



# Electrical Safety Tips

Electricity attempts to travel to the ground. It follows the path of least resistance, traveling through conductors, such as metal, water and people. If you touch electricity (or something touching electricity) and the ground at the same time, you become a path for that electricity and could get seriously injured or killed. Electricity travels at the speed of light, allowing no time to react. Therefore, it is extremely important that you use caution around electricity. The most important thing to remember is to always play it safe and smart around electricity.

## POWER LINES

Power lines transport tremendous amounts of electricity. Contact with a power line can result in serious injuries, burns or death. Stay away from all power lines, and never climb utility poles.

## DOWNED POWER LINE

Accidents, storms or other events may cause a power line to fall to the ground. A wire lying on the ground may be carrying electricity. Remember the following safety rules:

- Don't go near downed power lines. Assume the power is still on. It could save your life. Immediately call the police (911) and GP&L (972-205-3000) to report a fallen line.
- Instruct others not to go near the downed line.

## OBJECTS NEAR OR TOUCHING POWER LINES

- If a fallen power line is touching someone, stay away and immediately call for help. Don't touch the person or anything they are touching. Don't use an object to try to move the line or try to pull the person away from the line, or you may become a victim also.
- If your car is hit by a power line, stay inside unless in immediate danger such as a fire. If you must exit the car, jump clear without touching metal (the car) and the ground at the same time.
- Don't touch a fence that has come in contact with a fallen power line. Metal fences can become electrified if a live wire falls on them.
- Don't climb trees near electrical wires.
- Don't fly kites, balloons, airplanes or other objects near overhead lines. A kite or balloon string can conduct electricity to the ground.
- Keep pool skimmer poles away from overhead power lines.
- When carrying ladders and other long tools, be careful and keep them away from all overhead lines, including the line going to your home from the power pole.
- When installing an antenna, be certain there is ample space between it and all overhead power lines. Allow extra space so if it falls it will clear the overhead power lines. Read the installation instructions and install only in dry weather.

## **SERVICE DROPS**

A service drop is where the wiring comes into a building at the meter. The covering on these wires is not insulation. It is weatherproofing only. If this covering becomes brittle or cracked, it can fall off and expose energized wires.

- Keep ladders away from service drops.
- Use caution when near a service drop, such as when painting or cleaning.

## **ELECTRICAL OUTLETS**

Electrical outlets provide access to electricity. As such, they should be treated with the same caution as any other source of electricity.

- Never overload electrical outlets; an overloaded electrical outlet is a fire hazard.
- Don't put anything but plugs in electrical outlets.
- Use child safety devices such as plastic outlet guards.

## **ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES AND CORDS**

Once an electrical appliance is plugged in, it is a source of electricity whether it is turned on or off.

- Never use electrical appliances in or near water.
- Always unplug an appliance before cleaning it.
- Appliance cords are covered with insulation for protection. Check cords regularly for wear. Don't use the appliance if the cord is cracked or frayed.
- Disconnect appliances by pulling on the plug, not the cord.
- Don't run electrical cords under rugs or furniture.
- Unplug appliances when not in use. Even if the appliance is turned off, there is still a bit of electricity running through it if it is plugged into an outlet.
- Immediately disconnect an appliance if it blows a fuse or emits smoke or sparks. Have the appliance repaired before using it again or discard it.
- Be careful not to cut the power cord when working with outdoor electrical tools such as blowers, hedge clippers, chain saws and more.
- Wear rubber-soled shoes when using electrical appliances outdoors. Do not use electrical tools when barefooted.
- Don't use electrical appliances outdoors when the ground is damp or wet.

## **LINE LOCATORS**

There are a number of underground utilities that could be damaged if you hit them while digging.

- Call before you dig. (1-800-344-8377)
- If you hit an underground line you could be seriously injured or killed. You may also be liable for any damages.

## **SUBSTATIONS AND PAD-MOUNTED TRANSFORMERS**

A substation is a fenced area that houses power transformers. Some power lines are also buried underground and controlled by a pad-mounted transformer.

- Both the substations and the pad-mounted transformers contain high voltages of electricity. Don't climb or play around either. Stay away!
- If you see an unlocked gate, don't open it or go near it. Call GP&L at 972-205-3000.
- Don't dig around or plant anything near pad-mounted transformers. Not only does this restrict access to power company crews, but you may come in contact with a buried cable while digging.

## **ELECTRICAL STORMS**

Lightning goes from clouds to the ground, using the best conductor available. Follow these guidelines if outside in a storm.

- Seek shelter -- house, vehicle, golf cart, other. Don't stand in the open.
- If no shelter is available, seek low ground and sit bent forward with your hands on your knees.
- If you are in the water, get out!
- If you are in a boat, get to land!
- Stay away from metal objects. If caught on a golf course during a storm, don't hold a metal club.
- Don't stand under a tree. A wet tree can attract lightning instead of providing protection.