

Y-W ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

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Y-W Electric Association, Inc. is dedicated to providing high-quality, reliable electric service and related products to our members at competitive prices. Our members deserve and shall receive quality service unexcelled in our industry. We are committed to maintaining an environment where the Board of Directors and employees can perform at maximum potential to benefit our Y-W community.

KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE STORM

BY TRENT LOUTENSOCK GENERAL MANAGER



TRENT LOUTENSOCK

It's your worst-case scenario: A major storm was predicted and, this time, the predictions were right. Many power lines are down and your electricity could be out for several days. You are low on everything: food, pet supplies, toilet paper, batteries, diapers and your medication.

Imagine how you would feel in this situation. While you can't predict which weather forecast will come true, you can plan ahead so when a severe weather event strikes, you have the tools and resources to effectively weather the storm. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security offers several resources to help you prepare for major weather events and natural disasters at Ready.gov/make-a-plan. Here are some tips to help prepare you for severe weather events:

PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS AND ITEMS

- Stock your pantry with a three-day supply of nonperishable 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 a portable, battery-powered radio or television.
- Organize emergency supplies so they are together in an easily accessible location.

WITH ADVANCE WARNING

If a severe storm is expected with high winds, heavy rain, snow or ice, you may need to take extra steps to safeguard your home. Shutter windows and securely close exterior doors. Fully charge all cell phones, laptops and devices so you have maximum power in the event of a power outage. 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.

DURING A PROLONGED OUTAGE

In the event of an outage, turn off appliances, televisions, computers and other sensitive electronics. This will help avert damage from a power surge and help prevent overloading the circuits during power restoration. That said, do leave one light on so you will know when power is restored. If utilizing a small household generator, consider using LED holiday lights to illuminate a living area. A strand of 100 white lights draws little energy yet produces considerable light. Solar lights also work, if they can receive some sunlight during the day for charging.

During thunderstorms, the American Red Cross recommends avoiding electrical equipment and land-based telephones. Use battery-powered televisions and radios instead. Keep away from windows. Listen to local news or NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) Weather

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INCREASE YOUR **SAFETY YIELD** DURING HARVEST

Especially during the busy harvest season, help decrease the chances of an electrical-related incident:

- Always use a spotter when operating large machinery near lines.
- Use care when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from lines — at all times, in all directions.
- Inspect the height of the farm equipment to determine clearance.

- Always lower extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads.
- Never try to move or raise a power line for clearance; instead call us.

If your equipment does come in contact with a power line, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 9-1-1, warn others to stay away, and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.

For more information about electrical safety, including farming-related safety tips, visit:

**Safe
Electricity.org**



[Tracy Lungwitz, 731428502]

Operating Your Generator Safely

When the electricity goes out, generators can help you get through until power is restored. However, before ever starting a generator, it is vital that you educate yourself on how to use one safely.

There are two types of generators for homeowners to choose from: standby and portable. Standby generators are installed directly to the house and are typically powered by natural gas or propane. These generators start automatically when the power goes out.

A portable generator is usually gas powered and is movable. You can power appliances by plugging them into it. Your generator should have more output than the wattage of the electronics you will plug into it. This way, the generator will be able to create the extra electricity it takes for the initial power surge. Make sure there is nothing plugged into the generator when turning it on.

When you refuel a generator, make sure the engine is cool to prevent a fire, should the tank overflow. Be sure to keep children and pets away from the generator, which could burn them.

Generators pose electrical risks especially when operated in wet conditions. Use a generator only when necessary during moist conditions. Protect the generator by

operating it under an open, canopy-like structure and on a dry surface where water cannot form puddles or drain under it.

Carbon monoxide fumes emitted by the gasoline engine on the generator can be deadly. Always operate your portable generator outdoors at least 10 feet from your home.

If you are not careful with the installation of a portable or standby generator, you can put the lives of others in danger away from your home because of backfeed — a situation where a generator is feeding electricity back through your electrical system and meter into the power lines. To prevent backfeed, standby generators should have a transfer safety switch installed by a professional. Portable generators should never be plugged directly into a home outlet or electrical system; use an extension cord to plug appliances into an outlet on the generator for power.

It is recommended that a generator be operated once a month for 10 minutes to ensure it is running properly. Store a standby generator in an easily accessible, weatherproof area. Have enough fuel for at least 24 hours in case of a power outage.

