

CMS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

The Enlightener

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Lightbulb Winners

Congratulations to this month's lightbulb winners:

- ▶ Ed Pittman
- ▶ Kim Rinehart
- ▶ Frank Devine
- ▶ John Doney
- ▶ Betty Jo Maris
- ▶ Karl Mosshart

Contact us today for your free lightbulbs!



Nondiscrimination

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

The Power of Preparation

With severe weather events occurring more frequently, now more than ever, it makes sense to be prepared. During a prolonged power outage or other emergency, this means having enough food, water and supplies to last at least a few days.

In honor of National Preparedness Month in September, I want to remind community members about the power of preparation. While you don't have to achieve a "doomsday prepper" level of preparedness, there are several practical steps you can take to keep you and your family safe.

Even at a modest level, preparation can help reduce stress, anxiety and lessen the impact of an emergency event. We recommend starting with the basics.

Here are general guidelines recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency:

- ▶ Assemble a grab-and-go disaster kit. Include items like nonperishable food, water (one gallon per person,

per day), diapers, batteries, flashlights, prescription medications, first-aid kit, battery-powered radio and phone chargers.

- ▶ Develop a plan for communicating with family and friends (i.e., via text, social media, third party, etc.).
- ▶ Have some extra cash available; during a power outage, electronic card readers and ATMs may not work.
- ▶ Store important documents (birth certificates, property deed, etc.) in safe place away from home (for example, a bank safe deposit box).
- ▶ Keep neighbors and coworkers apprised of your emergency plans.
- ▶ Fill your car with gas.
- ▶ Organize your supplies so they are together in an easily accessible location that family members know about.

Caring for Vulnerable Family Members

If you have older family members or those with special needs, make

Continued on page 12B ▶



LABOR Day
Office Closing

In observance of Labor Day,
our office will be closed on
MONDAY, SEPT. 5.

What to do before using a PORTABLE GENERATOR



Prepare
Install battery operated carbon monoxide (CO) alarms throughout your home; ensure they are working properly.

Position

Place a portable generator at least 20 feet from windows and doors; do not use one in a garage or carport.



Read
Carefully review and then follow all manufacturer's instructions.

Protect

If it is wet outside, keep it dry by placing it on a tarp. Position it under a portable canopy (not a carport).



Refuel Safely
Turn off your portable generator and let it cool down before refueling.

Inspect and Maintain

Inspect a portable generator before each use and make sure it is properly maintained.



Using a portable generator can be useful during an outage; however, use one correctly to prevent CO poisoning and to stay safe.

The Power of Preparation *Continued from page 12A*

sure they have enough medication and supplies for a few days. If they don't live with you, arrange for a neighbor to check in on them. If a severe weather event is expected, consider having your relative stay with you if feasible, otherwise call them daily. If you have an infant or young children, make certain you have ample formula, diapers, medication and other supplies on hand to weather an outage lasting several days or more.

Keeping Four-Legged Family Members Safe

For families with pets, having a plan in place in the event of a prolonged outage or an emergency will help reduce worry and stress especially during an emergency.

- ▶ Bring pets indoors at the first sign of a storm or other emergency. Pets can become disoriented and frightened during severe weather and may wander off during an emergency.
- ▶ Microchip your pet and ensure the contact information is up to date.
- ▶ Store pet medical records on a USB drive or in an easy-to-remember location.
- ▶ Create an emergency kit for pets (include shelf-safe food, bottled water, medications and other supplies).

At CMS Electric, we care about your safety. Planning for an emergency today can give you more confidence to deal with severe weather and potential outages in the future.

3 Workspace-Friendly Exercises

Does it seem impossible to squeeze exercise into your daily routine? If so, you're not alone! However, it's actually easier than you think.

Exercise is any activity that gets your body moving, and there are several exercises you can do at work to help you get energized and feel more positive and productive. Countless studies show that exercise stimulates your brain, increases focus and reduces stress.

First, set realistic goals. This will help create momentum for maintaining a routine. Determine a time block to exercise, i.e., 15 minutes, and select exercises that are enjoyable, easy to do and complete within that time. Breaking exercise into manageable time chunks will help overcome procrastination.

Here are three workspace-friendly exercises you can do any time:

- ▶ **DESK PUSHUPS:** Take a few steps back from your desk and place your hands flat on your desk, a little wider than shoulder width. Lower yourself down toward your desk, keeping your core tight. Then push back up until your arms are straight but not locked. Repeat 15-20 times.

