages caused by people, either intentionally or inadvertently, shooting at important power equipment such as power poles, line insulator, transformers and distribution lines. Even worse than the outages, is the potential for bodily injury caused by shooting at live electrical equipment. Not only could the shooting result in injury or even death, it also presents a risk to line crews who must repair the damages and to member-owners who rely on the delivery of safe power for health care needs.

Shooting at power equipment is also vandalism and could result in fines and or jail sentences.

If you are hunting or target shooting, we ask that you please take caution not to shoot at any utility facilities. Further, if you notice this type of vandalism on cooperative lines, please contact our office.



Efficiency tips for shops and barns

There are many benefits to having an energy efficient outdoor shop or barn. Aside from saving energy, an efficient outdoor building can keep the environment around your structure healthy and safe; save money on your water bill; keep your animals happier and healthier; and save you from costly structural repairs.

Whether you are looking to build a new structure, or make changes to an existing structure, there are many ways you can make you outdoor shop or barn more energy efficient.

Follow these tips to achieve energy efficiency when building a new structure on your property:

- Location matters. If possible, carefully consider where you build your shop or barn. Consider drainage, sun exposure and how the building affects your neighbors.
- Start with a sustainable design plan. A sustainable design plan, according to the U.S. General Services Administration, includes the ability to use environmentally preferable products protect and conserve water; enhance indoor environmental quality; and optimize operational and maintenance practices.
- If hiring a contractor to help build the structure, look for companies who specialize in “green” buildings and energy efficient practices.
- Choose efficient building methods. Pole barns offer reliable shelter without costly excavation, concrete foundations or general site disruption.
- Follow these tips to make energy efficient upgrades to an existing structure:
 - Replace indoor lighting with energy efficient LED bulbs.
 - Ensure existing structure has adequate insulation levels.
 - Choose outdoor lighting designed to be energy
- efficient, and install motion detectors to reduce energy consumption when not in use.
- Plant trees around metal shed or barn. In colder climates, trees act as a windbreak, and in warmer climates, trees have a natural cooling effect reducing the temperatures by three to six degrees Fahrenheit.
- Consider adding ceiling fans to circulate air. Typically, there is a two degree temperature increase for every one-foot increase in ceiling height. A ceiling fan can help keep warm air close to the ground in the winter, and circulate fresher cooler air in the summer. Not only will this help with energy costs, it will also help keep the air in the building from becoming hot and stagnant, which will keep harmful bacteria from building and will keep insects at bay.



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