

Staying Safe



**Kelly Hamm,
Energy Services
Manager**

I heard a pretty amazing story the other day. It involved two teens in Indiana, Lee Whittaker and Ashley Taylor, who were driving down the road with some friends when their car started to fishtail. Lee did his best to keep the vehicle on the road. But before he knew it he was sliding straight into a utility pole — and that pole came down, lines and all, right on top of his overturned car.

Now, most folks faced with this situation would do what comes naturally: get out of the car. But Lee and Ashley knew better. Not a week earlier they had attended a safety demonstration at their school sponsored by their local electric co-op. One of the key messages relayed was “stay in your car if it ever hits a power pole, where you’ll be safe from any electrical current.” 5315B5-260B

The two did just that and kept their friends in the car and family members at a safe distance once they arrived. As a result, the entire group walked away with just a few minor injuries. However, without a basic knowledge of electrical safety, the outcome that night could have been much different.

The electricity McDonough Power provides day-in and day-out is a phenomenal resource, powering our modern lifestyles in a safe, reliable and affordable way. But electricity must be respected: if

safety isn’t made a priority, what changes our lives for the better could change them for the worse in an instant.

Lee and Ashley know this from experience, and we’re striving to keep you informed of electrical safety so you don’t have to learn a similar lesson the hard way.

Safety has been a part of the fundamental culture at McDonough Power since day one. Being an electric line-worker is ranked by the U.S. Department of Labor as one of the top 10 most dangerous jobs, on the same list as fisherman, loggers, and military servicemen. We demand that not only those out in the field, but employees at all levels make safety a top priority.

As part of our safety commitment, please take time to learn how you can be safe around electricity at home. Spending just a few minutes with some helpful resources can make all the difference when you’re faced with a possible unsafe situation. For more information on electrical safety, please visit SafeElectricity.org and Electrical-Safety.org.

I hope there won’t be any stories about McDonough Power members getting into sticky situations like Lee and Ashley. But if there are, a few minutes spent studying safety today could ensure a happy ending.



**Our office will be closed in
observance of Memorial Day
on Monday, May 31.**



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Celebrate National Electrical Safety Month

May marks National Electrical Safety Month and McDonough Power Cooperative is teaming up with the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) to launch a public awareness campaign to promote the importance of electrical safety and educate key audiences about the steps that can be taken to prevent electrical fires, injuries, and fatalities in the home. **6315SV20-708A**

"Eliminating electrical hazards begins with education and awareness," says ESFI President Brett Brenner. "National Electrical Safety Month is a time for all of us to reexamine our surroundings and determine what steps we can take to prevent the hundreds of deaths, thousands of injuries, and billions of dollars in economic losses that occur each year because of electrical hazards."

Electricity is the cause of over 140,000 fires each year, resulting in more than 500 deaths, 4,000 injuries and \$1.6 billion in property damage in the United States. In the workplace, more than 300 workplace fatalities and approximately 4,000 injuries occur each year due to electrical hazards, according to a study published by the **Itasca, Ill.-based National Safety Council**.

To help raise awareness of electrical safety, ESFI will focus on a different electrical safety topic each week as part of a broader outreach effort this May:

May 2-8 - Educating Your Children: Do your children know what it takes to stay safe when it comes to electricity? Visit ESFI's *Kids Corner*, a brand-new online resource designed as a one-stop shop for teachers, educators, parents, and students!

May 9-15 - Staying Safe at Work:

Electrical accidents in an office environment usually occur as a result of faulty or defective equipment, unsafe installation, or misuse of equipment. During the second week of National Electrical Safety Month, perform an electrical safety inspection of your office.

May 16-22 - Renovating the Right Way: Whether you are a first-time do-it-yourselfer or a "weekend warrior," practicing safe habits can reduce your risk when it comes to home electrical work. Use ESFI's *Electrical Safety Workbook* to help better understand and maintain your home's electrical system.

May 23-29 - Remembering Electrical Safety in the Field: Use ESFI's *Never Assume Electrical Safety Series* to give you and your co-workers the right frame of mind when it comes to safety in the workplace. From job planning to arc flash awareness, this one-of-a-kind video program is a must for anyone working with or near electricity!

ESFI's newly redesigned Website offers a variety of print, online, and multimedia resources for teachers, educators, parents, students, and anyone else interested in learning about electrical safety or teaching others about it.

The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) is dedicated exclusively to promoting electrical safety in the home and the workplace. ESFI proudly sponsors National Electrical Safety Month each May, and engages in public education campaigns throughout the year to prevent electrical fires, injuries, and fatalities. For more information about ESFI and National Electrical Safety Month, visit www.electrical-safety.org.

Map Location Game

Every month we will have four map location numbers hidden throughout *The Wire*. If you find your map location number, call our office and identify your number and the page that it is on. If correct, you will win a \$10 credit on your next electric bill.



