

POWERLINE

NEWSLETTER FOR CO-OP MEMBERS OF CORN BELT ENERGY



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Ways to Prepare Your Home, and Yourself, for Summer Vacation

With the month of July upon us, bringing cherished holidays of opportunities for summer vacations, it is imperative to organize your home and yourself for your time off! Preparing your home, before you leave, to be energy efficient and safe is just as important as packing the right things in your suitcase for your getaway.

Let's dive into the best ways to keep you and your home in peak performance during the July summer vacation time.

Strategies for Keeping Your Home Secure

Set your house's thermostat to 85 degrees for optimal protection of your home. This temperature is about 10 degrees warmer than the typical temperature of a household and it provides the perfect atmosphere to both safeguard the interior of your home and to help save energy. This tip will also help you to subtract money on your electric bill while you are away.



Unplug small appliances and electronics to preserve any energy that you do not need to use while on vacation. These products can range anywhere from toasters and microwaves to televisions and electronic chargers. If you disconnect any unnecessary appliances, you automatically reduce the chance of an electrical fire and extend the span of life for your appliances. This action will also lower the possibility of power surges on your devices.

Make sure your sump pump is working to prevent any flooding in your home. The pump defends the indoor interior from any water held by the pump, and if it is broken, it could damage valuables in your home. Be especially cautious of storms near your residence during the length of your vacation, as downpouring rain can impact the

efficiency of your sump pump. Use light timers or smart lighting to reduce your energy usage and to mimic the presence of you in your residence. Light timers or smart lighting can be programmed to turn on and off at your convenience to simulate your regular, at-home patterns to ward off any unwanted guests.



Ensure your doors and windows are locked and sealed shut to prevent any outsiders, whether they are pests or intruders, from entering your home. Keeping entry ways into your home locked also helps to stabilize the temperature and humidity levels of the home.

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Clean out your refrigerator to escape the smells of your past meals when you come back from your vacation. Dumping out dairy that will go bad or produce that will get moldy, are both great preventative measures to take for you to come back to a clean and smell-free kitchen.



Pause your mail to prevent theft of important letters and an overflow of postage. Stopping the mail can relieve the stress of trying to find a friend or a neighbor to pick it up daily for you. Contact your local post office to alert them about your absence from your home.

Tips to Keep You Safe and Organized for Summer Vacation

Collect your personal identification (whether that's a passport, driver's license, etc.) with all of your other important documents that you are taking on your trip into one bag or wallet for easy access during your travels. Keeping essential identification in a single location takes away the stress of trying to find them, especially in time-pertinent situations like going through security at the airport. Having your documents in an accessible location, that you remember, makes you less likely to lose them.

Get your car serviced if you are traveling to your summer destination by motorized vehicle. Check to make sure your oil is changed, tire pressure is at a functional level, tank is fueled with gas, and the light bulbs are working. This extra precaution could save you from a flat tire on the highway or a broken-down transmission on a remote road.

Do not forget to pack sun protection, even if you are traveling to a colder climate. 30 SPF is recommended on areas of the skin exposed to the sun. Reapplication of sunscreen about every two hours is crucial for protecting yourself from the harmful ultraviolet rays, especially if you are in contact with water. Include hats and sunglasses in your suitcase for added protection from the sun.



Bring an emergency kit for your car or one for your backpack on an airplane to be prepared for any situation. Include band aids, important medications, wipes, hand sanitizer, tweezers, and any other vital products that you will potentially need while traveling.

Plan the budget of expenses for your trip to match your financial capabilities in order to fully optimize your vacation experience. Within your budget, you'll need to account for the cost of travel,

lodging, food, entertainment, and souvenirs. When budgeting in advance, set aside around 15-20% of your biweekly income for your summer vacation. Make sure to exercise any travel rewards or points you may have from credit cards or loyalty programs to help you save on your getaway.



Arrange times to travel during less busy periods on the road or in the air. Planning summer travel outside of when peak traffic takes place can save a lot of travel time and stress. Avoid heavily trafficked areas on the highway during rush hour in the morning (6 to 8 am) and at night (4 to 6 pm). Arrive at the airport at least two hours before your flight to give yourself an abundance of time in case of long security lines or flight issues.

Summer vacations are periods that we most look forward to so we can kick back and relax. Use these tips listed above to safeguard your home and your trip for your well-deserved July getaway.





Get Enlightened About Lightning Safety

Intense heat and UV rays let you know that summer is here, along with severe thunderstorms that could impact your daily routine. With every thunderstorm, there is the presence of lightning, which can be dangerous if you are in the vicinity. Sometimes, these summer storms swoop into areas very quickly and you might find yourself caught in the middle.

Let us explore some of the ways to stay safe if you find yourself stuck in a summer thunderstorm.

Stay away from any tall objects nearby, especially trees or large poles. Lightning is attracted to tall targets to use as conductors of electricity. Standing close to poles or large trees during a thunderstorm highly increases the chance of you becoming a conductor and being struck by lightning. In addition to not standing by tall objects, do not be the tallest object in an area. Avoid standing in open fields or on a hilltop to defend yourself from lightning.

In an emergency, find shelter in the

nearest building or a hard-topped vehicle. While inside a form of shelter, stay away from appliances, heating ducts, radiators, plumbing, or anything plugged into an outlet to avoid electric shock. If there is no shelter nearby, try to avoid using a metal umbrella as well to help yourself evade the chances of being struck.



