

CVEC Lineworkers Conduct Hotline Safety Demonstrations

Chippewa County Highway Department

Teaching community employees and local youth about the importance of safety around power lines was the purpose of Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative's recent safety demonstrations.

On March 12, two CVEC lineworkers, Terry Capek and Nic Alberson, presented a power line safety awareness demonstration to Chippewa County workers. The safety demonstration is an innovative teaching aid



designed to convey important messages about electrical safety. Terry and Nic discussed the dangers of objects coming into contact with power lines and the dos and don'ts of those types of situations.

The audience watched as Nic placed a tree branch across the phase (hot wire) and neutral (grounded wire) of the 7,200-volt power line. The photo at left shows a tree branch with



CVEC lineworkers Terry Capek, left, and Nic Alberson present a safety demonstration to county employees.

electrical current passing through it. First, the sap is boiled out of the branch and then ignited. As the branch burns, it eventually creates enough soot and carbon to flash an electrical arc across it (like a lightning bolt).

Terry and Nic also showed how a dry branch placed across the wires has enough current flowing through it to light a 300-watt light bulb. And all it takes is 50 milliamps of electricity to place your heart into fibrillation, which is less than it takes to light a 7½-watt light bulb.

The presentation ended with a review of safety information to remember when working around electricity and the importance of calling Digger's Hotline before digging. Please see the safety tips at left.

Cornell Elementary School

On March 16, Chippewa Valley Electric line workers Mike Sedlacek and Frank Hakes visited Cornell Elementary School second- and third-graders to teach them about being safe around electricity. Mike and Frank set up
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CVEC lineworkers Frank Hakes, left, and Mike Sedlacek present a safety demonstration to Cornell elementary students.

Safety Tips

Always remember to:

- Call before you dig! Call Diggers Hotline, dial 811 or (800) 242-8511 at least three business days before digging.
- Stay away from power lines, meters, transformers and electric boxes.
- Never touch or go near a downed power line.
- Don't touch anything that may be touching a downed wire, such as a car.
- If your vehicle comes in contact with a downed power line...
 - Stay inside! The safest place is in your car.
 - Honk the horn, roll down your window, and yell for help.
 - Warn others to stay away.
 - Use your mobile phone to call 911.
 - Fire department and police will guard the area until electric workers tell you when it's safe to exit your vehicle.
- Keep a safe distance from overhead power lines when working with ladders or installing objects such as antennas.
- Never fly kites, remote control airplanes, or balloons near power lines.
- Don't climb trees near power lines.
- If you get something stuck in a power line, do not try to remove it. Call CVEC to report.

Consider Safety When Planning Landscaping Projects

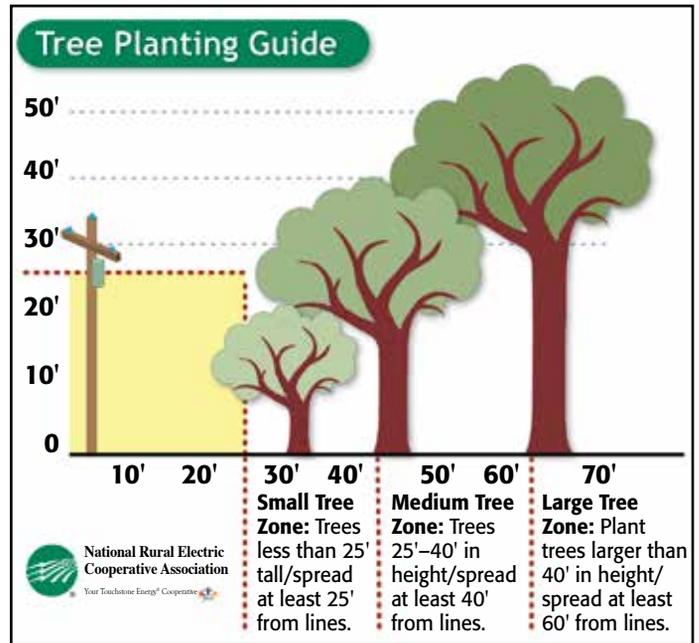
Putting in some new landscaping or trees this year? Or perhaps planning your garden? Here are some tips to keep you safe around electricity.

As you plan your tree and landscape plantings, consider that trees and shrubs need space to grow both above and below ground. Reduce fire hazards, power outages, and the need for frequent pruning with proper selection and planting of trees near utilities.

In our part of the country, we use dense windbreaks to protect homes from harsh winter winds. Winter sun should be able to reach south-facing windows. Refer to the helpful graphic at right to determine which species to plant in various locations on your property.

Tall trees surrounding your home, such as maple, oak, pine, and spruce, provide summer shade to lower cooling costs and keep out cold winter winds. Medium trees, 40 feet or less in mature height, include hawthorn, pagoda dogwood, star magnolia, and Amur maple, while smaller trees suitable for planting near distribution utility lines might include crab apple, sumac, burning bush, or winterberry.

These tree recommendations are for planting near



local distribution power lines. The only trees that may be planted within the 80-foot wide electrical transmission line right-of-way are ornamentals or dwarf fruit trees that grow no taller than 12 feet at maturity.

- Take care to plant trees away from underground utilities, as tree roots can grow to interfere with underground pipes, cables, and wires. Future repairs could damage the health of nearby plants and trees.
- Always look up for nearby power lines before you cut down any tree or trim branches. If a tree falls into a power line, contact Chippewa Valley Electric.
- Keep areas around electric meters, transformers, or other electrical equipment free of any vegetation that could limit utility service access.
- If you have trees that appear to be growing into or leaning toward power lines, contact Chippewa Valley Electric. Never try to prune them yourself.

