

Your Energy Connection



May is Electric Safety Month

Every year, hundreds of people are injured or killed as a result of electric related accidents in the home. More often than not, these accidents are preventable. The use of electricity in our daily lives has become so common it can be easy to forget how dangerous it can be.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, an estimated 53,600 house fires are reported resulting in \$1.4 billion in property losses due to electric related accidents. Aging homes account for many of the accidents reported. Today's increased demand for energy can overburden older wiring and cause a fire, severe injury or death.

The following are common warning signs of electrical hazards in older homes:

- Circuit breakers that trip frequently, fuses that need to be replaced often and dimming or flickering lights are all indicators of a problem with the electrical system.
- Sizzles, buzzes or unusual sounds from the electrical system can signal damage within the system.
- Cut, broken or cracked wire insulation can cause serious injury if exposed wires come in contact with other material or people.
- Flashes of light or showers of sparks anywhere on the electric system can easily cause a fire.
- An odor of hot insulation, switch plates that are hot to the touch or are discolored from heat build-up are all signs of a potential electrical fire.

Electrical accidents are not limited to older homes. New homes can be just as vulnerable without the proper safety equipment in place. According to North Carolina Building Code, all newly built homes are required to be equipped with Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCIs), Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs) and Tamper Resistant Outlets (TROs).

AFCIs are circuit breakers that are designed to recognize electric fire hazards and turn the power off. GFCIs are designed to provide protection from electrocution from ground faults and circuit overloading. This can be caused by faulty wiring, damaged cords, faulty or mishandled appliances or poorly insulated wires. TROs are standard wall outlets that feature a shutter mechanism that prevents foreign objects from being inserted into the receptacle (hairpins, keys, paperclips, etc.). During times when the outlet is not being used, the shutters are closed and the openings are covered.

Other ways to safely use electricity:

- Do not use deteriorated wires or cords.
- Do not use extension cords on a permanent basis. They are intended for temporary use only.
- Never overload outlets.
- Do not place cords under carpet or rugs.
- Be sure light bulbs are the appropriate wattage for the light fixture.
- Because water is a conductor of electricity, always use extreme caution when using electricity around water.
- Make sure electrical outlets are weatherproofed and protected by a GFCI.
- Do not touch or attempt to remove a fallen electric line. Contact Rocky Mount Public Utilities immediately at **(252) 467-4800** to report a down line.

Rocky Mount Public Utilities reminds customers to use caution when working with or around electricity year round. Always be aware and stay safe!

Customers purchasing select energy efficient products or renewable energy system for their home may be eligible for a federal tax credit through the ENERGY STAR Program.

Looking for more ways to save?

Tax credits of 30% of the cost of the appliance up to \$1,500 are available for the following items until December 2010:
 Biomass Stoves • HVAC Equipment • Insulation • Roofs (metal & asphalt) • Water Heaters (non-solar) • Windows & Doors

Tax credits of 30% of the cost of the appliance with no upper limit are available for the following through 2016:
 Geothermal Heat Pumps • Solar Panels • Solar Water Heaters • Small Wind Energy Systems • Fuel Cells



For more information about tax incentives and energy efficiency rebate programs, visit www.energystar.gov/taxcredits

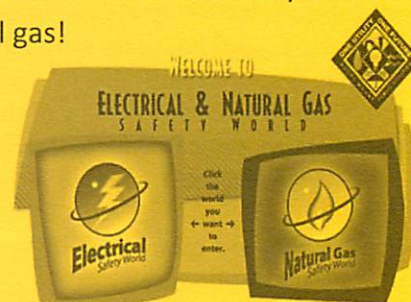
Natural Gas Word Search

N A E L C R D A T S P Q E K J C T Z L V
 E J Z R Q E E H Z H A D C K H A Q K L V
 T D H V V P Z T W Q G T Y Y S Y N E I L
 A K F Z P N G T E S G I F A X T R W B X
 E N Q J F J W M U M C J L C T B L L T H
 H B U O A V T E P C H V G T P N C Z E Z
 Z H U U E D D E Z B T N Q H O R H Y G O
 L K O Z R P S Y V A Z S E K O L R D D E
 Y C N E I C I F F E Y G R E N E I F U R
 M S V A X G S V I R Y A D O I T L P B L
 T Z Q R O E J V I M U R I S T A A D D M
 P Z U V V B V G H G L T H F M F F N D O
 W I U B X R Y Y Q P A E R E J U P O O A
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 U E P E Z K A O U B Y G N X K O V C Q L
 X P C C L Z M S P U O D V H I N G T J Y
 L C K T P I N E Z R Z C E R D K J B K O
 D E S S P I N F Q N Y C J U G H V K R K
 K C D M D D U E J E Y N M K C Q O T I H
 V W S K Y C I T R R V O F C K L U B X G

- BUDGET BILL
- BURNER
- CLEAN
- ENERGY
- EFFICIENCY
- ENERGY STAR
- FLAME
- GCA
- HEAT
- INSULATION
- METER
- PILOT LIGHT
- PIPELINE

Kid's Corner

Log on to utilities.rockymountnc.gov to visit Kid's Corner! Play fun and interactive games and learn about how to stay safe around electricity and natural gas!



Beat the Peak

Call 467-4803 for more information.

"Peak" or "Peak Demand" is the greatest amount of electricity used at one time by an electric system. This occurs when a large number of customers are using appliances and HVAC at the same time. By controlling the electric load or load management, we can keep electric costs in control. Rocky Mount averages less than 10 days per month load managing. There are no installation or maintenance charges associated with this program.

Electric Water Heater Control **\$2.00 credit each month**
 Water heaters are cycled off during load management periods. Controlling water heaters will not affect the amount of hot water available.

Electric Heat Strip Control **\$15.00 credit each month**
(Credit given in months when temperatures falls to 25° or below on a non-holiday weekday)
 Heat strips, known as auxiliary heat, are controlled during the winter load management periods, while heat pump compressors continue to operate and provide heat.

Central Air Conditioning Total Control **\$20.00 credit each month**
(Credit is given during three months of the summer season)
 The air conditioner's compressor is turned off during the load management period. During summer month's, the peak usually occurs between 2 p.m. - 6 p.m. Fans will continue to circulate the cool air in your house, but the compressor will not generate any new cool air.