

"Our Work Shows Pride, With Safety As Our Guide"

May is National Electrical Safety Month

Thanks to the *Electric Consumer* magazine for this month's article!

Electricity is the marvel that powers our world. Where would we be without it? Remember that electricity travels at the speed of light and in an instant can go from powering our modern lives to ending lives!! The key element to electrical safety is awareness and you have to make awareness a 24 hour a day, 7 days a week effort.

Using the ABCs, here are some tips to keep everyone safely grounded and adhering to the "letters" of electricity laws.

Appliances: Use your appliances according to the manufacturers' instructions. Make sure your appliances are all certified by an independent testing laboratory such as UL.

Bulbs: Check the wattage of all bulbs in lamps and light fixtures to make sure they are the correct wattage for the lamp or fixture. Make sure bulbs are screwed in securely—loose bulbs may overheat.

Cords: Never yank on a power cord to unplug it from an outlet. Use the grip at the plug end. Repairing a broken cord yourself is something to do with caution unless you have proper training. "Electrical" tape from the hardware store is most likely not rated for the heat that may be generated by electricity through the cord.

Downed power line: Stay away from fallen power lines. Call your electric provider immediately. Even though lines don't show signs of arcing or sparking, stay at least 10 feet away.

Extension cords: They should only be used on a temporary basis and not as permanent wiring. Make sure the cord is the proper size for the appliance application to prevent overheating. Never run extension cords through walls, windows, or doors, or under rugs.

Floods: Take care when stepping into a flooded basement. Submerged outlets or electrical cords may have energized the water. Don't use appliances that have been submerged until they have been dried out and reconditioned by a qualified repair technician.

Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI): Test your GFCIs monthly and after every electrical storm. GFCIs are most commonly found in outlets in bathrooms and kitchens near sources of water.

Heat: Check for any hot or discolored wall outlet or switch plate; a sure sign of dangerous heat buildup at connections.

Inspections: Have an electrical inspection done in your home if it is more than 40 years old. The addition of major appliances may have your system overloaded.

Jump: Don't make yourself a path to ground. If a vehicle you are in comes in contact with electric lines, stay inside the car. Only if the vehicle catches fire should you get out. If this occurs, jump clear from the vehicle without touching any of its metal surfaces and the ground at the same time.

Kites: Never fly kites near power lines of any kind. String that is soiled or wet can conduct electricity at the speed of light.

Ladders: Make sure ladders, antennas and other tall metal things do not contact electric lines.

Mowers: Do not use electric power mowers, trimmers or other electric powered tools in the rain or on wet grass or in wet conditions.

National Electrical Safety Month: The Electrical Safety Foundation International sponsors Electrical Safety Month each May in an effort to promote electrical safety.

For What It Is Worth! *Blind Dates*

After being with her all evening, the man couldn't take another minute with his blind date. Earlier, he had secretly arranged to have a friend call him to the phone so he would have an excuse to leave if something like this happened.

When he returned to the table, he lowered his eyes, put on a grim expression and said, "I have some bad news. My grandfather just died."

"Thank heavens," his date replied. "If yours hadn't, mine would have had to!"

