



[Rural Life]

SUNNY COLORADO

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It's shaping up to be another hot, windy and dry year in southeastern Colorado. As the outdoor temperature rises, your utility bills may also. Heat may strain your air-conditioning unit during the hot summer months, causing it to run frequently and increasing your cooling costs. However, there are steps you can take to make your home more efficient during these hot summer months.

Home efficiency during summer months has a lot in common with the home efficiency checks that you do during the winter months. Make sure you change your air filters at least monthly to keep your unit running efficiently. Just like checking for cold air leaking in through cracks in the winter, look for any areas that may need weather stripping and caulk where heat could enter your home.

While you are away during the day, set your thermostat higher; it can be as high as

85 degrees as this temperature will still keep any pets that may be in the home comfortable and can help lower your bills.

A programmable thermostat will help you control the temperature of your home and will ensure it is cool when you return home for the day. Whether it's manual or programmable, it is important to remember when adjusting your thermostat that lowering the temperature rapidly in an attempt to cool your home faster is ineffective — your air conditioner will cool just as fast at 78 degrees as it might at 68 degrees.

Ceiling fans are also a great way to keep rooms cool while saving energy. Air conditioners can use between 12 and 16 amps of electricity while ceiling fans average 1 amp or less of electricity. While running a fan may not exactly bring in new cold air,



Jack Johnston

it does circulate the cold air that is already in the home and may make it feel cooler than it really is. It is possible to turn on your fans and turn up your thermostat a degree or two and not notice a difference.

Other things you can do to keep it cooler in your home include simply keeping your shades, blinds and drapes

closed during the day. A darker room stays cooler longer than a room that has sunlight coming in. Also, consider running stoves, dryers and other heat-producing appliances during cooler hours of the day, such as the evening or early morning.

Energy efficiency, whether in the winter or in the summer months, is key for keeping your family comfortable and electricity bills lower.

You Could Be A Winner This Month

If you find your name in this issue as follows (WIN* your name, your account number), please contact Southeast Colorado Power Association at 719-384-2551 or 800-332-8634 to receive a credit on your next power bill.

Last month's winner was Melvin Vagher Acct.# 2200040000



WASHINGTON D.C. YOUTH TOUR TRIP WINNERS

This year's Washington D.C. Youth Tour trip winners were Caitlin Lancaster and Jeffrey Henderson, pictured at right.

Plan to attend next year's annual meeting and hear all about their experiences touring our nation's capital. Both winners expressed their appreciation to SECPA for giving them the opportunity to experience a life-changing trip.





It's Not Just a Green Metal Box

You're aware of those green metal boxes in neighborhood yards, but do you know what they're for? These boxes contain pad-mounted transformers that step down high-voltage electricity to a lower voltage needed for the underground wires supplying power to the lights and appliances in homes. They perform just like the gray, round transformers on power poles connected to overhead power lines.

In most cases, these boxes pose no danger, but they must be recognized and respected for the electrical equipment they contain. A box knocked askew by equipment, or tampered with and missing a lock, can become a serious danger to anyone, especially children who often use them as platforms.

Parents should explain to children that these boxes are potentially dangerous and not to be played on or around. Parents also need to make sure that their utility has properly locked the box. A pad-mounted transformer that isn't properly secured can be a serious hazard. This is a lesson that Aaron Studer learned the hard way.

Aaron and his brother Brett were playing, using sticks as swords, when they came upon an unlocked pad-mounted transformer box. Aaron opened the box, stuck his stick inside and created a bright flash. Aaron suffered second and third degree burns to his face. Fortunately he had no permanent scars.

It's also important to be safe while landscaping around pad-mounted transformers by:

- Keeping shrubs and structures 10 feet away from doors and 4 feet away from the other sides of the transformer.
- Considering the mature height of a bush or tree so as not to obstruct the transformer when fully grown.
- Making sure plant roots will not grow to interfere with wires and buried cables.

Remember, these boxes provide electricity to your home. Keeping the area around the transformer in your yard unobstructed can speed up restoration during outages and routine maintenance checks.

For more information on staying safe around pad-mounted transformers, visit SafeElectricity.org.

5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Careless digging poses a threat to people, pipelines and underground facilities. Always call 8-1-1 first. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before your work begins. The operator will notify the utilities affected by your project.

2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.

