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## ***May Is Electrical Safety Month***

It’s May, and Pitt & Greene EMC is celebrating National Electrical Safety Month. While safety for our members is top priority year-round, Electrical Safety Month is a time to acknowledge the importance of safety excellence.

This year, we’re focusing on electrical safety in the home. Electricity is the cause of over 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).

There are many measures you can take to ensure the safety of your loved ones. Use these helpful tips from ESFI to safeguard your home.

### ***In the kitchen***

- Vacuum refrigerator coils every three months to eliminate dirt buildup that can reduce efficiency and create fire hazards.
- Ensure all countertop appliances are located away from the sink.
- All appliance cords should be placed away from hot surfaces. Pay particular attention to cords around toasters, ovens and ranges. Cords can be damaged by excess heat.
- The top and the area above the cooking range should be free of combustibles, such as potholders and plastic utensils. Storing these items on or near the range may result in fires or burns.

### ***Light the way to safety***

- The wattage of the bulbs you use in your home should match the wattage indicated on the light fixture. Overheated fixtures can lead to a fire.
- Check lamp cords to make sure they are in good condition – not damaged or cracked. Do not attempt to repair damaged cords yourself. Take any item with a damaged power cord to an authorized repair center.
- Extension cords should not be used to provide power on a long-term or permanent basis. Have additional receptacles installed by a professional to provide power where needed.

### ***Be prepared***

- Nearly two-thirds of fire deaths result from fires in homes without working smoke alarms. Smoke alarms should be located on every level of your home, inside each bedroom and outside each sleeping area.
- Test smoke alarms every month. Batteries should be replaced at least once a year – or sooner if indicated in the manufacturers’ instructions. All smoke alarms should be replaced at least every 10 years.
- Talk to your family about an emergency plan in the event of a fire in your home. If you have small children, include them in planning an emergency escape route – they are more likely to remember the plan if they’re involved in creating it.



## **Beware of Scam Artist**

Scam artists, posing as employees of Pitt & Greene EMC, are calling cooperative members warning that their electricity is about to be disconnected unless payment is made immediately. They are also asking for personal information such as social security numbers, checking account numbers and/or debit/credit card numbers. Employees of Pitt & Greene EMC will not call you and ask for this information. At any time you are contacted by someone who says they are representing Pitt & Greene EMC and they begin asking you for personal information, hang up, call our office at 252-753-3128 to speak with someone in customer service for verification.



## *Manager's Message*

*By: Mark A. Suggs*

### **Tree Trimming Improves Service for All**

One of the best things about our community is the natural beauty that surrounds us. We are fortunate to have so many trees that offer beauty, shade, and a habitat for all sorts of birds and other wildlife. We know that you appreciate our community for many of the same reasons.

At Pitt & Greene EMC, we strive to balance maintaining beautiful surroundings and ensuring a reliable power supply by keeping power lines clear in right of ways (ROW).

While we appreciate the beauty of the trees, there are three main benefits to tree trimming in ROW areas. A right of way is the land we use to construct, maintain, replace, or repair underground and overhead power lines. Right of ways enable the co-op to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder the power line installation, maintenance, or operation. ROW areas are typically on public lands or located near a business or home. Pitt & Greene EMC must be able to maintain the power lines above and below the ROW. The overall goal of our vegetation management program is to provide reliable power to our members while maintaining the beauty of our community. Proactive vegetation management benefits co-op members in three ways.

#### **Safety**

First and foremost, we care about our members and put their safety and that of our line workers above all else. Overgrown vegetation and trees create a risk to power lines. For example, if trees are touching power lines in our members' yards, they can pose grave danger to families.

If children can access those trees, they can potentially climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor like a tree. A proactive approach also diminishes the chances of fallen branches or trees during severe weather events that make it more complicated and dangerous for line workers to restore power.

#### **Reliability**

Of course, one of the biggest benefits of a smart vegetation management program is reliability. Strategic tree trimming reduces the frequency of downed lines causing power outages. Healthy trees do not fall on power lines, and clear lines don't cause problems. Proactive trimming and pruning keep lines clear to promote reliability.

#### **Affordable**

As you know, Pitt & Greene EMC is a not-for-profit cooperative, and that means we strive to keep our costs in line to keep our rates affordable. This extends to our approach to vegetation management. If trees grow too close to power lines, the potential for expensive repairs also increases. Effective tree trimming and other vegetation management efforts keep costs down for everyone.

Our community is a special place. We appreciate the beauty of the trees, but we also know our community depends on us to provide reliable energy. Through vegetation management, we are better able to keep the power lines clear, prepare for future weather events and secure the reliability of the grid.

