

Butler Public Power District

February 2020

Trees and Power Lines Don't Mix

There are thousands of trees across our service area that beautify our countryside and communities. Although most trees do not present a problem, some of them grow into or crowd power lines or other utility equipment. When greenery becomes too close for comfort, we have to address it because overgrowth can interfere with power distribution and create other problems including dangers to people around them. Power lines can give off a spark or arc that may land on a nearby branch and ignite. Additionally, the lights in your house may flicker when tree branches brush power lines during high winds. Stormy weather can also cause limbs to break off and land on lines.

In fact, the majority of power outages are caused by tree-related issues. That is why utilities have the right-of-way to trees growing on easements. An integral part of providing excellent customer service is ensuring trees are a safe distance from power lines.

Lines that are clear of branches, limbs and other types of debris make it easier and safer for line workers to access lines and fix other problems that may occur. When clearing around lines, we make sure proper pruning techniques are used to preserve tree health as much as possible. Pruning is the first line of defense against unruly trees, although sometimes a tree must be removed. This is a last resort for certain scenarios: when a fast-growing tree is located directly under a power line or for trees that are leaning, in decline, or cracked or split.

When hiring someone to trim trees on private property, know that most tree-care workers are not qualified to work around energized power lines. By law, only certified utility line clearance workers are allowed to work on trees or branches within 10 feet of a power line.

Contact us with questions about power line clearance or trees around power lines. For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.



Irrigation 2020

The annual newsletters will be sent out in March. Please notify us of any property/name changes, phone number for text notification changes, or motor changes as soon as possible.

Deadline for control changes, without penalty is April 3rd.

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Four Tips for Winter Safety

By Abby Berry, NRECA

It's no surprise that winter months bring increased potential for fire risks and electrical safety hazards. This makes sense because during the coldest months, consumers are using additional electrical devices and appliances, like space heaters, electric blankets and portable generators.

The National Fire Protection Association estimates that 47,700 home fires occur each year in the U.S. due to electrical failure or malfunction. These fires result in 418 deaths, 1,570 injuries and \$1.4 billion in property damage annually. This winter, safeguard your loved ones and your home with these electrical safety tips from the Electrical Safety Foundation International.

1. Don't overload outlets. Overloaded outlets are a major cause of residential fires. Avoid using extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliance connections—they should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. If you're relying heavily on extension cords in general, you may need additional outlets to address your needs. Contact a qualified electrician to inspect your home and add new outlets.



2. Never leave space heaters unattended. If you're using a space heater, turn it off before leaving the room. Make sure heaters are placed at least three feet away from flammable items. It should also be noted that space heaters take a toll on your energy bills. If you're using them throughout your home, it may be time to upgrade your home heating system.

3. Inspect heating pads and electric blankets. These items cause nearly 500 fires every year. Electric blankets that are more than 10 years old create additional risks for a fire hazard. Inspect your electric blankets and heating pads – look for dark, charred or frayed spots, and make sure the electrical cord is not damaged. Do not place any items on top of a heating pad or electric blanket, and never fold them when in use.



4. Use portable generators safely. Unfortunately, winter storms can cause prolonged power outages, which means many consumers will use portable generators to power their homes. Never connect a standby generator into your home's electrical system. For portable generators, plug appliances directly into the outlet provided on the generator. Start the generator first, before you plug in appliances. Run it in a well-ventilated area outside your home. The carbon monoxide it generates is deadly, so keep it away from your garage, doors, windows and vents.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Are you using your fireplace efficiently? Remember to turn down the thermostat when burning a fire, and close the damper when a fire is not burning.

Source: energy.gov





Residential Energy Efficiency Programs

Effective: January 1, 2020

Heat Pump

- Must have minimum of 12.5 EER and 8.5 HSPF
- Must include AHRI Certificate

Incentive

- Air Source Heat Pump
 - * 15 SEER = \$400.00
 - * 16-17 SEER = \$800.00
 - * 18+ SEER = \$1,200.00
 - * Variable Capacity = \$1,200
- Ductless Mini-Split
 - * 15 SEER = \$400
 - * Variable Capacity = \$600
- Ground Source/Geothermal
 - * \$2,400.00 or \$3,300.00 (depending on options)
- Installing Contractor Incentive
 - * \$50.00 (Must complete Contractor Checklist on Application)

Cooling System Tune Up

- Central Air Conditioner
- Air Source Heat Pump
- Geothermal Heat Pump

Incentive

- \$30.00 (Eligible for Tune-up Each Year)

Smart Thermostat

- Must be ENERGYSTAR-certified
- List of eligible thermostats are available online

Incentive

- Primary Electric Heat • Professionally Installed = \$30.00
- Primary Electric Heat • Customer Installed = \$75.00

Attic Insulation

- Must have electric heat
- Must have less than 6" insulation
- Add 6" new insulation or an R-19 value of new insulation

Incentive

- \$0.15 per square foot of attic (Maximum \$300.00)

Heat Pump Water Heater

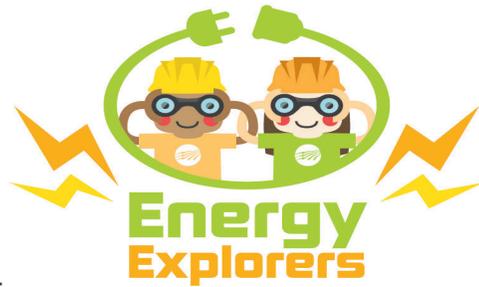
Incentive

- Air Source HP Water Heater with EF > 1.9 = \$400
- Water/Ground Source HP Water Heater with COP > 2.8 = \$650

Contact Amanda at (800) 230-0569 or atopil@butlerppd.com for assistance or information

PLEASE ALWAYS CONFIRM PROGRAMS AS THEY MAY CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT WORD SCRAMBLE

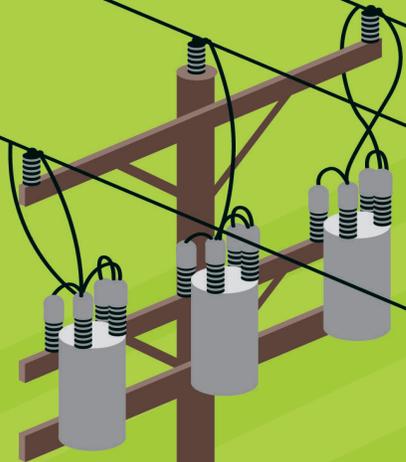


Electric co-ops use a variety of equipment to make sure you and your family receive reliable electricity. Can you unscramble the equipment terms below?

Use the provided clues for help, and double check your work in the answer key below.

- 1. ORNSTAMREFR** _____
These can look like large metal cans on top of utility poles or big green boxes on the ground. They are used to reduce the voltage of electricity, making it safe for use in your home.
- 2. OERPW NSLIE** _____
These can hang overhead or be placed underground. They carry electricity from where it's generated to homes and businesses in your community.
- 3. OUTASBSNTI** _____
This is an electrical facility that contains equipment for controlling the flow of electricity.
- 4. RCTLECIE ERMTE** _____
These devices are typically found outside the home and measure the amount of electricity you use.
- 5. CBUTKE KTURC** _____
Lineworkers use these types of vehicles to reach power lines and poles when making repairs and updates to the electrical system.

Answer Key: 1. TRANSFORMER 2. POWER LINES 3. SUBSTATION
4. ELECTRIC METER 5. BUCKET TRUCK



Butler Public Power District

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Office Hours: Monday - Friday 7:30am to 4:00pm

Butler PPD's mission is to safely provide low cost, reliable, excellent services to Butler and Saunders Counties customers.