

country living

FOR MEMBERS OF EAST CENTRAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Co-op Membership is Sweet

Sweet Electrical Safety Tips for National Crafting Month



Are flower buds and bird songs making you feel energized for some springtime DIY? As you beautify your home and yard, East Central Electric Cooperative would like to share some tips to keep you and your family safe.



Do not plant shrubs and trees close to green box transformers or other utility equipment. Limiting or restricting access to the box in your yard could delay restoration work during an outage and create a serious safety hazard.

Look up and around you. Always be aware of the location of power lines, particularly when using long metal tools like ladders, pool skimmers, and pruning poles; when installing rooftop antennas and satellite dishes; or when doing roof repair work.



If your projects include digging, like building a patio or planting a tree, call 811 to have utility lines marked before you begin. Never assume the location or depth of underground utility lines. This service is free, prevents the inconvenience of having utilities interrupted, and can help you avoid serious injury.

Whatever the project, take the time before you begin to make sure you have the right tools for the job, and always inspect electric tools for frayed cords, cracks in the insulation, and proper connections. Tools that are used outdoors have a higher risk of wear and tear. Replace any damaged tools. It is never worth the risk of injury.

Not all electric tools are able to reach the work area, so be sure you use the appropriate extension cord. Only use extension cords that are rated for outdoor use when working outside, and remember, extension cords are for temporary use only.



Use heavy-duty, three-prong extension cords for tools with three-prong plugs. Never remove or bend back the third prong on extension cords. It is a safety feature designed to reduce the risk of electrocution or shock.

Keep your work area tidy to reduce the risk of tripping, and do not allow your power cords to tangle. When the project is finished, neatly put your tools away in a dry area. Do not leave tools outdoors.

To learn more about your elected trustees, or to view a district map, please visit ecoec.com. To contact your trustee, please call 918-756-0833.

notes from the chair



by Lowell Hobbs, President, East Central Electric Cooperative Board of Trustees

We Can Make It Better

Some of our members experienced about 2 hours without electric power in early February. I was one of those. It was comforting to my family to know that East Central Electric crews were on the job, locating and fixing the problems. I knew we would be back online soon, and there was great comfort in knowing the outage wouldn't last long.

When we think about all of the benefits we have in life, it makes our attitudes better. Your board of directors have an attitude of "we can make it better." Remain calm, be kind, and believe in your team. We have special people for special jobs, and we can trust our team. Electricity provides many blessings to our way of living, and it lets our young people become accustomed to a better way of life.

I was reminded about my life before we had electricity. Our heat was a wood stove. We did get some heat from the exercise of cutting the wood for the stove. After Donna and I married I told some of my friends one of my coldest memories was holding the lantern for her to cut us some stove wood one night.

Our broadband build out to our members is projected to be complete by the end of 2023. Soon we will be building out to non-members in our area as Federal Funds become available.

Construction is moving along very well on our new building effort and is already housing some of our staff that have been working off location. Many things are happening to make our members and neighbors have a better way of life.

A few years back through our horseback riding, Donna and I met

Don LaPorte. At 55 years of age he had lost his eyesight from diabetes. Discouraged he sold his horses and left

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- LOWELL HOBBS

the riding experience. Before long he decided that with some help he could resume his riding. He was able to buy

back some of his horses, had a wife or a friend that would accompany him and say dodge left or right or duck down as they negotiated the trees. Don became a supporter of the Oklahoma School for the

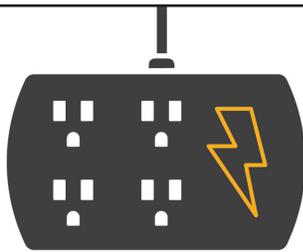
Blind in Muskogee, and asked us at Barefoot Ranch to host a ride for the youngsters at that school. We immediately accepted the challenge.

We called on the Okmulgee County Cattlemen for help. Several came to assist and some brought their horses. 43 kids, pre kindergarten to 3rd grade showed up. My, my what a day!

Those kids "saw" the horses, hay bales, and fish with their hands. Each rider had an Okmulgee County cattleman walking on each side of a horse being led, each student had an adult helping them fish, and the Oklahoma Quarter Horse Association, of which Don LaPorte was a part, fed everyone hot dogs for lunch. Channel 6 TV was there, a reporter from the Tulsa World was there and several politicians.

I was interviewed by the news people. They asked "Do you think this was good for the kids?" My reply: "Certainly was, but I can tell you the adults got equally as much out of it as the kids!"

Lowell Hobbs represents ECE District #2. To reach him, please call his cellphone at 918-695-5289.



SURGE PROTECTION

Keep your electronic equipment safe.

A power surge is typically caused by lightning, changes in electrical loads, faulty wiring or damaged power lines.

Install power strips with surge protection to protect sensitive equipment.

- Easy to use (just plug them in)
- Protect electronics plugged into the device
- Must be replaced over time or after a major surge event



REMEMBER:

Not all power strips offer surge protection. Carefully read the packaging labels when purchasing.

Planning ... Planting ... Pruning ...

how logical landscaping saves lives

You can have the prettiest petunias or the most manicured lawn in the county, and still be making this common landscaping mistake. The wrong trees in the wrong spot can present a life-threatening electrical hazard to you, your children, and the men and women who restore power.

Consider the mature height of trees when planning your garden. For example, a beautiful towering Eastern Redcedar might be the perfect barrier between you and your neighbors, but at 40-feet tall, it can disrupt power and will require regular yearly maintenance to prevent interference with power lines. Even short, flowering trees

like dogwoods and redbuds should be planted away from electrical equipment whenever possible. When tree limbs come in contact with electric lines, they can conduct electricity through the branches to any children who might be climbing.