10 family outdoor fun tips

Play it safe this spring with this electrical safety information

Outdoor family fun really takes off in the spring. But before you get out the kites and start those outdoor games, Safe Electricity and McDonough Power recommend you review these safety rules:

- Never climb trees near power lines. Even if the power lines aren't touching the tree, they could touch when more weight is added to the branch.
- Fly kites and model airplanes in large open areas like a park or a field, safely away from trees and overhead power lines. Never fly a kite on a cloudy day when a thunderstorm may be brewing.
- If a kite gets stuck in a tree that's near power lines, don't climb up to get it. Electricity can travel down kite strings or wires and electrocute you. Contact your electric utility for assistance.
- Never climb a utility pole or tower. The electricity carried through this equipment is extremely high voltage and could kill you.
- Don't play on or around pad-mounted electrical equipment. (those large green boxes sometimes located in yards)
- Never go into an electric substation for any reason. Electric substations

- contain high-voltage equipment, which can kill you. Never rescue a pet or retrieve a ball or toy that goes inside. Call your electric utility instead.
- Be sure all pools and outdoor play areas are away from power lines and call JULIE before installing any new posts.
- Install and use GFCI outlets outside. Use portable GFCIs if outlets don't have them. Keep appliances 10 feet from pools, ponds and wet surfaces.
- Don't leave electrical appliances outside. They could become wet and cause an electrical shock when unplugged later. If the weather looks threatening, pack up and go inside.
- Spring showers bring more than just puddles to splash in. They can bring flooded areas that are never safe to play or wade in and may be in contact with energized equipment or fallen power lines.

Visit www.SafeElectricity.org for more information on electrical safety, and on-line games and activities that teach kids to safely use and play around electricity. 6315SV26-708A



Don't forget to check the air filter

Do you check your furnace/air conditioner or heat pump's filter each month? Probably not, but you should. Dirty air filters will reduce your furnace/air conditioner or heat pump's efficiency levels more than you think, costing you more money. Chances are, you'll need to replace your filter every other month, or even more often if you have multiple pets or smoke indoors. You'll save more money in energy costs by replacing the filter as needed than trying to squeak by another month. Bottom line: Filters are cheap, change them often. Here's how:

1. Locate your filter. It could be in your furnace, between the air

- handler and return air duct, or possibly in your return air duct in the ceiling. Is it furry with dust bunnies? Then it needs to be changed. Be aware that some newer furnaces contain two filters, one serving as a backup. Make sure you locate the main filter on this type of system.
2. Measure your filter carefully. They come in all different sizes that can vary as little as 1/8-inch. The size should be marked on the old filter.
3. Determine which type of filter you need. Most filters are disposable while a few are reusable and will just need washing. Fiberglass or paper pleated disposable filters are the cheapest. Be careful when

- shopping for a new filter. If your system cannot handle the newer, allergen reducing, thicker filters, using one could reduce the airflow to your unit and cut efficiency. When you buy a new filter, get several so you have them on hand.
4. Place the new filter in the unit exactly where you found the old. Now, don't just forget about it. Check it every month.

For more information, contact your local HVAC dealer or electric cooperative.



Farming efficiency

Energy efficiency offers new harvest for farmers

By Megan McKoy

To get the biggest bang for their electricity dollar, more and more farmers are turning to energy efficiency to boost their bottom line and productivity.

Electricity on the farm powers heating (water, space, heat lamps), pumping (irrigation, water wells, manure lagoons), refrigeration, ventilation, lighting, fans (drying grains, aeration), and materials handling feed augers, manure conveyors, milking and egg conveyors. In the area of motors and lighting alone, the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE) estimates farmers could save \$88 million annually by implementing cutting-edge efficiency measures using available technology.

EnSave, a Vermont-based farm energy audit group, has created a pyramid revealing steps agricultural operations can take to cut down on energy use, arranged by cost and benefits of improvements. **532RM3-900A**

First, farmers should analyze energy use. This may reveal opportunities to save on electric use and in some cases could lead to increased productivity. Next, farmers should try energy conservation – changing behaviors and simply using less energy daily. After this, the greatest savings may be achieved through energy efficiency – working smarter and saving money by using more efficient equipment.

Each farm – from dairy and poultry to general agriculture – provides differ-

ent opportunities for efficiency upgrades, varying by region and crop. However, regular equipment maintenance provides universal benefits. For example:

- **Clean equipment:** Removing dust, soot, and debris from equipment will allow it to do more work with less effort, extending its life and reducing energy use.
- **Inspect regularly:** Equipment should be checked regularly. Replace parts that are showing excessive wear before they break and cause irreparable damage.
- **Plug leaks:** Be it a pinprick hole in a hose or a drafty barn, leaks waste money, fuel, and electricity. By plugging the leaks, savings can be considerable.
- **Remove clutter:** Hoses should be regularly flushed to clear them of debris. Ensure fan and motor intakes and exhausts remain clutter-free for maximum circulation and efficiency.

Lighting presents another efficiency touch point. Light work areas, not entire buildings, and use daylight when possible. Installing dimmable ballasts can also help control light levels.

Types of lights used on the farm make a difference. Incandescent light bulbs typically convert only 10 percent of the energy used into light. There are many other options available:

- **Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs)** deliver the same amount of light as incandescent bulbs, but use only a quarter of the electricity. Installing CFLs may cost a little more initially, but they can last up to 10 times longer.
- **Cold cathode fluorescent lamps (CCFLs)** can last up to 25 times longer and have around the same efficiency as CFLs.
- **T-8 and T-5 lights** with electronic ballasts generate less noise, produce more light per watt, offer better color rendering, minimal flickering, and cooler operation and provide electric cost savings.

For more regional and/or crop-specific energy efficiency options, the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service provides farm energy calculators. From animal housing operations to irrigation estimates, the calculators assess how much energy your farm currently uses and provide insights on how to cut your energy costs. Learn more at www.energytools.sc.gov.usda.gov.

Sources: American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy, EnSave, U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service

Energy Efficiency *Tip of the Month*

Properly hooking up your clothes dryer can help save on energy costs. The outdoor dryer exhaust door should close when the dryer is off. Check to make sure the dryer vent hose is tightly connected to the dryer and also to the inside wall fitting. The vent hose should not be kinked or clogged.

Source: Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

