



## NATIONAL ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

Every May, electric cooperatives across the country celebrate Electrical Safety Month. Raising awareness about the importance of electrical safety is more essential than ever. This month's feature article discusses some potential electrical hazards and how you can safeguard your home.

**Surge protectors serve an important purpose,** and you should use them to protect your computer and other electronic equipment from damage caused by voltage changes. But if you are relying heavily on power strips, it might be an indication that you have too few outlets to address your needs. Remember, power strips and surge suppressors do not provide more

power to a location, only more access to the same limited capacity of the circuit into which it is connected.

**Extension cords should also not be used to provide power on a long-term or permanent basis.** If you are using several surge protectors and extension cords, you should look into getting additional outlets installed by a qualified, licensed electrician.

**Kitchen appliances can also pose hazards if not properly cleaned and maintained.** For example, when was the last time you thought about your refrigerator as a fire hazard? You should vacuum refrigerator coils every three months to eliminate dirt buildup. Not only will this reduce the chances of a fire starting, but it will also increase the energy efficiency of your refrigerator.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Electricity is the cause of more than 140,000 fires each year, resulting in more than 500 deaths, 4,000 injuries and \$1.6 billion in property damage, according to Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI).



### #electricalsafetymonth

Check our Facebook page throughout the month for more tips to keep your home safe!

### IMPORTANT DATES

#### MAY 30

Memorial Day  
Our offices will be closed for the holiday.  
Employees will be on call.

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Our culture of safety.*

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### KEEPING OUR LINEMEN SAFE

*Learn how our linemen gear up for safety.*

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### GO MOBILE WITH PIEDMONT ELECTRIC!

*Sign up for our monthly e-newsletter and/or download the app for your tablet.*

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### SIGN UP FOR THE CONNECTION'S DIGITAL VERSION!



Carolina Country magazine and our newsletter are available on iPads and Android tablets. Visit the App or Play store from your tablet to download the Carolina Country app today.

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

*Charge set for renewable energy.*

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Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Every May, we celebrate Electrical Safety Month. At Piedmont Electric, safety remains a top priority year-round – the electricity we provide every day is a phenomenal resource, powering our modern lifestyles in a safe, reliable, and affordable way.

But electricity must be respected: if safety isn't a priority, what changes our lives for the better could change them for the worse in an instant. As cooperative leaders, we embrace safety as a core value and are committed to keeping our members, communities and employees safe.

At Piedmont Electric, we work hard to instill a culture of safety and this begins by educating and raising awareness of electric hazards to our employees and members.

Our "Culture of Safety" is designed to create a much greater awareness about safety issues. This campaign includes the "Speak Up, Listen Up" program, which was created to empower anyone who sees a potentially unsafe situation to speak up and encourage everyone to listen up to those concerns.

In addition to raising awareness and educating our employees, we want

## Our Culture of Safety

our members to know that safety is a shared responsibility and that they are an integral part of ensuring safety in our communities.

For example, it's that time of year when many of our members are planning a project that involves digging, including planting a tree or shrubs. We want our members to make sure you know where underground lines are located. Before starting any project involving digging, "Call 811" – it's smart, safe, free and it's the law.

Another safety program we pride ourselves with is our Electrical Safety Demonstrations that we present to local schools and community organizations. In addition, PEMC reminds members to stay away from downed power lines or fallen trees/limbs that may be in close proximity to power lines. Do not attempt to move downed lines under any circumstances and exercise extreme



R.G. Brecheisen  
President & CEO of Piedmont EMC

caution around any damaged electrical infrastructure. Please report any damage to the cooperative and/or local law enforcement in the event of an emergency.

Piedmont Electric will continue to work with electric cooperative employees, members and the community to maintain safety excellence.

Please take time to educate yourself on how you can be safe around electricity at home. Spending just a few minutes with some helpful resources can make all the difference when you're faced with a possibly unsafe situation. For more information on electrical safety, please visit our website at [www.pemc.coop](http://www.pemc.coop) or the Electrical Safety Foundation International at [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org).

## CO-OP CONNECTIONS® CARD DISCOUNTS



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SAVE \$1

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**Co-op Connections® Card Contest**

Every month, we hold a drawing for one **\$25 Visa Gift Card**. To enter, submit your receipt from a local Co-op Connections® business by the 30th of each month and we randomly draw a winner. For contest details, call 800.222.3107 or visit [pemc.coop](http://pemc.coop).

Meet some of our linemen (left to right) — Jonathan, Donald and Dale, who make safety their top priority. While most linemen love their jobs and cannot imagine doing anything else, they have one primary goal: to come home safely to their loved ones at the end of the day. By setting aside time for training, wearing the proper personal protective equipment and following their utility's safety procedures, linemen can go home safely at the end of each work day.



