

HOT WATTS



Safety Starts With You

Electricity plays many roles in our lives, from powering baby monitors, cell phones and lighting, to running HVAC systems and appliances. No wonder we get so comfortable with its instant availability that when we flip a switch, we expect most systems or devices to do the job.

May is National Electrical Safety Month, and here at CHEC, we think it's a great time to look around your home and check for potential safety hazards.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, approximately 51,000 electrical fires are reported each year in the United States, causing more than \$1.3 billion in annual property damage.

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Felicia Wixom, *Editor*
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Cookson Hills Electric Cooperative, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



If you find your account number hidden in this issue of the Hot Watts, you'll receive a \$25 credit on your electric bill.

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Remember, every electrical device has a purpose and a service lifespan. While we can extend their operations with maintenance and care, none of them are designed to last or work forever. When electricity is involved, failures can present electrical hazards that might be avoided with periodic inspections.

Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters

Outdoor outlets or those in potentially damp locations in a kitchen, bathroom or laundry room often include GFCI features. They are designed to sense abnormal current flows, breaking the circuit to prevent potential electric shocks from devices plugged into the outlets.

The average GFCI outlet is designed to last about 10 years, but in areas prone to electrical storms or power surges, they can wear out in five years or less. Check them frequently by pressing the red test button. Make sure you hit the black reset button when you are done. Contact a licensed electrician to replace any failing GFCI outlets.

Loose or Damaged Outlets or Switches

Unstable electrical outlets or wall switches with signs of heat damage or discoloration can offer early warnings of potential shock or electrical fire hazards. Loose connections can allow electrical current arcing. If you see these warning signs, it may be time to contact an electrician.

Surge Protectors

Power strips with surge protectors can help safeguard expensive equipment like televisions, home entertainment systems and computer components from power spikes. Voltage spikes are measured in joules, and surge protectors are rated for the number of joules they can effectively absorb. That means if your surge protector is rated at 1,000 joules, it should be replaced when it hits or passes that limit. When the limit is reached, protection stops, and you're left with a basic power strip.

Some surge protectors include indicator lights that flicker to warn you when they've stopped working as designed, but many do not. If your electrical system takes a major hit, or if you don't remember when you bought your surge protector, replacement may be the best option.

Extension Cords

If you use extension cords regularly to connect devices and equipment to your wall outlets, you may live in an underwired home. With a growing number of electrical devices connecting your family to the electricity you get from CHEC, having enough outlets in just the right spots can be challenging. Remember, extension cords are designed for temporary, occasional or periodic use.

If an extension cord gets noticeably warm when in use, it could be undersized for the intended use. If it shows any signs of frayed, cracked or heat-damaged insulation, it should be replaced. If the grounding prong is missing, crimped or loose, a grounded cord will not provide the protection designed into its performance. And always make sure that extension cords used in outdoor or potentially damp locations are rated for exterior use. [2463100]

Electricity is an essential necessity for modern living, and CHEC is committed to providing safe, reliable and affordable power to all of our members. We hope you'll keep these electrical safety tips in mind so that you can note any potential hazards before damage occurs.



Chris Morris Named Chief Financial Officer

CHEC is excited to introduce Chris Morris, Chief Financial Officer, to our co-op family. Chris began his employment with CHEC on April 1, 2019.

Chris, originally from Loxley, Alabama, graduated from Troy University and has received a Bachelors and Masters of Business Administration. In 2016, he passed the exam to become a CPA. Upon graduating from college, Chris moved to Montgomery, Alabama and worked for two years as a public accountant and two years as the Controller at DISCORP. From there, he moved

back to Baldwin County, Alabama and worked as the Manager of Financial Accounting at Baldwin EMC for 9 years.

Chris currently resides in Stigler, with his wife, Jessica and son, Elijah, age 5. He is very involved in church; and in his spare time, he enjoys golf, softball, wood working, working on cars, scuba diving/spearfishing, and coaching his son's tee-ball team.

"Thank you for giving me and my family the opportunity to be a part of your community," said Chris. I look forward to getting to know our new neighbors over the coming years."



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Avoid placing items like lamps and televisions near your air-conditioning thermostat.

The thermostat senses heat from these appliances, which can cause the A/C to run longer than necessary.

Source: energy.gov

News & Notes

- CHEC offices will be closed May 27 in observance of Memorial Day.
- CHEC has rebates available on window air conditioners, water heaters, Energy Star heat pump water heaters, programmable timer for engine block heaters, Energy Star advanced programmable thermostats, and dual-fuel, mini split and ground source heat pumps. Visit www.cooksonhills.com or call 800-328-2368 for more information.

The names listed are member accounts that have capital credit refund checks available to them. If your name appears on the list or if you are the surviving heir of a name listed, please contact CHEC about the capital credit refund check. Below is an alphabetical listing of names (A-Gip). More names will appear in the June issue of the Hot Watts. If you have any questions about capital credits, please contact CHEC at 800-328-2368.

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 ARMER, EVA P.
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 ASHER, ESTER

ASHLOCK, MARY S.
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 BECKHAM, WILLIE
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