



Students at Roger's Middle School learn hazards of electricity



Alan W. Wattles

Across The President's Desk

Monroe County Electric Cooperative linemen, Jay Krump, Bob Gross and Steve Drennan performed two back-to-back "Live Line Electrical Safety Demonstrations" for students of the Roger's Middle School in Waterloo on Monday afternoon, March 15.

The demonstrations showed the grade school students what electricity is capable of doing. Electricity is something we all use every day but we must respect it and know that it can be dangerous as well.

On an actual 7200 volt line, different objects were brought into contact with the line to show students what happens when high voltage finds a path to ground.

In the demonstration, contact to the line was made with a bird model, tree branch, mylar balloon, a pool skimmer metal rod and a small scale truck. To simulate what happens to human skin, a hot dog was



placed against the line and the result was immediate with smoke and flames.

During the demonstration, Jay

shared important lessons on being aware of your surroundings in situations where high voltage electric lines are present.

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The cooperative would like to thank Principal Nick Schwartz for allowing the cooperative to come in and do the demonstrations to teach the students about electrical safety.

On Tuesday, March 23, the cooperative performed a Live Line Demo for students at Valmeyer Grade School also.

If any civic organization, business or school would like to see the demonstration, please contact Allan Masterson, Director of Member Services, at 939-7171, extension 115.



Rebates available from Monroe County Electric

If you're making home repairs for energy efficiency this year to take advantage of the federal tax credit and/or the EnergyStar rebates, don't forget about Monroe County Electric Cooperative's (MCEC) rebates as well. They can help reduce your costs even further. In addition, installing a geothermal heating system, a heat pump (SEER 15) and an electric water heater could help qualify you for a cheaper electric rate. Call our office at 800-757-7433, 939-7171 or visit our Web site at www.mcec.org for more information on rates and rebates.

Geothermal rebate

One-time rebate of \$1000 for any size system installed in a new or existing home.

Heat Pump rebate

One-time rebate of \$500 for any size system (SEER 15 rated or above) installed in a new or existing home.

Electric water heater rebates

Change out that gas water heater to an electric at least 50 gallon in size and qualify for a \$75 rebate from the cooperative.

Water system rebates

Install a water softener system or reverse osmosis system from Schaefer Water Centers (\$1000 in price) and receive a \$100 discount from Schaefer Water as well as a \$100 rebate from MCEC.

Co-op Connections Card stretches dollars

When times are tough, we all look for ways to stretch our dollars to make each one count for more. Your Co-op Connections Card can help you stretch your dollars each and every day.

From the basic needs of food and medicine to luxury cruises, your Co-op Connections Card is the link to lower prices. There are savings with local merchants as well as national accounts.

To find merchants and deals, go to our Web site at www.mcec.org and click on the Co-op Connections card. You'll find local deals in the middle of the Web page, national ones on the right and a search option on the left side.

Want to be notified of special national deals that are offered from time to time? Click on the twitter link near the bottom left to have text messages sent to your cell

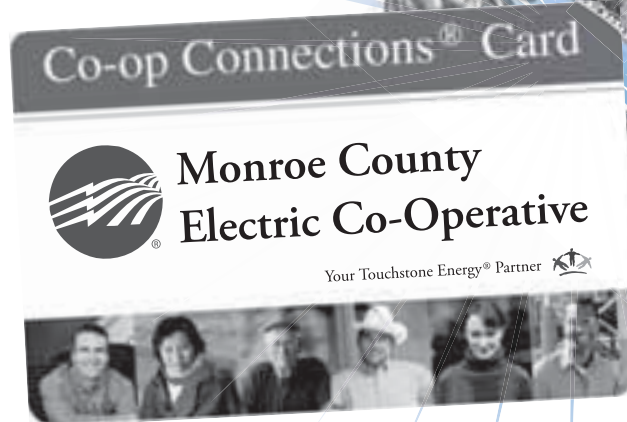
phone when new deals become available (local text charges with your service provider may apply).

Your Touchstone Energy Co-op Connections card can even save you money on prescription medication. The next time you have a prescription filled, show your card to your pharmacist. Even if you have prescription drug insurance coverage, ask them to compare your insurance to the savings offered by the Co-op

Connections card. Many times, the Co-op Connections card is less than insurance coverage.

If you've lost your Co-op Connections card or need a new one, just call or stop by our office. We'll be glad to provide you with a replacement.

The next time you head out shopping, remember to look at the Co-op Connections Web site so you can stretch your dollars further.



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:

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.

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.

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.

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.



ways to keep your kids safe around electricity



1. Protect your outlets

It's easy to do and many affordable and aesthetically pleasing options are available. Some include: traditional plastic covers inserted into the plug, replacement pieces featuring covers that slide across automatically when plugs are removed and replacement outlets that look like regular outlets but feature internal safety mechanisms.

2. Install GFCIs

GFCI outlets protect against shocks in wet conditions by shutting off power to the outlet when a problem is detected. They can save your child's life. Install them in your bathroom, kitchen, garage and in outdoor areas around pools or hot tubs.

3. Unplug appliances

Unplug all small appliances that are not in use. Look at your kitchen counter. Does your toaster, coffee pot and microwave need to be plugged in? Eliminate the hazards. This could save you money as well if these appliances use power even when they seem off (those with clocks or that use remotes for example).

4. Model good behavior

Don't yank on cords to unplug items, don't overload outlets and always work safely around electricity. Tell your kids what you're doing and why and emphasize safety.

5. Teach young drivers

Tell your young drivers to stay in the car if it comes into contact with an electrical line. See www.safeelectricity.com for more information on what to do during accidents and to read a success story of two teenagers whose lives were saved by staying in the car.

6. Keep cords safe

Repair cords that are worn, don't use extension cords on a long-term basis and inspect all plugs before using them.

7. Take the time

Teach young children to always ask for help when they want to use something that requires electricity. It won't take long for you to plug in that radio or video game for your child, giving you the opportunity to check the cord/plug and do it correctly.

8. Don't use mylar balloons outdoors

These balloons, popular for parties, can conduct electricity if they come into contact with a line. Never release them outdoors; even if you are a safe distance from lines, they can cause big and expensive problems for your co-op if they become tangled in lines or cause transformer problems.

