

# Y-W ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

JUNE 2022



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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.

## NEW WAYS TO USE ELECTRICITY

BY ANDREW MOLT DIRECTOR OF MEMBER SERVICES



ANDREW MOLT

If you listen carefully, you can hear a quiet transformation happening. Electric appliances and equipment are becoming more popular than ever among consumers.

Advancements in technology and battery power, coupled with decreasing costs, are winning over consumers looking for comparable utility and versatility. A bonus is that use of electric equipment is quieter and better for the environment.

Inside the home, consumers and homebuilders alike are turning to electric appliances to increase energy efficiency and savings. Whether a traditional electric stove or an induction cooktop, both are significantly more efficient than a gas appliance. That's because conventional residential cooking tops typically use gas or resistance heating elements to transfer energy. Gas cooktops are only 32% efficient. Resistance heating cooktops are 75% efficient. Electric induction stoves, which cook food without a flame, reduce indoor air pollution and can bring water to a boil about twice as fast as a gas stove.

More tools and equipment with small gas-powered motors are being replaced with electric ones that include plug-in batteries. In the past few years, technology in battery storage has advanced significantly. Hand-held tools with plug-in batteries can hold a charge longer than in the past and offer the user the same versatility and similar functionality as gas-powered tools. For DIYers and those in the building trades, national brands such as Makita, Ryobi and Milwaukee offer electric versions of their most popular products, including drills, saws, sanders and other tools. In addition to standard offerings, companies offer a wider array of specialty tools that plug in, such as power inverters, air inflators and battery chargers.

Keith Dennis, an energy industry expert and president of the Beneficial Electrification League, notes that, "A few

years back, the list of new electric product categories that were making their way to the market was limited: electric scooters, lawn mowers, leaf blowers and vehicles."

Today, the number of available electric products available is exploding.

"There are electric bikes, school buses, pressure washers, utility terrain vehicles, backhoes — even airplanes and boats," Dennis says. "With the expansion of batteries and advancements in technology, we are seeing almost anything that burns gasoline or diesel as having an electric replacement available on the market."

A case in point is the increased use of electric-powered tools and equipment, with more national brands offering a wider selection including lawn mowers, leaf blowers, string trimmers and snow blowers. The quality of zero- or low-emission lawn equipment is also improving.

Electric equipment also requires less maintenance; often the biggest task is keeping them charged. In addition, electric equipment is quieter, so if you want to listen to music or your favorite podcast while performing outdoor work, you can, which is something that wouldn't be possible with gas-powered equipment. On the horizon, autonomous lawn mowers (similar to the robotic vacuum cleaners) will be seen dotting outdoor spaces.

Another benefit of using electric appliances or equipment is that, by virtue of being plugged into the grid, the environmental performance of electric devices improves over time. In essence, electricity is becoming cleaner through increased renewable energy generation, so equipment that uses electricity will have a diminishing environmental impact. Quite a hat trick: improving efficiency, quality of life and helping the environment.



 Johanna Anderson, Wray High School.

## Y-W ELECTRIC SENDS STUDENT TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

Y-W Electric is sponsoring one student from the service territory on a cooperative-sponsored trip to Washington, D.C., in June. Johanna Anderson of Wray High School was selected to represent Y-W Electric on the Washington D.C. Youth Tour. She is visiting the nation's capital with 29 students from Colorado and more than 1,000 students from across the country.

On the trip, the students will tour many of the famous sites in Washington, D.C.: the Jefferson Memorial, several Smithsonian museums, the World War II Memorial, Mount Vernon, Arlington National Cemetery and the Library of Congress. The group plans to visit with some of Colorado's U.S. senators and representatives to discuss today's issues. [Karen J. Holtman-983206101] [Thomas & Bobbie Hottinger 2553004609]

## BILLING CORNER

### SAVE ON SUMMER ENERGY COSTS

We live in an area where the temperature in the summer can be very hot. We don't always associate high energy bills with summer usage; however, keeping cool in the summer can consume a great deal of power.