## THE APPROPRIATE GEAR

Piedmont Electric linemen are required to wear their personal protective equipment at all times on the job in order to keep them safe. These items include: safety belts, hard hats, safety eyewear, insulated rubber gloves and sleeves, arc resistant clothing.



## OSHA STANDARDS AND PROTECTIONS

This year, The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is revising the construction standard for electric power line work related to the construction and repair of electric power generation, transmission and distribution in an effort to improve workplace safety. These regulations are not only designed to keep our linemen safe, but also help to keep you safe when crews are in your area.

## KEEPING OUR LINEMEN SAFE

We often take power – and the linemen who provide it – for granted. Let's take a moment and stand in their boots. Linemen work safe, smart and efficiently – all while 40 feet or more in the air wearing sturdy, thick rubber gloves and sleeves. On a typical day, lineworkers maintain overhead and underground electrical distribution lines or build service to new homes and businesses in our communities. Linemen are also highly trained to be ready to respond no matter the situation or weather conditions.

At Piedmont Electric, lineworkers go through extensive training to ensure they can work safely with various kinds of equipment. The equipment gets tested regularly, too.

"Our line crews are among the best trained, most dedicated and hardest workers you will ever meet," said Wallace Cole, Piedmont Electric's Safety Director. "They must work in and around high-voltage power lines in extreme weather conditions and

often in the dark to restore power to their neighbors' homes."

These highly skilled linemen light our homes and businesses and power our lives every day. They endure harsh climate and long hours all to make our lives better. Today, and every day, please take a moment to thank them. Piedmont Electric's lineworkers are the proud and strong heart of the electric co-op nation.



## STAY SAFE

Piedmont Electric and the dedicated men and women who make up our lineworkers always make safety a top priority, especially when working in potentially dangerous conditions. The highly-skilled Piedmont Electric linemen bring power to our homes and businesses every day – often enduring long hours and harsh weather – for the benefit of our comfort and safety.



Sign up on our website to receive our monthly e-newsletter!

### CONNECT WITH US!

Technology allows Piedmont Electric members to connect with their cooperative like never before. Over the past few years, Piedmont Electric has gone mobile! We know our members are always on the go and want to conveniently access important information on our website and social media sites, including billing and account management tools. You can access all these from your computer, cell phone or tablet.

In addition, our newly launched e-mail newsletter provides easy access to the energy-saving tips, program information and cooperative news that you love in the *Connection* newsletter. If you would like to receive this helpful newsletter in your email inbox, along with the latest information from Piedmont Electric, all we need is your email address! Your *Carolina Country* will still be sent as these e-mail newsletters are an extra way to stay connected to your co-op.

#### To subscribe to the e-newsletter:

1. Visit [pemc.coop](http://pemc.coop) and click the e-newsletter icon on the home page.
2. From there you will fill out a quick form, where you will be added to the list to receive monthly e-newsletters from Piedmont Electric.

### OFFICIAL NOTICE

#### CHARGES ARE SET FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY & ENERGY EFFICIENCY RATES

Changes in the Renewable Energy Rider are due to the increases in renewable purchases. The Energy Efficiency Rider is not necessary for the next 12 months.

#### RENEWABLE ENERGY RIDER

The following Renewable Energy Rider charges are effective May 1, 2016, and will be in effect for 12 months.

	PREVIOUS CHARGES	NEW CHARGES
<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>	\$0.44/MONTHLY	\$0.78/MONTHLY
<b>COMMERCIAL</b>	\$2.93/MONTHLY	\$3.44/MONTHLY
<b>INDUSTRIAL</b>	\$18.18/MONTHLY	\$22.95/MONTHLY

#### ENERGY EFFICIENCY RIDER

The following Energy Efficiency Rider charges are effective May 1, 2016, and will be in effect for 12 months.

	PREVIOUS CHARGES	NEW CHARGES
<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>	0.0297¢/kWh	000¢/kWh
<b>COMMERCIAL &amp; INDUSTRIAL</b>	0.0486¢/kWh	000¢/kWh

#### SMALL & MEDIUM RENEWABLE GENERATION NET METERING RIDER

The following Small and Medium Renewable Generation Net Metering Rider excess energy credit is effective May 1, 2016.

PREVIOUS CREDIT	NEW CREDIT
4.94¢/kWh	5.18¢/kWh

### PIEDMONT ELECTRIC CONNECTION

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Our automated outage reporting system uses your phone number to determine your service location.

That's why it's important to update the number connected to your account. If your number has changed, or if you no longer have a landline, let us know by completing the form that comes in your monthly billing statement or calling 800.222.3107.

To report an outage 24 hours a day  
800.449.2667\*

To pay account and access account information by phone 24 hours a day  
877.999.3394\*

\*Voice instructions will direct you through the system.

Call 811 BEFORE you dig  
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Piedmont Electric is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