If you find yourself out in the open or near a tree during a thunderstorm and your hair begins to stand on its ends, lightning is immediately nearby. In that situation, promptly drop to your knees and bend forward towards

the ground. This action reduces the risk of being struck by lightning because you minimize your height. If you are swimming in a lake, pool, the ocean, or any body of water during a thunderstorm, quickly exit the water and move away to a safe form of shelter. Lightning is more likely to strike a body of water than it is an object on land, so make sure you are clear of any water to maximize your safety.

To properly calculate how far away lightning may be from you, use the 30-30 rule. This rule advises people to start counting the seconds in between the time you initially see lightning and then hear thunder. If your calculated time is 30 seconds or less, seek shelter for at least 30 minutes before resuming daily activities.

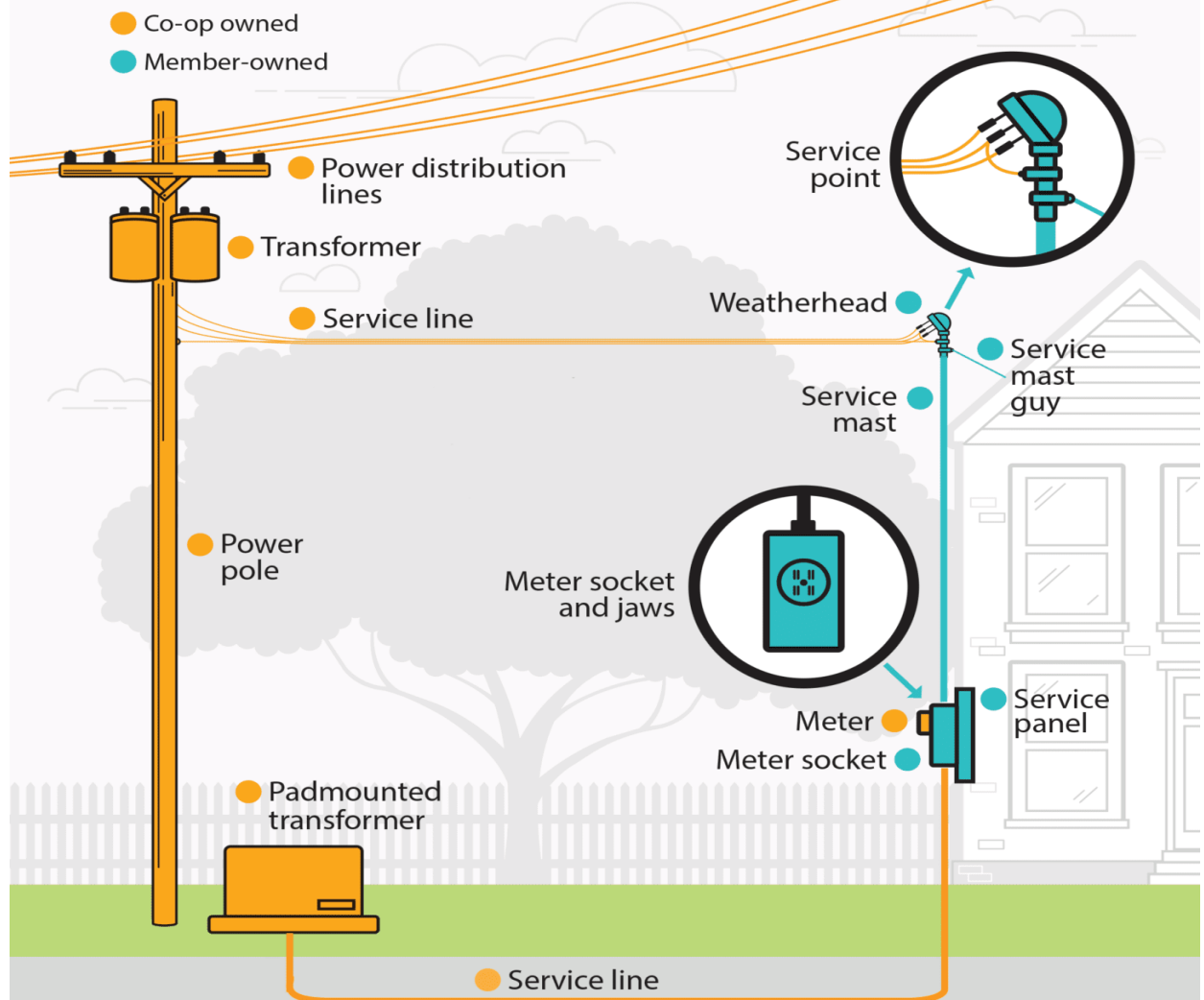
Thunderstorms and lightning can be extremely dangerous if people are not properly educated about lightning safety. To avoid being stranded in a hazardous storm, frequently check your local weather forecast and remember these tips.

Who Owns What?

Electric Co-op Owned Equipment vs Member-Owned Equipment



This graphic depicts equipment owned by the co-op (in gold) and the member (in blue). If a storm damages any equipment owned by the co-op, we are responsible for repairs. If a storm damages any member-owned equipment, the member is responsible for repairs. Members should hire a licensed electrician when making any repairs to member-owned equipment.



Note: This graphic depicts overhead and underground service. Please be aware of which type of service you receive at your home or business.

Keep an Eye Out for More Information About Corn Belt Energy's 2024 Electric Vehicle (EV) Car Show This Fall!

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