2-3

3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.



5. DIG CAREFULLY



Source: call811.com



HARVEST SAFETY

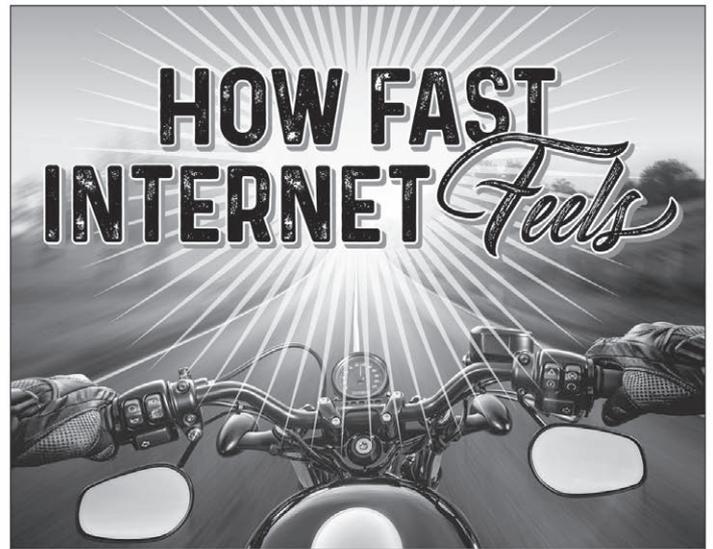
Now is the time for farmers to reap the rewards of a long and often tiring growing season. When it comes to fall harvest, there is a lot to get done in a seemingly short amount of time, as shorter days and cooler weather can create a sense of urgency. These factors, along with today's technology and large farm equipment, can lead to serious accidents.

Overhead electric lines near end rows and along roadways can also be a danger to operators of larger, taller farm equipment. Safe Electricity urges farmers to keep equipment and extensions at least 10 feet away from power lines in all directions, and recommends the following tips to keep farmers safe:

- Know where overhead power lines are before you head out to the field, and have a plan to stay far from them.
- Use a spotter when raising any equipment, such as augers, grain trucks and ladders. It can be difficult to tell how close you are to overhead power lines.
- Know what to do and have a plan if you come into contact with an overhead power line. Do not leave the vehicle until utility workers cut off electricity and confirm that it is safe to exit the vehicle. Know what to do in the rare event the equipment catches fire.
- Always lower portable augers or elevators to their lowest possible level — under 14 feet — before moving or transporting them. Wind, uneven ground, shifting weight and other conditions can make it difficult to control raised equipment.
- Never try to move a power line to clear a path. Power lines start to sag over time, bringing them closer to farmers and others who need to avoid them. Contact your utility to repair sagging power lines.

WIN* Howard C. Sumpter Acct.# 1911390000

For more information on electrical farm safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.



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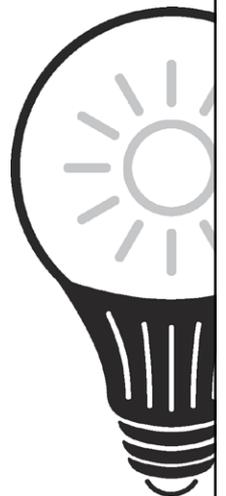
*Service availability and internet speed will depend on location. Contact us for details.

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Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Look for LED products and fixtures for outdoor use, such as pathway, step and porch lights. Many include features like automatic daylight shut-off and motion sensors. You can also find solar-powered lighting for outdoor spaces.

Source: energy.gov





PLAY IT SAFE AROUND LIGHTNING

There's nothing like spending a warm day outside enjoying your favorite sports activity, whether it's on the golf course, baseball diamond or a fishing boat. When the weather is right for outdoor sports, it can also be perfect conditions for a thunderstorm to roll in, with the potential for lightning. About 30 people are killed by lightning each year, according to the National Weather Service. Two-thirds of those fatalities are associated with outdoor recreational activities.

Safe Electricity wants you to be safe this season with the following tips to protect you while participating in outdoor sports:

- Organized sports activities should have a designated official who will watch for approaching dark clouds and any lightning in the area. Designated officials and anyone participating in outdoor sports should have a lightning safety plan with tips on when the activity should be stopped, where people should go for safety and when activities can resume.
- Stop outdoor activity if you see lightning. Lightning can strike up to 10 to 15 miles away from the storm. Follow the simple phrase: "When thunder roars, go indoors."
- No place outside is safe during a storm, including dugouts, sheds or rain shelters. If you don't have access to a sturdy building, a hard-topped metal vehicle with the windows rolled up provides good protection from the elements.

