

NEWS



**Stopping Power Surges
with Power Guard**

22



**Maintaining an Efficient
HVAC System**

23

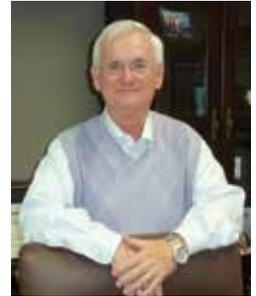
Manager's Message:

Meter Tampering Harms Us All

Every day, headlines bring reports of theft: cars stolen, banks robbed and houses broken into. But here at Tri-County EMC, we deal with another kind of theft— theft of electricity. Tampering with electric meters and stealing electricity is punishable by law. In addition to being a crime, meter tampering and theft pose serious safety hazards that affect entire communities. When one person tampers with an electric meter, everyone pays for it. The theft results in increased costs for our cooperative and members, and tampering with a meter is very dangerous, to both the person involved and others.



J. Michael Davis
General Manager



Meter tampering may cause severe electrical flashes, expose energized wires or involve other improper wiring, creating hazards to the public. Electrical flashes may cause serious burns to the vandal. Hidden traps created by the tampering may cause injury to meter readers, line workers, and children playing. In addition, electrical fires may result.

Meter tampering is illegal in North Carolina
North Carolina law specifically prohibits altering, tampering with and bypassing electric meters. Persons found guilty are liable for triple the amount of losses and damages to the utility. Anyone who uses power from an altered meter violates the same law. Both the person in whose name the meter is installed, and the persons using the electricity, may be liable. It's also illegal for an unauthorized person to reconnect a meter after the cooperative has disconnected it. These activities do not apply to licensed contractors performing their usual services within recognized standards. It's all in North Carolina General Statutes, Chapter 14, Subchapter VI, Article 22, Section 114-151.1.

If you see someone acting suspiciously around an electric meter or panel box, immediately report them to authorities. Report meter tampering, open electric meters or other apparent electrical hazards involving power systems to Tri-County EMC at (919) 735-2611.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month:

Here's a cool tip for your fridge! Cover liquids and wrap foods stored in your refrigerator. Uncovered foods release moisture, causing the compressor to work harder.

Source: energy.gov

Office Closed for Holiday

Tri-County EMC will be closed on Thursday, July 4, 2019, in observance of Independence Day. Payments after office hours and on holidays can be placed in the night deposit box or you may choose to utilize the convenience of online bill-pay by logging on to tcemc.com. You may choose to call the numbers listed below to pay by phone. To report a loss of power or an emergency, please call 1-800-548-4869 or 919-735-2611.



Surges Can Harm Your Valuable Electronics

With summer storms at their peak, it's time you buy Power Guard to protect your valuable electronics. Power Guard is a surge protection package offered by Tri-County EMC that helps protect your home appliances and electronics from serious damage caused by unexpected power surges.

You might ask: "What is a power surge?"

A "power surge" occurs when there is a rapid rise in the flow of power and usually causes damage that is often unseen. Surges can be caused by downed power lines, bad weather, birds and squirrels coming in contact with power lines, and the normal on and off cycling of large appliances. Surges can also be caused by faulty wiring or poor grounding.

"How can PowerGuard help?"

Surge suppressors are made to protect your electronic equipment by diverting surges away from sensitive electric circuits. PowerGuard utilizes a two-step approach to be most effective in a home. The first step is a high energy surge suppressor professionally

installed in your meter base by a Tri-County technician. This suppressor will provide increased life for your motor driven appliances such as your refrigerator, and washer and dryer.

Secondly, plug-in surge suppressor modules are used inside the home that connect to equipment such as your entertainment center or personal computers. The plug-in suppressors are designed to protect your appliances from surges from other sources, such as a telephone or cable wire. It also provides supplemental protection from external surges. It is an affordable means of added security and peace of mind!

"How do I purchase PowerGuard for my home?"

Contact Bob Kornegay, Manager of Member Services at (919) 735-2611 or 1-800-548-4869 for prices and to schedule an appointment for our qualified utility technician to install the unit. Lightning can destroy your home electronics! Help protect them by installing PowerGuard equipment.

Stop power surges with PowerGuard!



EDUCATORS: Apply Early for a Bright Ideas Grant and You Could Win \$100

It pays to apply early for a Bright Ideas education grant! Teachers who submit their grant application by the Aug. 15 early bird deadline will be entered into a statewide drawing to win one of five \$100 gift cards.

The final deadline to apply for a Bright Ideas grant of \$1,000 from Tri-County EMC is Sept. 23.

The Bright Ideas education grant program is celebrating 25 years of making creative, innovative projects possible in North Carolina K-12 classrooms. Since the program began in 1994, educators statewide have received more than \$12.2 million in Bright Ideas grant funding for nearly 11,700 projects benefiting 2.3 million North Carolina students.

To learn more about the program and apply, visit ncbrightideas.com.



Tips for Maintaining an Efficient HVAC System

Ah, summer. Cookouts, swimming pools, camping—it's the perfect time to enjoy the outdoors with family and friends. And when it's time to come back indoors, there's nothing better than that cool blast you feel from your home's air conditioning unit.

Your heating, ventilating and air-conditioning (HVAC) system is essential to keeping your home comfortable during summer months, and if it breaks down, it's also the most expensive equipment to repair or replace. Luckily, there are simple steps you can take to lengthen the life of your HVAC system.

Change or clean filters. Dirty filters block airflow, which can greatly decrease the efficiency of your system. The Department of Energy recommends changing or cleaning filters every month or two during the cooling season. If your unit is in constant use or is subjected to dusty conditions or pet hair, consider checking filters more frequently.