Here are some tips on lowering your summer energy costs:

- **INSULATE:** Insulating attics and walls, as well as weatherizing doors and windows, is key to preventing conditioned air from escaping your home.
- **COOL WITH FANS:** Using as little energy as a 100-watt bulb, ceiling fans are an easy and energy-efficient way to keep things cool.
- **PLANT TREES:** Summer is the season for home improvements. Plant deciduous (leafy) trees to shade south- and west-facing windows. They will protect your home during the warm summer months, and when the leaves fall off in the winter, they will allow the sun to heat your home.
- **LIGHTS:** Replace incandescent lightbulbs with LED bulbs, which emit less heat and cut your lighting costs. LEDs also last seven to 10 times longer than an incandescent bulb.
- **REFRIGERATOR:** Resist the urge to stand in front of the refrigerator with the door open. The refrigerator is one of the most energy-consuming appliances in the home; less time with the door open means less energy spent keeping your food at a cooler temperature.
- **AIR CONDITIONING:** Keep your thermostat at 78 degrees instead of 73 degrees and save up to 5% on your energy bill.

- **KEEP FILTERS CLEAN:** Vacuum or replace refrigerator air filters once a month during the cooling season. Easy airflow means more efficient use of your cooling dollars.
- **DISHWASHER:** Use the "no heat" option for your drying cycle and run it only when it is fully loaded. A hot dishwasher will warm your home and increase your electricity bill at the same time.

If you have any questions or concerns about your bill, please contact the billing department at 1-800-660-2291, or if in the Akron area, 345-2291. Please have a safe summer.

### CLAIM YOUR CREDIT

Each month, Y-W Electric offers consumer-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 April 2022 issue:

- Jeff Reneau
- Evan & Kacey Morris
- Goldie Harman
- Ralph W Rogers
- Cassandra Willis

**CAUTION**

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## KEEP CHILDREN AWAY FROM CONTACT

Ensure your children are protected from the electrical service connection to your home. Keep ladders or long poles stowed and away from youngsters who might be tempted to use them to reach the wires connected to your house. If you have a room addition or deck, make sure the service connection remains well out of reach. Contact Y-W Electric if you are unsure that the distance is safe. [Randy & Lori Arnold-330701903]

# SAFETY TIPS FOR BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE STORM

BY ABBY BERRY

Storm season is in full swing. Many summer storms have the potential to produce tornadoes — they can happen anytime, anywhere, and can bring winds of over 200 miles per hour.

In April, a video of NBC Washington chief meteorologist Doug Kammerer went viral. During a live broadcast, Kammerer called his teenage son to warn him of a tornado that was headed straight for their home. Knowing the kids were likely playing video games and not paying attention to the weather, he told them to head straight to the basement. Kammerer debated if he should call his family on air, but he knew it was the right thing to do. Luckily, the kids made it safely through the storm.

As adults, we understand the importance of storm safety, but younger children and teens may not realize the dangers storms pose. That's why it's so important to talk to your family and have a storm plan in place. Here are several tips you can share with your loved ones.

## BEFORE THE STORM

Talk to your family about what to do in the event of a severe storm or tornado. Point out the safest location to shelter, such as a small, interior, windowless room on the lowest level of your home. Discuss the dangers of severe thunderstorms; lightning can strike 10 miles outside of a storm. Remember: When you hear thunder roar, head indoors.

Make a storm kit. It doesn't have to be elaborate — having a few items on hand is better than nothing at all. Try to include items such as water, non-perishable foods, a manual can opener, a first-aid kit, flashlights and extra batteries, prescriptions, baby supplies and pet supplies. Keep all the items in one place for easy access if the power goes out.

## DURING THE STORM

Pay attention to local weather alerts, either on the TV, your smartphone or weather radio, and understand the types of alerts. A thunderstorm or tornado watch means these events are possible and you should be prepared; a warning means a thunderstorm or

tornado has been spotted in your area and it's time to take action.

If you find yourself in the path of a tornado, head to your safe place to shelter and protect yourself by covering your head with your arms or materials such as blankets and pillows.

