

Teach Children About Electrical Safety



Electricity is a dynamic power source. We live our lives surrounded by it, but sometimes we forget just how dangerous electricity can be. Many home electrical fires, injuries and electrocutions can be prevented when we understand and practice electrical safety. This is especially true for our youngest co-op members.

Copper Valley Electric Association offers several ways to help teach youngsters about electrical safety throughout the year; such as safety demonstrations during health and safety fairs, safety discussions during power plant tours, and distribution of electrical safety materials during the CVEA Annual Meeting.

Schools also provide safety information to children, but as your child's first and most important teacher, perhaps it's time to have a talk with your sons and daughters to reinforce those lessons.

Start at an early age, teaching them about the physical dangers associated with electrical components and how to handle electrical plugs, outlets, switches and other devices.

Keep in mind, talking to your children about elec-

trical safety should also include fun activities and facts about the basics—what is electricity, the need to respect its power and how to use it efficiently as they study, work and play.

As we all know, kids will be kids. Getting them to show interest in some of these lessons won't be easy.

Just remember that what your children learn from you today can be a lifesaver later when they encounter potential hazards like downed power lines in their path, play hide-and-seek behind those big metal electrical boxes in the neighborhood or are tempted to clamber up a utility pole.

Gather your youngsters around the kitchen table or on the front porch—some of the best teachable moments about electrical safety can happen in and around your home. Look around.

There are plenty of opportunities to demonstrate safety that are as close as the electrical outlet on your living room wall. For example, show young children how plugs work, and let them know that even if they are curious about the slits of an electrical outlet, *nothing* else should be placed inside.



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Each year about 2,400 children end up in the emergency room after suffering injuries caused by inserting objects—paper clips, pens, screws, nails, forks, hair pins, coins and more—into electrical receptacles. That’s about seven children a day who sustain injuries ranging from electric shock to burns.

But this isn’t the only electrical mishap that impacts youngsters. Our reliance on electronics and gadgets have left both youngsters and their parents at risk when they overcrowd electrical outlets, continue to use frayed wires, place devices near liquids or leave electronics on for long periods of time.

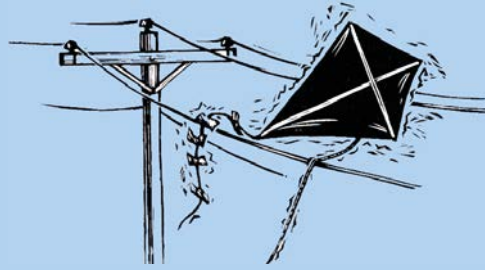
The same safety tips CVEA provides to protect adults also help protect children. We should all set good examples for our youngsters.

Supplement your lessons at home with resources galore; including those provided by CVEA. The Electrical Safety Foundational International (www.esfi.org) is among the many national organizations offering free kits, videos and interactive online tools that make learning and practicing electrical safety fun for you and your children.

As they grow older, remember to continue teaching them about the power of electricity and how to use it safely. ■

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Electric Safety Doesn’t Stop at Your Front Door



Warm, sunny days beckon the child in all of us to head outside and play. CVEA recommends that families review and stress to children to follow simple electrical safety rules for safe outdoor play. Children often do not understand the dangers of electricity. Make them aware of overhead power lines and electrical equipment, and emphasize they should never climb or play near them.

CVEA recommends children be taught to follow these outdoor safety rules:

- Never climb trees near power lines; even if the power lines are not touching the tree, they could touch when more weight is added to the branch
- Fly kites and model airplanes in large open areas like a park or a field, safely away from trees and overhead power lines; if a kite gets stuck in a tree that’s near power lines, don’t climb up to get it, contact CVEA for assistance
- Never climb a utility pole or tower
- Don’t play on or around pad-mounted electrical equipment
- Never go into an electric substation for any reason - electric substations contain high-voltage equipment which can be deadly; never rescue a pet or retrieve a ball or toy that goes inside - call CVEA instead
- Never go anywhere near a fallen power line; tell children to report any fallen or dangling wires to an adult
- Use caution when plugging in radios, Iphone speakers, or any electrical gadget outdoors, and keep all electrical appliances at least 10 feet away from hot tubs, pools, ponds, puddles, and wet surfaces

Parents, when designing an outdoor play area, do not install playground equipment or swimming pools underneath or near power lines.