

Norris Electric *News*

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Norris Electric Cooperative

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Practice safety when DIY-ing

These days, many of us are spending more time at home and finding new, creative ways to enhance our living space. Tackling do-it-yourself (DIY) projects for the home can be fun and cost-effective, so why not roll up those sleeves and get started! Whether you're painting the front door with a fresh hue or finally upgrading those patio lights, successfully completing a DIY home project is incredibly satisfying. But many of these projects do not come without risks. Here are a few safety tips to keep in mind as you get to work.

Select a designated work area

The amount of space you'll need will depend on the size and scope of your project, but make sure you have adequate lighting and ventilation (if necessary). Required tools and equipment should be located in your workspace and organized for easy access.

Personal protective equipment

Investing a few bucks in PPE is essential for most home projects. Stock up on safety goggles, dust masks, ear plugs (or noise reduction ear protectors), gloves and any other kind of protection you'll need for your project. Remember to wear appropriate clothing and shoes.

Work slowly and clean as you go

When you rush through a DIY project, you'll end up with less desirable results than you intended, or worse, you could make a costly or dangerous mistake. Take your time and remember that you are in control of the project. You should also clean as you go to ensure a safer workspace. Pick up any scrap materials, tools that aren't in use and any tripping hazards.

Be cautious with power tools

Annually, 8 percent of electrocutions in the U.S. are attributed to improper use of power tools. The Electrical Safety Foundation International offers the following safety tips:

- Use ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) with every power tool to protect against electrical shock.
- Never use power tools near live electrical wires or water pipes.
- Use caution when cutting or drilling into walls where electrical wires or water pipes could be accidentally touched or penetrated.
- If a power tool trips a safety device while in use, take the tool to a manufacturer-authorized repair center for service.
- Do not use power tools without the proper guards.
- When using a wet-dry vacuum cleaner or a pressure washer, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions to avoid electrical shock.

Remember, you should only tackle DIY home projects within your skill and comfort level. For projects that require extensive electrical work, we strongly recommend you hire a licensed, qualified electrician for assistance.

To learn more about electrical safety, visit our website at norriselectric.com.





Make sure your phone number and email is up to date

Over the years, many members have done away with their landline telephones. Due to this, the co-op is sometimes unable to reach members without a current phone number in our system.

We ask that if you have changed your primary phone number or would like to add a cell phone number to your account, please notify us.

By updating your phone number, it helps automate payment in our IVR and outage system. It automatically recognizes the account associated with the phone number making the process smooth.



It is important we have a current number and email address in our system so that we are able to reach you in the case of an emergency.

Please give us a call at 877-783-8765 to update your information.

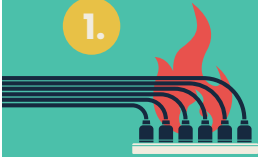
If you see roadside crews, please slow down and move over when possible.



ELECTRICITY 101

To stay safe around electricity, start with these **SEVEN** basic tips:

1.



DON'T OVERLOAD OUTLETS OR CIRCUITS

Plugging in too many items or drawing too much power on a circuit can cause overheating, fire, and damage to devices.

2.



DON'T USE FAULTY ELECTRICAL CORDS OR PLUGS

Do not use cords that look frayed, worn or cracked. Do not use broken plugs. Never remove the grounding pin from a three-pronged plug.

3.



HAVE YOUR ELECTRICIAN'S NUMBER IN YOUR PHONE

Most electrical repairs or installations are not DIY projects. Hire an expert to avoid serious injury or wiring problems.

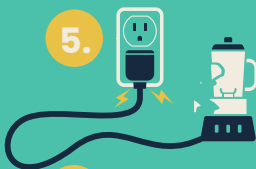
4.



BE CAREFUL AROUND H₂O

Never use electricity while standing in damp or wet conditions. Keep all electrical devices away from water, including cell phones that are charging.

5.



EVALUATE YOUR APPLIANCES

Do not use appliances in disrepair. Older or broken appliances can overheat, start a fire, and cause serious injuries.

6.



TEST YOUR GFCIS

Outlets near a water source should be equipped with GFCIs, which help prevent shock and electrocution caused by ground faults. Test monthly to make sure they are working.

7.



MAKE SURE YOUR HOME IS UP TO CODE

Your home should be properly wired and electrically sound. Contact a reputable electrician to evaluate your home.

Considering a new home? Remember these tips

Whether renting or buying, the process of looking for a new home can be overwhelming. Along with looking for a good value, the right neighborhood or curb appeal, also look for signs of potential electrical trouble.

Aside from having a professional electrical inspection completed, look for the following warning signs of electrical safety hazards before signing on the dotted line:

- Outlets and light switches that are warm to the touch
- Loose, scorched or discolored outlets
- Wall or light switches that cause shocks upon contact
- Strange smells (such as something burning or overheating)
- Smoke or sparks
- Exposed wires
- Lack of GFCIs (ground fault circuit interrupters) on outlets near a water source or could get wet
- Faulty appliances
- Evidence of frequent blown fuses or circuit breakers
- Missing or broken wall plates
- Delayed responses after switching lights on or off
- Flickering lights

A good house-hunting practice is to take note if there are too few outlets to accommodate your needs. If you will need to use extension cords and large outlet strips on a regular basis, you risk overloading your electrical system and creating an electrical hazard.

For more information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

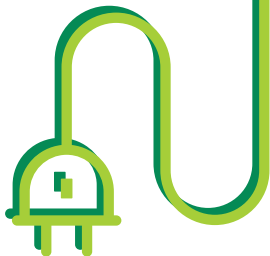
Safe
Electricity®

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Avoid placing items like lamps and televisions near your thermostat.

The thermostat senses heat from these appliances, which can cause your air conditioner to run longer than necessary.

Source:
www.energy.gov



Know what's below: steps for safe digging

Spring is here, and there's never been a better time to get outside and enjoy the fresh air. Perhaps you're making plans for a new garden or a lawn makeover. However, remember to keep safety in mind for all projects—especially those that require digging.

Most of us never think about the electric, gas, water and other utility lines buried below the ground, but hitting one of these lines while digging is not the reminder you'll want—trust us! Norris Electric reminds all members who are planning a digging project to call 811 at least three business days before you start. Or you can submit a request online by visiting illinois1call.com. Here's how the process works.

After you call 811 or submit your request online, all affected utilities will be notified of your intent to dig. It may take the utilities a few days to get to your request, so please be patient. The affected utilities will send

someone out to mark the buried lines with paint or flags. Before you break ground, confirm that all the utilities have responded to your request. If you placed your request by phone, use the process explained by your 811 call center representative. If you submitted your request online, refer to your 811 center ticket to confirm everything.

By taking this important step before you break ground on your project, you can help protect not only yourself but our community. Disrupting an underground utility line can interrupt service, cause injuries and cost money to repair, so remember to call 811 first and know what's below.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**