



Pitt and Greene

Electric Membership Corporation

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Member Newsletter

*“Where Customers Have A Choice”
July 2019*

Keeping you safe during and after summer storms

No one knows electrical safety better than the experts who practice it every single day. Pitt & Greene EMC encourages you to practice safety with these reminders - during and after a summer storm:

- Avoid wires and water - When lightning strikes a home during a storm, the electrical charge can surge through pipes and utility wires. That means you can get zapped if you're touching water or any device that's plugged in, whether it's a landline phone or toaster.
- Skip the makeshift shelter - During a storm, it's tempting to take cover under a picnic gazebo or golf cart, but in open-sided structures with no conductors to channel strikes, a bolt's path of least resistance to the ground could be you. On top of that, these structures raise your risk of a lightning strike because of their height. Keep moving toward suitable shelter.
- Portable generators - Take special care with portable generators, which can provide a good source of power, but if improperly installed or operated, can become deadly. Do not connect generators directly to household wiring. Power from generators can back-feed along power lines and electrocute anyone coming in contact with them, including co-op line workers making repairs. It's best to hire a qualified, licensed electrician to install your generator and ensure that it meets local electrical codes.
- Flooded areas - Stay away from downed power lines and avoid walking through flooded areas. Power lines could be submerged and still alive with electricity. Report any downed lines you see to Pitt & Greene EMC by calling 252-753-3128 immediately.
- Electrical equipment - Never use electrical equipment that is wet - especially outdoor electrical equipment, which could be a potential danger after a summer storm. Water can damage electrical equipment and parts, posing a shock or fire hazard.

Avoid High Summer Electric Bills

Don't let warmer weather turn into “summer blues” when your monthly electric bill arrives. Following are some energy-saving tips:

- Adjust the thermostat. During warmer months, raising the thermostat a few degrees can save money. Set the temperature between 78-80 degrees Fahrenheit, and you could save up to 8 percent on monthly cooling bills.
- Programmable thermostats make it easy to save by offering four pre-programmed settings to regulate a home's temperature throughout the year.
- Be a “fan-atic.” While they don't replace air conditioners or heat pumps, fans move air and help you feel more comfortable. On milder days, fans can save as much as 60 percent on electric bills. Fans cool people, not rooms, so turn them off when you leave.
- Regular maintenance is essential. Have your HVAC systems serviced annually by NATE (National American Technician Excellence) - certified technician. This HVAC professional will check your entire system to make sure it runs efficiently. This will help extend the life of the system and save money.
- When it's time to replace your cooling system. TogetherWeSave.com recommends replacing it with an ENERGY STAR - qualified model. Doing so will reduce your energy costs.
- Bigger isn't always better. Too often, cooling equipment isn't sized properly and leads to higher electric bills. A unit that's too large for your home will not cool evenly and might produce higher humidity indoors.

Instead of getting burned this summer by high energy bills, visit www.energysavers.gov OR Touchstone Energy Cooperatives energy-saving website, www.TogetherWeSave.com, for more money-saving ideas.



Manager's Message

By: Mark A. Suggs

A Buyer's Guide To Residential Generators

Let's face it: rough weather happens. At Pitt & Greene EMC, our goal is to restore power as quickly and safely as possible. But when a major storm hits, power may be out for an extended period of time. Anyone who has experienced an extended power outage has likely mulled over the idea of buying a generator, but before you do - make sure you have all the facts.

The purchase and installation of a generator is an important and serious decision. Properly done, you gain peace of mind knowing your family can ride out any outage with some degree of comfort. But an incorrectly implemented generator can become deadly to you, your family, your neighbors and your electric cooperative's employees.

So, let's look at the decisions you'll need to make when it comes to purchasing a residential generator. First, do you want to back up your entire home or just portions? The biggest drawback to a permanently installed, whole-house generator is the cost. While the advantages are significant, it is a large expense for most folks to cover. The next decision is sizing the generator to your particular situation. Online tools abound, so if you like to research, just type "generator sizing guide" into your browser and off you go. A nice portable generator size is at least 6,500 watts with a startup capacity of around 8,000 watts. When motor loads start, they draw more power than they use when running. This "in rush" of power gets them spinning. Afterwards, their demand for electricity decreases.

The third consideration is how to integrate the generator with your home. Permanent models have dedicated switching devices that handle this chore, while portable models require you to remove them from storage, set them up, connect them and start them up. Here is where the danger mentioned above comes into play. Improperly connected generators can easily back feed into Pitt & Greene EMC's lines. As electricity flows back into the lines, the transformers boost the voltage to lethal levels. Be sure to closely follow connection instructions, and contact us if you have any questions regarding connecting your generator safely. The National Electrical Code has specific guidelines for their installation.

Use of the generator can be as simple as plugging appliances directly into it. This is cumbersome and very limiting. Better yet, have a transfer switch installed by a qualified electrician. This device connects to the circuits you want to power. Connect your generator to the dedicated plug, follow the disconnect procedure and fire it up. Now you've got power for your home that's safe for all.