- ▶ **SHOULDER BLADE SQUEEZES:** Stand straight and tall. Pull your shoulder blades back and slightly downward to bring your elbows back and inward. Return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times.

- ▶ **WALL SITS:** Start with your back against the wall with your feet shoulder width and about a foot from the wall. Slowly slide your back down the wall until your thighs are parallel to the floor. Hold 20 to 60 seconds.

In addition to the exercises noted above, move around during breaks. Take a quick walk outside. Periodically stretch to prevent stiffness, especially if you are working in front of a computer for long periods.

Remember, the overall goal is to get your body moving, and any movement is better than being sedentary. Adding any form of exercise to your daily routine can foster a healthier lifestyle. Mountains of research cite the benefits of exercise for your body and mind, including reducing the risk of disease, lowering stress levels and boosting energy levels. Don't overthink it — just get moving!

ENERGY EFFICIENCY Tip of the Month

Our faucets and appliances use a lot of hot water, which accounts for a large portion of home energy bills. You can lower your water heating costs by using less hot water in your home. To save energy (and money!) used for water heating, repair any leaky faucets, install low-flow fixtures and insulate accessible hot water lines. When it's time to purchase a new washing machine or dishwasher, look for models that are Energy Star®-certified.

SOURCE: WWW.ENERGY.GOV



Electricity Complacency

Stay Safe on Your Ranch or Farm

Farmers and ranchers must take countless precautions to stay safe. Unfortunately, electrical hazards can be overlooked since electricity cannot be seen or heard and overhead power lines often fade into the rural landscape.

Here are some electrical safety tips to implement on your farm or ranch:

- ▶ Look for exposed energized parts and unguarded electrical equipment that could become energized unexpectedly.
- ▶ Be careful when operating watering tanks with electric pumps. Ensure irrigation systems are not spraying water into or near overhead power lines.
- ▶ Inspect electrical fencing regularly to ensure that everything is tight and secure and that no parts are frayed.
- ▶ Ensure your electric fence is well supported. A lack of support can cause it to sag, leading to animals escaping or electrical issues.
- ▶ Make sure electric fencing is visible by using electric fence tape, warning signs or other methods.
- ▶ Cap posts, especially metal T-posts, to prevent an animal (or human) from becoming impaled.
- ▶ Be aware of overhead power lines when moving hay bales.
- ▶ Do not store hay bales under power lines.
- ▶ Be aware that tarps covering hay can come loose and blow in heavy winds, sometimes causing an outage if the tarp gets too close or contacts a power line.
- ▶ When using a generator and double throw switch, make sure they are in good working order and up to code.
- ▶ Check electrical center pivot equipment before and after use to ensure it is grounded, that the housing is protected, and the wiring is sound. This protects livestock and people.
- ▶ Regularly inspect irrigation equipment. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for inspection and maintenance.
- ▶ Always turn off the power before working on an irrigation system.
- ▶ After a storm, make sure the irrigation system is still grounded and has not been affected by lightning.
- ▶ Position irrigation pipes at least 15 feet away from power lines; store unused pipes away from power lines.
- ▶ Always be aware of overhead power line locations and use a spotter when working close to lines or poles.
- ▶ Follow safe digging procedures; call 811 to have underground utilities marked before breaking ground.

To learn more about electrical safety on the ranch or farm or in general, visit SafeElectricity.org

WHAT IS A GENERATOR TRANSFER SWITCH?

A transfer or throw switch, also called a double throw switch, is an essential mechanism that shuts off power to the grid before backup power is used.



WHAT DOES A TRANSFER SWITCH DO?

- ▶ Changes or transfers the power load from one source to another.
- ▶ Connects generators rated at 5,000 watts or more to your home's main circuits to provide backup power during an outage.
- ▶ Prevents power from backfeeding into the power grid and endangering utility workers and others.

PERMANENT GENERATORS

- ▶ Have an internal switch that automatically transfers the source of power.
- ▶ Automatically turn on when the power goes out.
- ▶ Must be installed to code by licensed contractors and usually placed near the electric and gas meters.
- ▶ Not all permanently installed generators are standby versions. Some have manual transfer switches. Make sure your permanent generator and switch are installed to code and working properly.

PORTABLE GENERATORS

- ▶ Can be connected to your home's electrical service panel that is properly wired through a transfer switch.
- ▶ Never plug it into a wall outlet as this can cause backfeed.

ALWAYS USE A GENERATOR SAFELY.

NATIONAL FARM SAFETY and HEALTH WEEK

Farm Safety and Health Week is Sept. 18-24! Whether you live on a farm or in the city, always play it safe near power lines and other electrical equipment.