It's also critical to consider where underground utility services are located before planting. Roots can grow and interfere with underground pipes, cables, and wires. Future repairs to these facilities could damage the health and beauty of nearby plants and trees. Before digging, always call 8-1-1 to have underground utility lines

marked so that accidental contact, damage, and injuries can be avoided.

The areas around electric meters, transformers, or other electrical equipment are also important to keep vegetation free. Plants need water to survive, but water and electricity are a dangerous combination. Vining plants may look elegant as they wind up a structure, but when they take over electrical equipment, they threaten the lives of the lineworkers attempting to restore your power.

It is possible to have both a beautiful garden, and a safe one. It just takes a little planning.

Plant Trees Safely

Before you dig, call 811 to locate buried utility lines.

LOW TREE ZONE

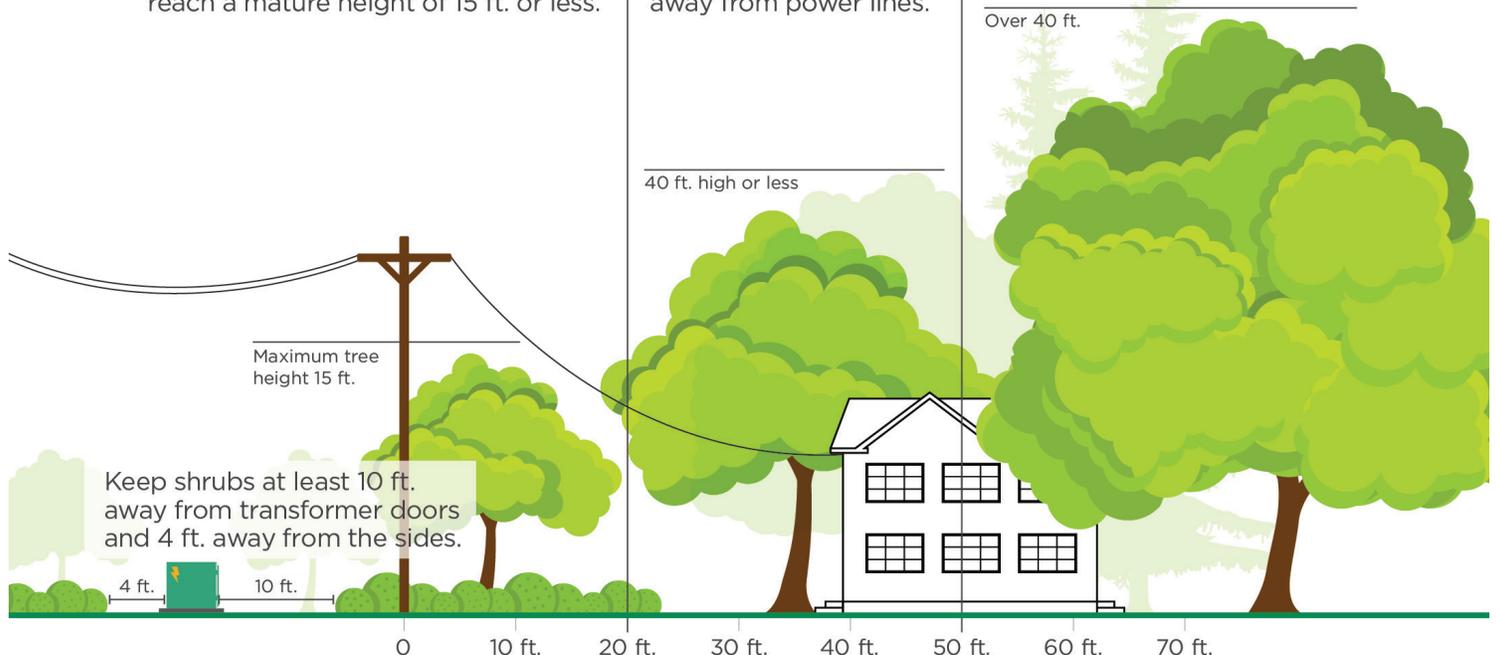
Avoid planting within 20 ft. of power lines. If planting is unavoidable, only plant shrubs and small trees that reach a mature height of 15 ft. or less.

MEDIUM TREE ZONE

Plant medium trees (under 40 ft. when mature) at least 25 ft. away from power lines.

LARGE TREE ZONE

Plant large trees (over 40 ft. when mature) at least 50 ft. away from power lines.





Operation Roundup funds support local charitable organizations, civic groups, youth programs, community services, and needy families. For more information on this voluntary bill roundup program, please visit us online at www.ecoec.com.

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS
\$2,081,606.43

APPLICATIONS REVIEWED
1,261

APPLICATIONS GRANTED
865

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED
\$284,500

AVERAGE MEMBER CONTRIBUTION
48¢



Cool Whip Pie

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 2 graham cracker pie crusts | 2 cans mandarin oranges, drained and chopped |
| 1 C. chopped nuts | 1/2 C. lemon juice |
| 1 large container of Cool Whip | 1 can condensed milk |

DIRECTIONS

Mix lemon juice and milk. Add other ingredients. chill thoroughly. Other fruit may be substituted based on season or preference. Makes 2 pies.



ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

A heavy reliance on extension cords and power strips is an indication that you have too few outlets to address your needs. Have a qualified electrician inspect your home and add new outlets.

SOURCE: ELECTRICAL SAFETY FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL

SOURCE: ECE 80TH ANNIVERSARY COOKBOOK



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