Next, a word about quality. With generators, you definitely get what you pay for. Cheap models are just that. They may last a couple of years, but after that, parts can be impossible to get. Few things are worse than your generator failing to operate when the lights are out. Definitely go for engines with recognizable brand names. They may cost more, but it will certainly be worth it.

It's important to exercise your portable generator regularly. Don't worry, you don't need to walk your generator - it's not that type of exercise. Exercising means connecting load to it and turning it on to be sure it will run. While you're at it, why not let us know you have a generator? We can provide safety and connection tips if needed, and it will enhance our line crew's safety.



ELECTRICAL SAFETY QUIZ

Test your electrical safety knowledge by taking the quiz below!

Use the answer key if you need help.

1. Smoke alarms in your home should be tested _____.

- A. once a week
- B. twice a year
- C. once a month

2. Overloading electrical outlets and power strips can create an electrical fire hazard.

- A. True
- B. False

3. What's the most dangerous place to use electricity?

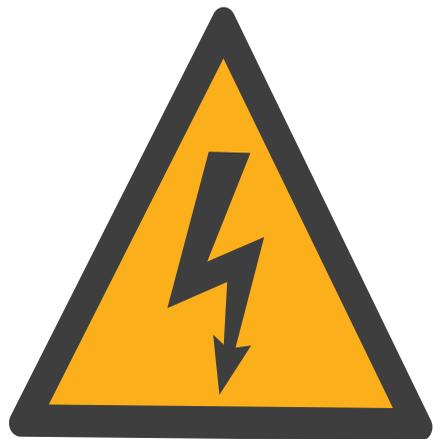
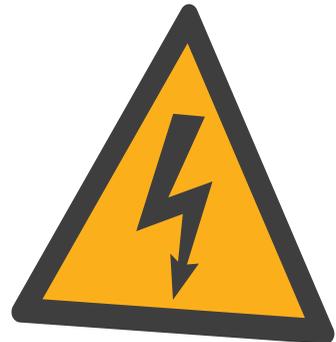
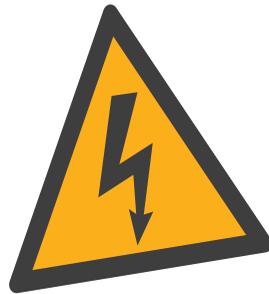
- A. Outdoors
- B. Near other electrical equipment
- C. Near water

4. It's safe to run an electrical cord under a rug or carpet as long as the cord is not damaged.

- A. True
- B. False

5. Which is safest to play near?

- A. Power lines
- B. Pad-mounted transformers
- C. Neither A or B - both are dangerous



Answer Key: 1.C 2.A 3.C 4.B 5.C



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVES

Harvesting Safely

As rewarding as it may be, farming is an extremely difficult job. It ranks among the top 10 most dangerous professions in the United States. At Pitt & Greene EMC, safety is top priority for all our employees and our members.

Our farmers work hard to get the job done, and sometimes it's easy to forget all the necessary steps to take when practicing safe operations. Grain bins are siloed spaces built for storing grain and fermented feed known as silage. These bins play an integral role in the efficiency and profitability of farm operations, and safety regulations should always be considered when working around these structures.

Whether you're purchasing new grain bins or remodeling areas that contain existing ones, proximity to overhead power lines must be a considered factor.

Safe clearance. The National Electrical Safety Code requires an 18-foot minimum vertical clearance from the highest point of the filling port of the grain bin to nearby high-voltage wires and the minimum distance from the power line to the grain bin wall is determined by the height of the grain bin. Changes to landscaping and drainage work can affect clearance heights of power lines, so remember to check these measurements regularly.

Filling grain bins. High-voltage power lines are not insulated, so it's important to maintain an adequate high-wire clearance when using a portable auger, conveyor or elevator to fill your grain bin.

Moving equipment near grain bins. When moving equipment, such as a hopper or a scaffold, be aware of nearby power lines. Remember to maintain a 10-foot clearance to ensure safety.

Accidents can happen in a split second, which is why Pitt & Greene EMC reminds you to always use caution when working near power lines. If you are considering a plan for a new grain bin or reconstruction of an existing bin's site, please contact Pitt & Greene EMC's engineering department at 252.753.3128 and let us assist you in maintaining a safe environment for you and your family.



Important Sales and Use Tax Notice

A purchaser (farmers, manufacturers and commercial laundries) that is eligible for a preferential tax rate on electricity should complete and furnish the seller/electricity supplier Form E-595E, Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement Certificate of Exemption, to take advantage of qualifying reductions.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When it's warm out, avoid using the oven. Try cooking on the stove, using the microwave or grilling outside instead.

Source: energy.gov



De lunes a viernes de 8:00 a.m. a 5:00 p.m.
252-753-3128 / 1-800-622-1362 / 252-747-7600

CORTES DE SUMINISTRO ELÉCTRICO Y EMERGENCIAS:

Durante fines de semana, días festivos y después del horario de oficina
252-753-8778

Co-op Office Hours

Monday - Friday - 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
252-753-3128 / 1-800-622-1362 / 252-747-7600

POWER OUTAGES & EMERGENCIAS

During weekends, holidays and after office hours
252-753-8778