For more electrical safety information, visit SafeElectricity.org. [Thomas G. and Tamara L. Jackson, 891000801]

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Radio for emergency updates, or check Y-W Electric Association, Inc.'s, Facebook pages for restoration updates.

After the storm, avoid downed power lines and allow ample room for utility crews to safely perform their jobs, including on your property.

POWER IN PLANNING

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 visit our website or social media pages to stay abreast of restoration efforts and other important co-op news and information. Act today, because there is power in planning. [Double J Farms, 250300301]

Billing Corner

SmartHub Bill Pay & More

For your convenience, Y-W Electric offers the ability to **pay your account with the SmartHub app**. This service allows you to pay your bill electronically with a credit or debit card or checking account. This is also a great place to go to get account information. Information on billing history, usage, payment history and past billing invoices is available. There is also a link to sign up for auto payment.

Reporting an outage is also available on SmartHub. This information goes directly to our operations department in an email. This leaves our phone lines open for those who do not have SmartHub available.

The app is compatible with iPhones as well as Android devices. Check our website at **www.ywelectric.coop** for more information. [Tom Kuntz, 620900400]

Claim Your Credit

Each month, Y-W Electric offers members a chance to earn a \$20 credit on their next electric bill. If you recognize your name and account number in this magazine, call 800-660-2291 and ask for your credit. It couldn't be easier.

Get acquainted with your account number, read your *Colorado Country Life* magazine and pick up the phone. That's all the energy you'll need to claim your energy bucks.

You must claim your credit during the month in which your name appears in the magazine. (Check the date on the front cover.)

Winners claiming \$20 from the July 2019 issue:

- Delman Craig
- Mindi Segelke
- Paul and Cassandra Campfield



September 2019

Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

COOKWARE EFFICIENCY TIP:

Copper-bottomed pans heat faster on the stove. In the oven, ceramic and glass dishes are better than metal. With ceramic and glass dishes, you can turn the oven down about 25 degrees and your meal will cook just as quickly.

Source: energy.gov

Eliminate Toddler Temptation

If you are expecting young crawlers or toddlers in your home, take time to consider electrical items that could tempt inquisitive little ones. There are potential dangers in every room. You may think a room is fine at first glance, but consider getting down on your hands and knees to see it from a crawling baby or toddler's perspective.

Look for unprotected outlets, hanging or dangling cords with excess length, surge protectors and extension cords or long cords that could be tugged on. Various products are available to help cover outlet slots, reduce cord length, cover surge protector strips and help prevent little ones from pulling out plugs from outlets.

If the thought of all of this overwhelms you, ask a friend or the parent of young children to help you inspect your home. Then take action to protect the little ones who will be exploring your home.



RECEIVE MONEY FOR BEING SAFE

Install a double throw generator transfer switch and collect a sizable rebate as a reward for safety.

Y-W Electric reminds those members using standby generator sets how important it is to connect into the electrical system correctly. These switches increase the margin of safety both for Y-W personnel as well as the members utilizing a standby generator. Since 2001, the Y-W board of directors has sponsored a rebate program to encourage all members with standby generators to install the proper double throw transfer switches. The program was initiated to provide safety for linemen working on downed power lines following storms.

For a number of years before that, Y-W Electric provided double throw transfer switches at cost for members. However, even at cost, the purchase price discouraged members from installing the safety devices. The Y-W board reasoned that providing a rebate that covers approximately two-thirds of the cost of the panel would encourage members to install the switches for safety.

The provisions for receiving the rebate are as follows:

1. Member may purchase a double throw transfer switch with Underwriters Laboratories approval rating for service entrance equipment from any source and present purchase invoice within 180 days of purchase.
2. Member may install equipment or hire others to install equipment.
3. Switch installation must be inspected and approved by a Y-W Electric employee.
4. Switch and installation must meet article 702 of the National Electrical Code.
5. Rebate is to be paid upon the schedule shown below.

100 amp single phase: \$250

200 amp single phase: \$325

100 amp three phase: \$400

200 amp three phase: \$475

Y-W Electric has contacted electrical contractors in the area to discuss the program with them. All of them have expressed support for the program. Y-W Electric has no intention of competing with the contractors. Y-W Electric will gladly advise the consumer who wishes to do his or her own work, but Y-W will not install any of the equipment. If you have questions, you may call your electrical contractor, or call Y-W Electric Association at 800-660-2291 or in Akron, call 970-345-2291. [John Ormanoski, 1291401013]