

NEWS



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Manager's Message:

Practice Safety When DIY-ing

These days many of us are spending more time at home and finding new, creative ways to enhance our living space. Tackling do-it-yourself (DIY) projects for the home can be fun and cost-effective, so why not roll up those sleeves and get started! Whether you're painting the front door with a fresh hue or finally upgrading those patio lights, successfully completing a DIY home project is incredibly satisfying. But many of these projects do not come without risks. Here are a few safety tips to keep in mind as you get to work.

→ **Start by selecting a designated work area.** The amount of space you'll need will depend on the size and scope of your project, but make sure you have adequate lighting and ventilation (if necessary). Required tools and equipment should be located in your workspace and organized for easy access.

→ **Personal protective equipment (PPE) is your friend.** We know you're a pro but investing a few bucks in PPE is essential for most home projects. Stock up on safety goggles, dust masks, ear plugs (or noise reduction ear protectors), gloves and any other kind of protection you'll need for your project. Remember to wear appropriate clothing and shoes. (Ditch the sandals for this!)



J. Michael Davis

General Manager



→ **Work slowly and clean as you go.** When you rush through a DIY project, you'll likely end up with less desirable results than you intended, or worse, you could make a costly or dangerous mistake. Take your time and remember that you are in control of the project. You should also clean as you go to ensure a safer workspace. Pick up any scrap materials, tools that aren't in use and any tripping hazards.

→ **Be cautious with power tools.** Annually, 8% of electrocutions in the U.S. are attributed to improper use of power tools. The Electrical Safety Foundation International offers the following safety tips:

- Use ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) with every power tool to protect against electrical shock.
- Never use power tools near live electrical wires or water pipes.
- Use extreme caution when cutting or drilling into walls where electrical wires or water pipes could be accidentally touched or penetrated.
- If a power tool trips a safety device while in use, take the tool to a manufacturer-authorized repair center for service.
- Do not use power tools without the proper guards.
- When using a wet-dry vacuum cleaner or a pressure washer, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions to avoid electrical shock.

Remember, you should only tackle DIY home projects within your skill and comfort level. For projects that require extensive electrical work, we strongly recommend you hire a licensed, qualified electrician for assistance.

To learn more about electrical safety, visit our website at tcemc.com.

We're Ready for Storm Season. Are You?

Summertime brings many of our favorite activities like cooking out with family and friends, afternoons on the water and simply slowing down a bit to enjoy life. Summer months also make conditions right for dangerous storms. These potential weather events can cause destruction to our electrical system, but Tri-County EMC crews are ready and standing by to respond should power outages occur in our area.

When major storms knock out power, our line crews take all necessary precautions before they get to work on any downed lines. I would encourage you to also practice safety and preparedness to protect your family during major storms and outages.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends the items below as a starting point for storm and disaster preparedness, but you can visit ready.gov for additional resources.

- Stock your pantry with a three-day supply of non-perishable food, such as canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee, water and other essentials (i.e., diapers and toiletries).
- Confirm that you have adequate sanitation and hygiene supplies including towelettes, soap and hand sanitizer.
- Ensure your First Aid kit is stocked with pain relievers, bandages and other medical essentials, and make sure your prescriptions are current.
- Set aside basic household items you will need, including flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener and portable, battery-powered radio or TV.
- Organize emergency supplies so they are easily accessible in one location.

In the event of a prolonged power outage, turn off major appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This will help avert damage from a power surge, and will also help prevent overloading the circuits during power restoration. That said, do leave one light on so you will know



when power is restored. If you plan to use a small generator, make sure it's rated to handle the amount of power you will need, and always review the manufacturer's instructions to operate it safely.

Listen to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio for storm and emergency information, and check Tri-County EMC's app, website or Facebook page for power restoration updates.

After the storm, avoid downed power lines and walking through flooded areas where power lines could be submerged. Allow ample room for utility crews to safely perform their jobs, including on your property.

Advance planning for severe storms or other emergencies can reduce stress and anxiety caused by the weather event and can lessen the impact of the storm's effects. Sign up for NOAA emergency alerts and warnings, and download our app to stay abreast of power restoration efforts and other important co-op news and information.

We can never predict Mother Nature's plans, and summer storms are inevitable. At Tri-County EMC, we recommend that you act today because there is power in planning. From our co-op family to yours, we hope you have a safe and wonderful summer.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

A dirty filter causes your air conditioner to work harder than necessary. Remember to change your air filter every month (or every two months) to prevent dust buildup, which can lead to even bigger problems.

Source: www.energy.gov

Surges Can Harm Your Valuable Electronics

With summer storms at their peak, it's time you buy PowerGuard to protect your valuable electronics. PowerGuard 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 EMC technician. This suppressor will provide increased life for your motor driven appliances such as your refrigerator, and washer and dryer.

Second, 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 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!



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

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. 15.

The Bright Ideas education grant program is celebrating 27 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 \$13.6 million in grants for 12,922 projects benefitting 2.7 million students across the state. In 2020, Tri-County EMC awarded \$62,000 in grants to educators in Duplin, Lenoir and Wayne counties.

Member says "Thank You!"

If you have been a cooperative member over the last few years, you are aware that cooperatives operate under seven principles. Often you see Tri-County EMC appear as a sponsor at various events in the communities we serve. This is because we are guided by one of the seven cooperative principles, Concern for the Community. We want to see our communities thrive and grow stronger,

and because of that, we're committed to dedicating resources to its development. Recently, Tri-County EMC sponsored the 2021 Wayne County Junior Livestock Show and Sale. A "thank you" note was received from Grand Champion, Spate Sanderson, age 7. We appreciate Spate's thank you note and look forward to hearing more good news from our future leaders in our community.

Dear Tri County Electric,
 Thank you so much for supporting my swine project. I worked extra hard this year, and felt blessed to have my barrow chosen as grand champion. Each year I learn more and more. I am grateful to be raised on a farm, and thankful for this opportunity. Thanks again for helping me prepare to carry on our family farm.
 Spate Sanderson Age 7



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

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.

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

J. Michael Davis
 General Manager

Management Staff

Kenneth E. Davis, Jr., CPA
 Manager, Finance & Administration

Robert B. Kornegay
 Manager, Member Services

Deidra Grantham, Editor
 Manager, Marketing and Communications

Tony Grantham, P. E.
 Manager, Engineering

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Employee of the month



Brian Hope

Brian Hope is one of 50 employees ready to serve you. He has worked with Tri-County EMC since January 2, 2014 as a tree trimmer for the cooperative. Brian resides in Mount Olive with his wife, Michelle, and son, Benjamin.