

Stay safe on the road

You did not see it coming. You were driving down the road and you heard a thumping-type noise, or your car handled differently as it rolled down the pavement.

If you are driving along and you notice your car is starting to malfunction, gently take your foot off the accelerator. Do not brake hard or suddenly, according to the National Safety Council. Signal your intention to pull over and monitor traffic before changing lanes.

While no one likes to think about the possibility of getting stranded, here are some common causes of car trouble. **6633-48**

Flat tire

One in four roadside emergencies are caused by a flat tire. Because of that, it is a good idea to learn how to change a tire. While you can contact a roadside service to take care of your flat, that will not help you if you are out of cell phone service range or your phone is dead.

Although surveys on this subject should be taken with a grain of salt, some surveys estimate that 25 percent of Americans do not know how to change a tire, and another 19 percent are not confident in their ability to do so. Of teen drivers aged 15–17, 52 percent are clueless when it comes to changing a tire.

Dead battery

A standard car battery will last for around three years or 50,000 miles

before it starts failing (depending on the battery's rating, of course). If you do not stay on top of how long you have had your battery, you may find yourself with a drained battery and no way to start your car.

Keeping jumper cables in your vehicle is a wise choice because someone else may be able to give you a jump. However, if no one else is around, this will not help you. If you want to play it safe, keep a portable car jump-starter in your trunk. This nifty device could jump-start your car when the battery is completely dead, as long as the starter is charged.

Wintry road conditions

Road conditions during winter can be treacherous and may be caused by a blizzard, sleet or black ice. Each year, 24 percent of weather-related crashes occur on snowy, slushy or icy pavement and 15 percent happen during snowfall or sleet, **4828-16** according to the Federal Highway Administration.

If roads have become impassable, take the following steps:

- * Pull over and try not to panic. Avoid walking away from your car to look for help. Your car will keep you sheltered, and it will also be

easier for you to be found.

- * On the other hand, if your car is in a hazardous position or in a place where it could be struck by another vehicle, move it off the roadway. If that is not possible, safely get out of the car and off the roadway.
- * Open or crack a window to get some fresh air.



- * Keep your hazard lights on to help other drivers see your car and make it easier for emergency responders to locate you.
- * Move your body to keep your blood circulating.

Take steps to prevent car trouble, such as checking your tires and keeping your vehicle well-maintained. When car trouble does happen, take steps to stay safe.



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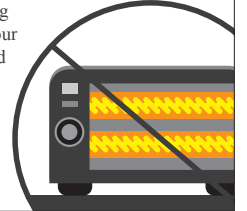
Every month we are printing four members' map location numbers in the newsletter. If you find your map location number call the WIEC office by the 25th of the following month, tell us where it is and we will give you a \$10.00 bill credit. Keep on reading the WIEC News.



TIPS TO DITCH THE SPACE HEATER

Space heaters are energy hogs, and older models can be extremely dangerous. This winter, ditch the space heater and try these alternative solutions to stay cozy.

- Use an electric blanket to keep warm during the night.
- Caulk and weatherstrip around all windows and doors to prevent heat loss.
- Consider adding insulation to your attic and around duct work.



Energy Efficiency
Tip of the Month

Maximize your heating system's performance by inspecting, cleaning or replacing air filters once a month or as needed to reduce energy costs and prevent potential damage to your system.

Make sure radiators, baseboard heaters and warm-air registers aren't blocked so air can flow freely.

Source: Dept. of Energy



Welcome New Members

Brent Beimert
Kathleen J Blindt & Frank G Delaney
Sheena Dhamsania & Jacob Ferguson
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October
2021



ICE ON POWER LINES IS A WEIGHTY SUBJECT



When it comes to getting electricity across power lines and into homes, ice can be a force to be reckoned with.



ICE ON DISTRIBUTION LINES

Ice can quickly lead to broken power poles and other pole equipment. Ice can also make falling tree branches 30x heavier and much more likely to break power lines.

