



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

*We are committed to the well-being of our members and employees to provide safe, reliable power and maintaining the company's financial strength.*

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# Power Pointz

August 2019

## Keep Your Home Safe From Electrical Fires

Your lights turn on in an instant and your plug slides into outlets without sparks or shocks. You can't see it, and typically don't think much about it. However, the electricity that we take for granted every day requires attention to potential hazards and taking steps to keep everyone safe.

SafeElectricity.org shares these tips to help keep your home safe from electrical problems and fires this winter and all year long:

- Have all work done by a qualified electrician.
- Get regular check-ups for older homes, which have older wiring and are often designed for fewer appliances and electronics. Have the electrical system checked every 5-10 years, depending on the age of your home. If your home is older than 30 years, make sure the wiring meets updated National Electrical Code standards.
- Watch for warning signs such as hot or discolored switch plates, cords or plugs; dimming or flickering lights; buzzing or sizzling sounds. If you smell a burning odor, check it out immediately and unplug electric items in that area.
- Immediately repair loose outlets, and discard or replace cracked, cut or broken insulation on electric cords.
- Keep cords out of walkways and high traffic areas so they don't get stepped on, damaged and cause a tripping hazard.
- Use extension cords temporarily, not as permanent wiring. Too many extension cords in one area creates a risk of overheating or overloading circuits.
- Never use cords or appliances that have exposed, damaged or faulty wiring. Have them repaired or replaced.
- Avoid using nails or staples to secure electric cords in place. When an electrical cord is punctured, it increases the likelihood of electric shock and fire.
- When you replace lightbulbs, ensure that you match the recommended wattage for your lamp or other light fixtures. Using an incorrect wattage increases the likelihood for electrical fires.
- If small children are present, install tamper resistant outlets or use outlet covers to reduce the risk of shocks and fire.
- Educate your loved ones on the dangers of electricity and provide guidance on care for your appliances and electronics.

Electrical safety can also reduce energy waste and save on the power bill. Turn off electronics and lights when they are not in use. This reduces heat as it lowers electricity use.



## Go green with big-ticket renovations

Going “green” means living in a way that’s friendly to the planet. But it also means keeping a little more “green” in your pocket by living more efficiently.

Even if finances are keeping you from making over your whole house so it’s more energy efficient, you can convert it a little bit at a time.

Next time you need to replace an appliance or other home product, consider an eco-friendly choice. Here are some suggestions for going green at home:

- When replacing major appliances, it pays to buy those that are Energy Star qualified. These are significantly more efficient than other models so they’re cheaper to operate.
- Buy appliances with “energy saver” options. New dishwashers and washing machines, for example, use less water than older models and let you choose load size and water temperature. Turn off your dishwasher’s heated cycle, and choose a clothes dryer that automatically shuts off when it senses that clothes are dry.
- Place the dishwasher and refrigerator on opposite sides of the kitchen so the heat from the dishwasher won’t force the refrigerator to work harder. Resist the temptation to store an extra freezer or refrigerator in the garage, where the extreme heat and cold will force it to work so hard it will send your energy bills soaring.
- When it’s time to replace windows, go with double-or-triple pane glass. These models cost more than your single-pane windows, but they prevent your heated or air-conditioned air from leaking outside, so you’ll save money on your energy bills.

## 10 Ways to Save Energy

1. Seal and insulate. Seal air leaks and properly insulate. These are always the first steps for reducing energy waste, saving up to 20 percent on heating and cooling bills and increasing home comfort.
2. Turn it off. Turn off all lights, appliances and electronics when not in use.
3. Use window coverings. Use your window shades, blinds and draperies to keep the warm sunshine out during the summer months.
4. Program it. A programmable thermostat, properly programmed, can save up to 10 percent on cooling and heating costs.
5. Buy ENERGY STAR products. Look for the ENERGY STAR label, the symbol of quality and energy efficiency, on a wide range of consumer products to save up to 30 percent on related electricity costs.
6. Use improved light bulbs. New and improved light bulbs reduce energy use from one-third to as much as 80 percent with today’s increasing number of energy-efficient halogen incandescents, compact fluorescents and LEDs.
7. Clean and change filters. Clean or change furnace filters regularly. A dirty filter will slow down air flow and make the system run longer to keep you cool. Schedule an air conditioning checkup to ensure it’s running efficiently.
8. Reduce water temperature. Reduce water heater temperature to 120 degrees to save energy and money on heating water. Turning down the water heater thermostat also can prevent scalding, which is great for households with young children.
9. Do laundry with cold water. Wash clothes in cold water to save an average of \$63 a year.
10. Control the flow. Use low-flow faucets and shower heads to save on water heating and water consumptions.

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## Give a wedding gift that promotes energy-efficiency

What gift could be nicer for a newlywed than one that helps a new couple save energy and money?

Here are a few ideas.

- \* Microwave ovens and slow cookers use less energy than the oven or stovetop to cook meals, and they often require less effort.
- \* Wrap up an electric blanket as a gift to help the new couple stay warm in the winter and reduce heating bills. Choose one with an automatic shutoff for safety.
- \* If your friends have asked for bathroom fixtures, choose a low-flow showerhead, which uses up to 50 percent less hot water than a regular model, often without reducing the quality of the shower.
- \* Give a programmable thermostat. It not only will help the new couple save money and energy, but newer models have tons of bells and whistles that can be fun to tinker with as the newlyweds start to automate their new home.



# 811

## Don't forget to call 811

Building a deck? Planting a tree? Installing a mailbox? 811 is the number you should call before you begin any digging project.

Every digging job requires a call, even small projects like planting trees or shrubs. If you hit an underground utility line while digging, you can harm yourself or those around you, disrupt services to an entire neighborhood and potentially be responsible for repair cost.

Remember 48 hours notice is required before you start to dig.

### Summer Hours

Garland Light & Power is changing to a 4/10 work week from April 29 to Oct 4

Hours of operation will be:  
7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday  
Closed on Fridays

Standby crews will be available from Friday through Sunday for outage situations by calling:

**754-2881**



## Line Rebuild

Garland Light & Power Lineman shown in this picture are moving a transformer from an old pole to a new pole on Road 10.

## Pole Top Rescue

At the safety meeting in June, our linemen practiced pole top and bucket rescue. The lineman in the picture is practicing rescuing a life-size dummy that has become injured. It is very important that our linemen re-certify once a year in the event someone gets hurt out in the field.