Call Before You Dig

Do your outdoor projects include installing a new mail box or bringing in a backhoe for trench work? At least 72 hours before engaging in any type of digging, call 8-1-1, the national "Call Before You Dig" number, to have the location of underground utilities on your property marked. Underground utilities, such as buried gas, water, and electric lines, can be a shovel thrust away from turning a spring project into a disaster. Calling 8-1-1 before you dig is free, it is easy, and it's the law. ■

Solving Stray Voltage Problems

Stray voltage is the common term used to describe neutral-to-earth voltage in a cow or livestock contact area, usually in the barn. When a cow makes contact between two points with a difference in voltage, such as a watering cup and the concrete floor, an electric current may flow through the cow, which the cow may feel. Such situations can be caused by a variety of electrical problems both on farm and off farm.

Neutral-to-earth voltage may never be completely eliminated because it is present on all grounded electrical distribution systems. However, much can be done to resolve stray voltage concerns. There are fairly simple electrical tests that can be performed by qualified individuals to determine whether stray voltage is present at unacceptable levels on your farm.

If you believe you may have stray voltage, Chippewa Valley Electric stands ready to investigate that possibility. We have the equipment and trained personnel to offer assistance and advice pertaining to stray voltage. ■



MAY IS NATIONAL ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH

Switch to Safety

The home is over 40 years old and has aluminum wiring, but has not recently undergone a safety inspection by an electrician.



The wall plate is hot to the touch.

Lights get dimmer or brighter when other appliances turn on or off.



There is discoloration of or around the switch plate.

You often experience a shock when operating the switch.



Don't Take These Warning Signs Lightly



Lights dim and/or flicker without cause.

The switch leans to one side or feels loose when operating.



You hear crackling, popping, or buzzing from your outlet.

You detect an odor when a switch is used.



Often breakers trip or fuses blow when the switch is turned on.

If your lighting control points are characterized by any of the above, have your home's electrical system inspected by a qualified electrician as soon as possible.



Cracked, broken or missing cover plates should be replaced immediately to prevent accidental contact with wiring.



Switches and lighting equipment should bear the mark of a nationally recognized testing laboratory such as UL, Intertek, or CSA.



Dimmers

- Save energy and reduce utility costs
- Extend bulb life
- Adjust light levels to meet range of preferences
- LEDs and CFLs need to be dimmer compatible



Timers

- Provide added security while away from home
- Improve safety for entrance after dark
- Countdown timers prevent leaving lights on accidentally



Remote Control/Smart Panels

- Offer convenient management from phone or remote control
- Some models save preset preference profiles
- Have ability to save energy and reduce utility costs
- Some models allow for remote management from anywhere providing security and peace of mind



Motion Sensors

- Allow for hands-free convenience
- May save energy and reduce utility costs
- Added security when installed outside



If you want to switch up your lighting controls, contact a **qualified electrician** to make sure that the option you desire is compatible with your home. And remember, all light switches should be **installed by a professional**.

Safety Demonstrations

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a tabletop display model representing a miniature neighborhood to demonstrate the effects of contacting 7,200 volts of electricity. The model-size electrical system allows the students to witness the result of electrical contact with conductors such as trees, ladders, and vehicles.

To help further convey the seriousness of electrical safety, special effects including neon figures (named Lightning Liz and Neon Leon) that light up and electrical arcs are incorporated. Ball Park Franks® were used and proved to be no match to withstand high voltage, since the human body's internal body resistance is similar to that of a hot dog. As one can imagine, the hot dog sizzled and burned, just as human skin would if it came into contact with a power line, in addition to any internal injuries which would almost be inevitable from prolonged contact with high voltage.

The students were very attentive as they listened and watched. At the end of the presentation, comments and questions from the students revealed their interest and knowledge gained from the demonstration.

If one life can be saved, or a serious accident avoided, we will be rewarded for our efforts. ■

Office Move!

CVEC Moves Into Temporary Headquarters During Building Project



In April we opened at our temporary office (formerly Dr. Lane's dental office) located at 208 Main Street, Cornell. The move was necessary because of our new building project. We anticipate working out of the temporary facilities until the end of the year. Thank you in advance for your patience as we may experience some logistic and communication problems during this time.

Please note: Our payment drop box has also been relocated to 208 Main Street, Cornell. ■

Is Your Central Air Conditioning Controlled?

Chippewa Valley Electric is offering a \$25 rebate to new participants in our Central Air Conditioning Load Management Program. In order to qualify for the rebate, the member must sign up for the control before June 1, 2015.

In addition to the \$25 rebate, the member will receive a \$6 per month credit during June, July, and August.

Central air conditioning has a special control strategy that cycles only the compressor rather than shutting down the entire system for extended periods. When we need to control

central air conditioning systems, the compressor is cycled in 15-minute increments during the control period.

The blower is not interrupted, as there is generally enough residual cold in the ductwork for the control to go unnoticed.

If you would like to receive the rebate and the AC credit, please contact our office for a rebate form, or the rebate form can be downloaded from our webpage at www.cvecoop.com/forms/ACagreement.pdf. ■

Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative will be closed Monday, May 25, for Memorial Day.



Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative

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