

Electric Line Newsletter

Four Tips for Winter Safety

It's no surprise that winter months bring increased potential for fire risks and electrical safety hazards. This makes sense because during the coldest months, consumers are using additional electrical devices and appliances, like space heaters, electric blankets and portable generators.

The National Fire Protection Association estimates that 47,700 home fires occur each year in the U.S. due to electrical failure or malfunction. These fires result in 418 deaths, 1,570 injuries and \$1.4 billion in property damage annually. This winter, safeguard your loved ones and your home with these electrical safety tips from the Electrical Safety Foundation International.

Don't overload outlets. Overloaded outlets are a major cause of residential fires. Avoid using extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliance connections—they should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. If you're relying heavily on extension cords in general, you may need additional outlets to address your needs. Contact a qualified electrician to inspect your home and add new outlets.

Never leave space heaters unattended. If you're using a space heater, turn it off before leaving the room. Make sure heaters are placed *at least* three feet away from flammable items. It should also be noted that space heaters take a toll on your energy bills. If you're using them throughout your home, it may be time to upgrade your home heating system.

Inspect heating pads and electric blankets. These items cause nearly 500 fires every year. Electric blankets that are more than 10 years old create additional risks for a fire hazard. Inspect your



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DANGER! Outlet Overload

Every year, U.S. fire departments respond to an estimated **25,900 home electrical fires**. These fires cause an estimated **280 deaths, 1,125 injuries** and **\$1.1 billion in property loss**.

Thirty-nine percent of home electrical fires involve outlets and receptacles, and other electrical wiring.

To ensure safety, you should only use about 80 percent of the available current for each electrical outlet in your home.

Are you overloading outlets?
Use this formula to find out:

WATTAGE/VOLTS=AMPS

Example:

Let's say you are using 2,000 watts of power (for one outlet). Divide the watts by the volts in your home (typically 120), and you come up with 16.6 amps of current being used. With a 20 amp electrical outlet, you are using about 80 percent of the available current.

Source: U.S. Fire Administration, Home & Garden

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electric blankets and heating pads – look for dark, charred or frayed spots, and make sure the electrical cord is not damaged. Do not place any items on top of a heating pad or electric blanket, and never fold them when in use.

Use portable generators safely. Unfortunately, winter storms can cause prolonged power outages, which means many consumers will use portable generators to power their homes. Never connect a standby generator into your home's electrical system. For portable generators, plug appliances directly into the outlet provided on the generator. Start the generator first, *before* you plug in appliances. Run it in a well-ventilated area *outside* your home. The carbon monoxide it generates is deadly, so keep it away from your garage, doors, windows and vents.

Use Space Heaters Safely

DON'T: Leave your space heater unattended. Always unplug it before you leave the house or go to bed.

DON'T: Use an extension cord to plug in your space heater. It can cause the heater to overheat, and can be a tripping hazard.

DON'T: Place your space heater near curtains, clothing, furniture or bedding.

Maintenance work in progress

Line crews are in the process of doing follow-up repairs from our last underground inspection. Repair work includes doing repairs in underground transformers, as well as single-phase and 3-phase junction boxes.

One area that crews will be working in pertains to feeder No. 1 and feeder No. 2 of the Wittenberg substation. This includes the townships of Wittenberg, Birnamwood and Almon.

Another area being worked in pertains to feeder No. 2, feeder No. 4, and feeder No. 5 of the Tigerton Substation. This includes the townships of Dupont, Grant, and Fairbanks.

Some of the repairs include raising and leveling cabinets due to settling over the years, replacing worn out equipment, tightening any loose connections, repairing any damaged grounds, and replacing secondary covers if needed.

ENERGY SAVINGS WORD SEARCH

Did you know there are many ways you can help save energy in your home?

Read the energy efficiency tips below and circle the **bolded** words in the puzzle.



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

- Turn off **lights** any time you leave a room.
- Keep the **refrigerator** door closed to save energy.
- Wash **clothing** in cold water to reduce the load on your **water heater**.
- Unplug items that consume **electricity** even when they're not in use, like cell phone **chargers** and coffee makers. These are known as "phantom load" **electronics**.
- Take **showers** instead of baths – showers require less **water** use.