Clean the HVAC unit. Outdoor condenser coils can become clogged with pollen, dirt and small debris. Use a hose to spray the HVAC unit once each season to ensure maximum airflow. (Warning: Do not use a pressure washer to do this, as it can damage the equipment.)

Clear space around the HVAC unit. Dryer vents, falling leaves and grass left behind from the lawnmower can create buildup. Remove any debris around the HVAC unit. If you have foliage near the unit, trim it back at least 2 ft. around the condenser to increase airflow.

If you want to evaluate the efficiency of your HVAC system, try this quick test. The outdoor temperature should be above 80 degrees, and you should set your thermostat well below the room temperature to ensure the system runs long enough for this test:

- Using a digital probe thermometer (about \$12), measure the temperature of the air being pulled into your HVAC filter.
- Measure the temperature of the air blowing out of your A/C vent.

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3-Step HVAC Test

As summer temperatures rise, so do electric bills. Follow these steps to test the efficiency of your HVAC unit.

The outdoor temperature should be above 80 degrees, and you should set your thermostat well below the room temperature to ensure the system runs long enough for this test.

1. Using a digital probe thermometer (about \$12), measure the temperature of the air being pulled into your HVAC filter.
2. Measure the temperature of the air blowing out of your A/C vent.
3. Subtract the A/C vent temperature from the HVAC filter temperature. You should see a difference of about 17 to 20 degrees. If the difference is less than 17 degrees, you may need a licensed technician to check the coolant. If the difference is greater than 20 degrees, your ductwork may need to be inspected for airflow restrictions.



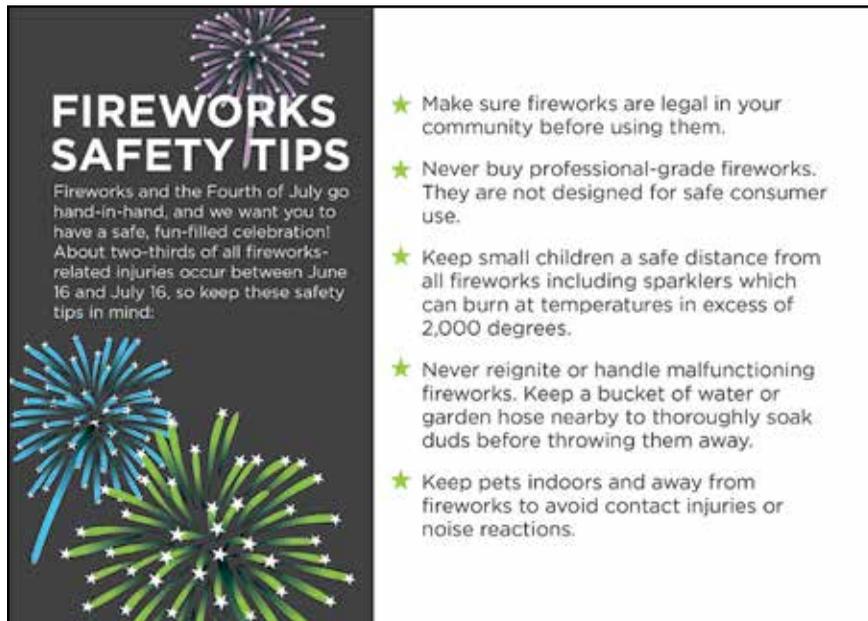
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➔ Subtract the A/C vent temperature from the HVAC filter temperature. You should see a difference of about 17 to 20 degrees. If the difference is less than 17 degrees, you may need a licensed technician to check the coolant. If the difference is greater than 20 degrees, your ductwork may need to be inspected for airflow restrictions.

You should also have your HVAC system periodically inspected by a licensed professional. The frequency

of inspections depends on the age of your unit, but the Department of Energy recommends scheduling tune-ups during the spring and fall, when contractors aren't as busy.

When HVAC equipment fails, it's inconvenient and uncomfortable—especially during the dog days of summer. Remember, your HVAC system runs best when it's regularly cleaned and serviced. With a little maintenance along the way, you can add years to your system's lifespan.



FIREWORKS SAFETY TIPS

Fireworks and the Fourth of July go hand-in-hand, and we want you to have a safe, fun-filled celebration! About two-thirds of all fireworks-related injuries occur between June 16 and July 16, so keep these safety tips in mind:

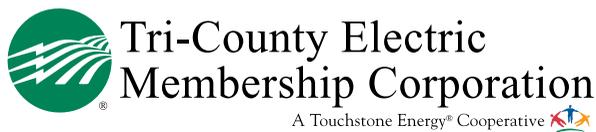
- ★ Make sure fireworks are legal in your community before using them.
- ★ Never buy professional-grade fireworks. They are not designed for safe consumer use.
- ★ Keep small children a safe distance from all fireworks including sparklers which can burn at temperatures in excess of 2,000 degrees.
- ★ Never reignite or handle malfunctioning fireworks. Keep a bucket of water or garden hose nearby to thoroughly soak duds before throwing them away.
- ★ Keep pets indoors and away from fireworks to avoid contact injuries or noise reactions.



Tri-County EMC Employees:

Ready To Serve

William Jones (BJ) is one of 46 employees ready to serve you. BJ has worked with Tri-County EMC since July 14, 1997, as an equipment operator. He and his family live in Faison.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Tri-County EMC Membership Corporation in Dudley, N.C., was chartered May 8, 1940.

We are here to serve you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year.

For Outages or Emergencies:
919-735-2611 or
1-800-548-4869

tcemc.com

Mission Statement:

Tri-County Electric Membership Corporation is a member-driven cooperative committed to providing reliable electric power at a reasonable cost, to offering superior service, and to taking an active role in supporting the communities it serves.

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