

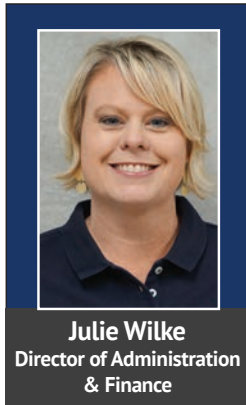
# JAMUP

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Energy Efficiency

Summer is just around the corner. With warmer weather, electric utility bills can increase; however, we have the power to make a difference in the amount of electricity we use. Every little bit helps when it comes to conserving energy. Below are some small tricks and tips to help you lower your electric usage during the summer months.



- Make sure the outdoor dryer exhaust door closes when the dryer is off.
- Make sure the dryer vent hose is not kinked or clogged.
- Dry consecutive loads to harvest heat remaining in dryer from the last load.
- Consider using a clothesline to air dry your clothes.

### Kitchen

- Switch your refrigerator's power-saver to "ON," if available.
- Clean refrigerator coils annually.
- Set the refrigerator temperature to 34–37 F and freezer temperature to 0–5 F.
- Unplug unused refrigerators or freezers. **Jackie Poole**
- Only run the dishwasher when fully loaded.
- Open your dishwasher and air dry your dishes instead of using the dryer cycle.

### Lighting

- Replace incandescent light bulbs with LEDs.
- Turn off unnecessary lighting especially in rooms no one is using.

### Miscellaneous

- Unplug devices when not in use.
- Ensure all new appliances are ENERGY STAR approved.
- Spend time outdoors.

## Heating and air conditioning



- Set thermostats to 78 F in summer.
- Turn off your air conditioner when not needed.
- Ensure your outdoor heat pump/air conditioning unit is kept clean and free of debris.
- Have your HVAC system serviced annually by a certified technician.
- Change HVAC filters as needed.
- Clean your air conditioning vents and units.
- Take advantage of natural ventilation.
- Run ceiling fans blowing down in the summer.
- Insulate electric wall plugs and wall switches with foam pads.
- Check for thorough home insulation.
- Caulk around windows and cracks.
- Ensure windows and doors are properly weather-stripped.
- Close fireplace dampers when not in use.
- Close shades during the day to help keep heat out in the summer.
- Insulate attic access door.
- Install a programmable thermostat to control your home's temperature.

Making smart energy choices can make a difference in your electric utility bill. When it comes to energy efficiency, everything you do can add up to savings for you.

## Water heating

- Set your water heater temperature no higher than 120 F.
- Install a water heater wrap per manufacturer's instructions.
- Drain a few gallons from the bottom of your water heater each quarter to reduce sediment build up.
- Insulate exposed hot water lines.
- Limit shower length to 5–7 minutes.
- Install low-flow shower heads.
- Fix dripping faucets.

## Laundry

- Wash clothes in cold water. Use hot water only for very dirty loads.
- Only do full loads of laundry.
- Clean your dryer's lint trap before each load.

## Practice safety when DIY-ing

**T**oday, 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 come with 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. 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 not 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 [siec.org](http://siec.org).



### 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.

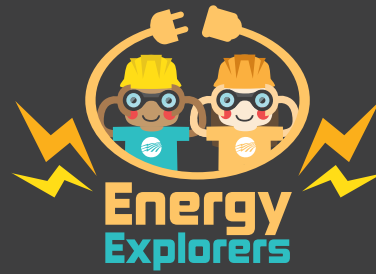
Source: [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov)



# ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH WORD SEARCH

May is Electrical Safety Month!

Read the safety tips below, then find and circle all the **bolded** words in the puzzle.



E	J	E	Q	L	V	T	S	O	K	F	A	B	T	T
L	S	R	Y	S	D	E	D	D	E	H	N	Y	X	J
E	D	A	M	A	G	E	D	B	I	J	L	G	E	V
C	N	V	J	L	H	W	M	E	B	U	R	I	T	O
T	S	C	N	K	R	W	C	D	M	S	Q	A	N	A
R	B	M	Z	D	G	D	S	R	R	N	R	I	Q	I
I	J	Z	O	F	Y	D	F	O	C	O	D	O	L	F
C	S	C	Y	K	R	Z	D	O	V	N	U	V	I	D
A	Z	U	T	O	E	F	Q	M	T	T	B	R	B	Q
L	K	Y	C	K	X	A	P	N	L	A	E	J	B	W
K	I	M	W	A	Q	A	L	E	Z	R	N	L	Y	E
E	Z	K	T	A	L	M	T	A	I	G	P	X	I	D
D	R	A	Z	A	H	S	Y	S	R	F	J	J	I	J
E	F	E	B	A	S	P	K	L	V	M	Z	H	L	M
E	L	E	C	T	R	O	N	I	C	S	S	N	W	T

## WORD BANK:

- Do not use any electrical **cords** that feel warm to the touch or are **damaged** in any way.
- Remind parents or adults in your home to test **smoke alarms** every month. Alarms should be installed in every **bedroom**, outside each sleeping area and on every level of your home.
- Do not overload electrical **outlets**. Overloading creates a potential fire **hazard**.
- Keep all **liquids** away from **electronics**, including TVs, computers and gaming consoles.
- Do not run **electrical** cords under rugs or carpet. This creates a **fire risk**.

## Member prize

In this issue of the JAMUP, we printed the names of three SIEC members who are eligible to receive a \$10 credit toward their utility bill. If you find your name printed in this center section and it's not part of the story, call Bree with your account number at **800-762-1400** to claim your prize.

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## Considering a new home or apartment? Check out electrical concerns too

**W**hether you're renting or buying, the process of looking for a house, condo or apartment can be overwhelming, especially for young people moving out on their own or new families ready to relocate to larger places. Along with looking for good value, the right neighborhood or curb appeal, consider signs of potential electrical trouble before deciding.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, electrical failures or malfunctions are present in an estimated average of 47,000 U.S. home structure fires per year, resulting in 430 deaths, 1,280 injuries and \$1.5 billion in property damage. Based on figures from the National Center for Biotechnology Information, electrical injuries in general cause approximately 1,000 deaths per year in the U.S.

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

- Outlets and light switches 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 certain outlets (those near a water source or that could get wet)
- Lack of AFCIs (arc fault circuit interrupters); these help to prevent fires and are required in new builds
- 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

Another good house-hunting practice is to take note if there are too few outlets to accommodate your needs for electronics, appliances and other items that will increase the electrical load. 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.

If you are buying a home, a reputable home inspector should note electrical wiring or other electrical deficiencies and code violations. Make sure electrical items are addressed by a qualified electrician before you call your new place home. If you already own your home and detect electrical issues, call a reputable electrician so problems can be addressed immediately.

If you are or will be a renter and notice any of these issues, advise the landlord right away. If your landlord won't make repairs, tenants have the option to hire someone to make the repairs and deduct the costs from their rent. Illinois law allows you to deduct \$500 or half a month's rent, whichever is lower. However, remember that a certified electrician is the only person who should be hired to assess and repair electrical hazards or address issues. Verify credentials before hiring one. Research laws in your area to determine renter protection provisions. **David Hammond**

Both renters and homeowners should test all GFCIs once a month to make sure they are working and keep an eye out for other electrical hazards. For more information on electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).