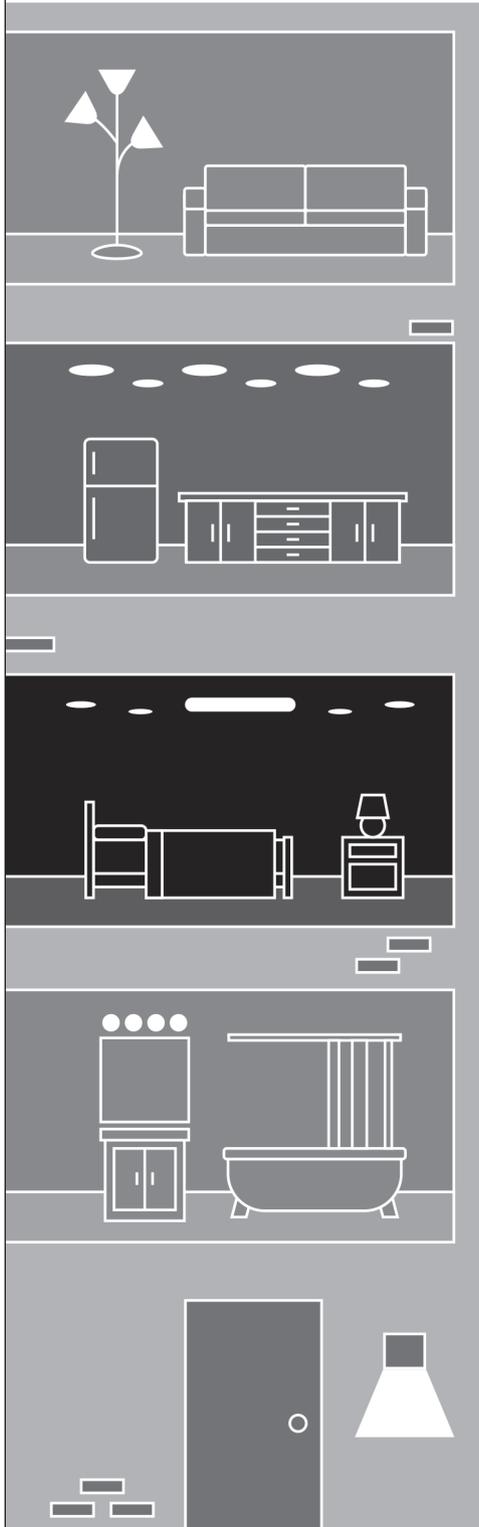
Because electrical charges can linger in clouds even after the storm passes, weather experts recommend you wait 30 minutes after the last sounds of thunder before resuming any outdoor activity. If it is an organized sports activity, the designated official should make the call on when to return to the field.

Whether it is an organized sports activity, a round of golf with friends or a game of basketball in the driveway, plan to make your outdoor sports safe this season and don't let lightning strike you out.

For more information on lightning safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Save Energy with LEDs

LED lights last up to 30 times longer than incandescents, reducing the need to replace bulbs in high or hard-to-reach places. Below are LED lighting suggestions for your home.



Living Room Lamps

Table or floor three-way lamps using LED bulbs provide 620, 1,600 or 2,150 lumens of soft white light and deliver up to 25,000 hours of light.

Kitchen

Dimmable recessed LED conversion lights add a warm glow of up to 1,200 lumens for kitchen workspaces and add far less heat to your kitchen. Each bulb could last 10 years.

Bedrooms and Hallways

Long-life LEDs are ideal for ceiling fixtures. A 9-watt LED produces the same 800 lumens of light as a 60-watt incandescent, and uses about 80 percent less energy.

Bathrooms

Omnidirectional LED globe bulbs are designed to provide a warm glow ideal for bathrooms. A 6-watt bulb produces 450 lumens and lasts up to 15,000 hours.

Outdoors

A 6-watt, 500 lumen LED bulb can replace a 40-watt incandescent bulb. Designed to last up to 30,000 hours, it could be a one-time switch.