If you're driving during a severe storm or tornado, do not try to outrun it. Pull over and cover your body with a coat or blanket if possible.

## AFTER THE STORM

If the power is out, conserve your phone battery as much as possible, limiting calls and texting others to let them know you are safe.

Stay off the roads if trees, power lines or utility poles are down. Lines and equipment could still be energized, posing life-threatening risks to anyone who gets too close.

Wear appropriate gear if you're cleaning up storm debris on your property. Thick-soled shoes, long pants and work gloves will help protect you from sharp or dangerous debris left behind.



Summer is a time for many fun-filled activities, but the season can also bring severe, dangerous weather. Talk to your loved ones about storm safety so that everyone is prepared and knows exactly what to do when a storm strikes. [Linda K Stroup-4301005001]

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Source: energystar.gov

If you're looking to add smart technology to your home, consider smart plugs. Smart plugs are inexpensive and can be used to control lighting and other electronic devices through a smartphone app.

With smart plugs, you can conveniently manage lighting, home office equipment, video game consoles and more. By powering off unused devices when you're away, you can save energy (and money!).

# PROTECT THE SKIN YOU'RE IN REDUCE SKIN CANCER RISKS

**S**kin cancer is the most common type of cancer in the United States. One in five Americans will develop it in their lifetime, and nearly 20 Americans die from melanoma every day, according to the American Academy of Dermatology Association.

Although those with fair skin are at greater risk than others of getting skin cancer, anyone can get it.

Basal and squamous cell carcinomas are the two most common types. Melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, is the third most common type. The risk for melanoma doubles for people who have had more than five sunburns, according to the Skin Cancer Foundation. However, even without a burn, any sun exposure increases the risk of skin cancer.

The most preventable cause of skin cancer, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is overexposure to ultraviolet light from the sun or artificial sources, such as tanning beds. [Gary W & Linda R. Erickson-523005300]

## SAFETY IN THE SUN

To prevent skin cancer, protect yourself from UV rays, not just during the summer but year-round. UV rays can reach you on cloudy and cool days, and they can also reflect off other surfaces like water, cement, sand and snow.

In the continental U.S., UV rays are strongest from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daylight saving time or 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. standard time, according to the CDC. The UV Index forecasts the strength of UV rays for each day. Protect your skin from too much exposure to the sun when the UV Index is 3 or higher by:

- Staying in the shade
- Wearing sun-protective clothing
- Wearing a hat with a wide brim
- Wearing sunglasses that wrap around and block both UVA and UVB rays

Additional tips from the AAD include:

- Apply a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher.
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours or after sweating or swimming.
- Apply enough sunscreen to cover skin not protected by clothing.

- Do not forget to apply sunscreen to the tops of your feet, your neck, your ears and the top of your head.

## INDOOR TANNING

Using a tanning bed, booth, sunbed or sunlamp exposes users to high levels of UV rays. Over time, too much exposure to UV rays can cause skin cancers, cataracts and cancers of the eye, according to the CDC.

Indoor tanning does not protect against sunburns; a “base tan” is a sign of skin damage. Using a tanning bed or other indoor tanning methods can also cause serious injury; burns send more than 3,000 people to the emergency room each year.

## THE SKIN YOU'RE IN

The bottom line is that you should always protect your skin from sun/UV exposure. Consider using a self-tanning product if you want to look tan, but be sure to still use sunscreen. Perform regular skin self-exams to detect skin cancer early when it is most treatable. See a dermatologist if you notice new or suspicious spots on your skin or anything changing, itching or bleeding.

Sources: CDC, AAD, The Skin Cancer Foundation

# Say **NO** to Skin Cancer

## Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the U.S.

**One** in **five** Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime, and nearly **20 Americans** die from melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, every day.



Since exposure to the sun's harmful UV rays is the most preventable risk factor for skin cancer, protect your skin by:

- **Seeking shade**
- **Wearing sun-protective clothing**
- **Applying sunscreen to all skin not covered by clothing**