## *May is Military Appreciation Month*

We are thankful for the brave men and women who selflessly gave the ultimate sacrifice so that we can enjoy the freedoms their service affords us. This May, please join us in pausing to reflect on the sacrifices made by our nation's veterans.



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## **Prepare Now for Hurricane Season**

While it may feel like the 2020 hurricane season just ended, the 2021 Atlantic hurricane season is quickly approaching and will officially begin on June 1. In recognition of this, May 9-15 has been designated as Hurricane Preparedness Week, and PGEMC encourages all our members to prepare now for potential storms.

North Carolina is one of the leading states for overall damage from hurricanes, and any part of our state can be impacted by their storms, as many of our communities have experienced firsthand in recent years.

Here are some things you should do BEFORE hurricanes season starts:

Outline a communication and evacuation plan for your family. If you have pets or any live-stock, include them in your plan.

Create an emergency kit that includes:

- Important documents sealed in a watertight plastic bag
- Cash
- Enough non-perishable food, water and medication for at least three days
- First-aid kit
- Battery-powered radio
- Flashlight
- Extra batteries
- Personal hygiene items
- Extra clothes and blankets
- Food and other supplies for pets

Connect with us online at [WWW.PGEMC.COM](http://WWW.PGEMC.COM) or on Facebook to stay informed about outages and other storm information. Keep our outage reporting number 800-622-1362 and 252-753-3128, along with our holiday, nights and weekend number 252-753-8778 for your convenience.



**Energy Efficiency  
Tip of the Month**

Avoid placing items like lamps and televisions near your thermostat.

The thermostat senses heat from these appliances, which can cause your air conditioner to run longer than necessary.

Source: [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov)

## *Electrical Safety Tips for Kids*

At Pitt & Greene EMC we understand your child's health and well-being are your top priority. With more than 140,000 electrical fires occurring each year, knowledge of electrical safety is necessary to ensuring your loved ones stay safe. Here are a few tips you can share with your little ones:

\* Electrical fires are caused when a wire or electrical device overheats. It is important to make sure your children understand that water cannot extinguish this type of fire. Only fire extinguishers can be used to remedy this situation.

\* In addition to the previous tip, it is never a good idea to mix water with electricity. Keep blow dryers, radios and any other electrical devices away from all water, especially those used in a bathroom.

\* Keep metal objects out of appliances and plugs. If a piece of toast gets stuck in the toaster, never use a metal knife to retrieve it. Unplug the toaster, and use a different tool or utensil to remove the toast. Remember, only plugs should go in outlets. Sticking fingers or other objects in outlets may result in an electrical shock.

\* It's always a good idea to turn lights off when they are not in use. This will save your family money on your electric bill and prevent electrical fires from overheated bulbs.

Kids will be kids, and they love the great outdoors. Remind them to avoid overhead power lines. Whether they are climbing trees or flying kites or remote-controlled toys, they should always be mindful of what is above. Talk to your children about the importance of electrical safety, and more importantly, lead by example – because you never know who's watching.

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## *Make The Most Of Ceiling Fans*

By turning on the fan, you can turn up the savings! If you are like most Americans, you have at least one ceiling fan in your home. Ceiling fans help our indoor life feel more comfortable. They are a decorative addition to our homes and, if used properly, can help lower energy costs.

### TIPS FOR MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR CEILING FANS:

1. **FLIP THE SWITCH** – Most ceiling fans have a switch near the blades. In warm months, flip the switch so that the blades operate in a counter clockwise direction, effectively producing a “wind chill” effect. Fans make the air near you feel cooler than it actually is. In winter, move the switch so the fan blades rotate clockwise, creating a gentle updraft. This pushes warm air down from the ceiling into occupied areas of the room. Regardless of the season, try operating the fan on its lowest setting.

2. **ADJUST YOUR THERMOSTAT** – In the summer, when using a fan in conjunction with an air conditioner, or instead of it, you can turn your thermostat up three to five degrees without any reduction in comfort. This saves money since a fan is less costly to run than an air conditioner. In the winter, lower your thermostat's set point by the same amount. Ceiling fans push the warm air from the ceiling back down toward the living space, which means the furnace won't turn on as frequently.

3. **CHOOSE THE RIGHT SIZE** – Make sure your ceiling fan is the right size for the room. A fan that is 36-44 inches in diameter will cool rooms up to 225 square feet. A fan that is 52 inches or more should be used to cool a larger space.

4. **TURN IT OFF** – When the room is unoccupied, turn the fan off. Fans are intended to cool people - not rooms.

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