ON A 300-FOOT SPAN OF 1-INCH-THICK POWER LINES

- 1/2 inch of ice adds 281 pounds of weight
- 1 inch of ice adds 749 pounds of weight
- 2 inches of ice adds 2,248 pounds of weight

WHEN ICE MELTS

Melting ice can cause power outages. If ice on the bottom (neutral) line melts before the lines above, it can cause the lines to touch.

OTHER ICE FACTS

- Damage can begin when ice exceeds 1/4 of an inch
- 1/2 inch of ice can cause a line to sag up to 12 inches
- Pressure can also be caused by a broken tree limb
- Both ice and melting ice can cause power outages



Source: Jerri Imgarten-Whitley and Victory Electric Cooperative

STAY TOASTY AND WARM WHILE

TURNING DOWN THE THERMOSTAT



When the winter winds blow, it is tempting to adjust the thermostat up a few degrees to stay toasty and warm. However, turning to other (FREE!) ways to help keep you warm could help reduce your energy bills.



Each degree you reduce your thermostat saves 1% on your heating bill. No one home during the day? Adjust your thermostat 7 to 10 degrees from its normal setting to save up to 10% annually.

Source: Department of Energy

Here are ways to help you stay warm when it is cold outside:



Bundle up by wearing layers and heavy socks

Get your body moving and stay active

Use blankets while sitting still

Caulk windows and door frames that leak air



Replace or update old or ineffective door seals



Make sure your home's heating system is working properly

Keep your furnace clean and change the filter monthly



Let the sun shine in during the day and close window coverings at night



Reduce how long you use ventilation fans (they transfer warm air outside)



Keep a fireplace damper closed when not in use

Humidify your home to make the air feel warmer



If you use a portable space heater, use it safely and for short amounts of time. Using one for extended periods can cause your energy bill to spike since it draws a lot of power.

Learn more at:



Are portable space heaters efficient for my home?

Small space heaters are meant to do exactly as their name says: heat a small space. But unfortunately, many people use portable space heaters to heat their entire home, which can really take a toll on energy bills. **6712-3-1** The truth, whether you should use space heaters really depends on your home's efficiency and energy needs.

easy way to save energy. Depending on the size of your home, adding insulation can be a great next step. Loose fill insulation typically costs \$1 to \$1.50 per square foot. Taking these proactive energy-saving measures rather than relying on space heaters for supplemental warmth can reduce your heating and cooling bills for years to come.

try to shut off other rooms to contain the warmth provided by the space heater. If you decide to use a space heater to heat a small area in your home, make sure the heater is properly sized for the space; most heaters include a general sizing table.

A word about safety: the U.S. Consumer Product Safety

Commission estimates more than 25,000 residential fires are associated with the use of space heaters every year, resulting in more than 300 deaths. If you must use a space heater, purchase a newer model that includes the most current safety features and make sure it carries the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) label. Choose a thermostatically controlled heater to avoid energy waste and overheating and place the heater on a level surface away from foot traffic when in use. Always keep children and pets away from space heaters.

Consider alternative ways to stay warm like extra layers of clothing or UL-approved electric blankets. If you have hardwood or tile floors, lay down area rugs to provide additional insulation (and appeal!) and

maintain warmth. **369-11**

We know it's cold out there, but remember in addition to safety concerns, space heaters can greatly increase your energy bills if used improperly.

If you're looking for alternative ways to save energy and increase comfort in your home, contact Western Illinois Electrical Coop. We're here to help you manage your energy use.



If you're using a space heater to compensate for problems in your home, like inadequate insulation, drafty windows and exterior doors, or an inefficient heating system, space heaters are not a practical solution. Your best bet is to improve the overall efficiency of your home.

If you're on a tight budget, caulking and weather stripping around windows and exterior doors is a low-cost,

Perhaps your home is energy efficient but you're cold-natured and want a specific room to be cozier than the rest. In this case, a space heater may work for your needs. A good comparison is ceiling fans. Ceiling fans in the summer are used to cool people, not rooms. A space heater can be used in a similar way during winter months. Only use a space heater in small spaces that you're occupying and, if possible,