

WATT'S HAPPENING

SCENIC RIVERS ENERGY COOPERATIVE
LANCASTER, DARLINGTON AND GAYS MILLS, WISCONSIN

May is Electrical Safety Month

Summer brings the promise of long, sunny days—as well as the chance for some storms. Bad weather in any season can knock down electric power lines. Knowing the following will help you stay safe around this electrical hazard.

If You See a Downed Power Line:

- ▶ Stay at least 10 feet away from the line, since electricity can jump to anyone who gets too close.
- ▶ Electricity can move from a high voltage to a low voltage zone—and

it could do that through your body. To avoid this, shuffle away with small steps, keeping your feet together and on the ground at all times.

- ▶ If you see someone who is in direct or indirect contact with the line, do not touch the person. You could become the next victim. Call 911 instead.
- ▶ Do not move a downed power line or anything in contact with it by using another object such as a broom.

Car Accidents and Power Lines

- ▶ If you are in your car and it is in contact with a downed power line, stay in your car. Call 911 if possible, or honk your horn for help.
- ▶ In the event your car is on fire, jump out with both feet together to avoid contact with the live car and the ground at the same time. Shuffle away from the car.
- ▶ Do not drive over downed power lines.—Electrical Safety Foundation International

Lawn Mower Safety

With the warm weather comes grass and that means another mowing season. You could try to cut down your mowing area if possible. This would be beneficial to wildlife and reduce gasoline usage; this would be your way to promote a greener earth. Here are some lawn mowing safety tips for what lawn you have left to mow:



- ▼ Read the owner's manual thoroughly before operating the mower.
- ▼ If you have a gasoline-powered mower, store the gas in a UL-listed safety can. Fill the mower outside, away from possible ignition sources. Before starting the mower, be sure it is on level ground and disengage all clutches.
- ▼ Always start the mower outdoors.

Do not operate your electrically powered lawn mower on wet grass. Use an extension cord designed for outdoor use and rated for the power needs of your mower. To reduce the risk of cutting the cord while you're mowing, start in the area nearest the electrical outlet; then mow away from the outlet so the power cord will trail behind you.

- ▼ Make sure all safety guards are in place and keep the mower's blades sharp. If you hit a foreign object or have a mower malfunction, turn off the mower and disconnect the power cord before inspecting for damage.
- ▼ Keep your hands and feet away from the mower's blades. Never reach under the mower for any reason while the mower is operating and make all adjustments with the motor off.

- ▼ Safe footwear is important, especially with walk behind mowers. Never work barefoot or in sandals, canvas shoes, etc.
- ▼ Never leave a lawn mower "ON" while unattended. Curious children, eager to help, may get seriously injured.

Vitality NOTE

Skin inflammations

If your hands are dry, red, cracked and itchy no matter how much hand lotion you use, you could have eczema, a common skin inflammation. To ease the symptoms: Avoid frequent hand washing. Don't wash hands in hot water. Use hypo-allergenic soaps, such as Vanicream or Aveeno Dry Skin. Apply generous amounts of heavy moisturizers after bathing. See a doctor if the problem persists or causes pain.

Currently Cooking



If you want to impress your friends with a great coffee cake, try this recipe.

Graham Streusel Cake

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2 C. graham cracker crumbs | 3/4 C. chopped walnuts |
| 3/4 C. packed brown sugar | 3/4 C. melted butter or oleo |
| 1 Betty Crocker butter pecan cake mix | 1 C. water |
| 1/4 C. vegetable oil | 3 eggs |

Vanilla Glaze:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1 C. powdered sugar | 1 to 2 Tbsp. water |
|---------------------|--------------------|

Heat oven to 350°. Mix crumbs, nuts, brown sugar and butter; reserve. Blend cake mix, water, oil and eggs on low speed until moistened, then beat on medium, stirring occasionally, about 3 minutes. Pour half of batter (about 2 1/3 cups) into the pan; sprinkle with half the crumb mixture. Spread remaining batter over crumb mixture; sprinkle with remaining crumbs. Bake in 13x9x2" greased and floured pan until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool. Drizzle glaze over cake. Freezes well.

Straw bale homes



Straw bale homes are providing low-cost housing for do-it-yourselfers throughout the U.S., Canada, and Australia. Never before has such an unconventional building system gained acceptance so quickly. Properly designed straw bale homes composed of wheat or rice straw, and coated with plaster and stucco, are resistant to moisture, fire, and pests.

The walls of straw bale homes are between 14 and 23 inches thick, depending on the size of the bales and how they are laid within the wall. The estimated thermal resistance or R-value of straw bale walls is between R-40 and R-55. The actual R-value may be considerably lower because of air convection within bales and heat traveling from indoors to outdoors along the surface. But it is always higher than the R-11 to R-22 common in standard construction.

One disadvantage of straw bale construction is that your local trades people may be unfamiliar with how to build, wire, and plumb these unusual structures. Your code officials may also be at a loss as to how to evaluate your plans.

Studies that were done by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporations concluded that straw bale homes use 20 percent less energy for heating than standard homes with standard two-by-six insulated walls.

Since straw bale homes are still uncommon, they work best for the skilled do-it-yourselfer with a limited budget and lots of time and energy to dedicate to their building project. But they can be a good option for homeowners that want the most efficient home possible.

“Properly designed straw bale homes composed of wheat or rice straw, and coated with plaster and stucco, are resistant to moisture, fire, and pests.”



Just For Fun

Red Skelton's Recipe for The Perfect Marriage



- Two times a week, we go to a nice restaurant, have a little beverage, good food and companionship. She goes on Tuesday, I go on Fridays.
- We also sleep in separate beds. Hers is in California and mine is in Texas.
- I asked my wife where she wanted to go for our anniversary. "Somewhere I haven't been in a long time!" she said. So I suggested the kitchen.
- We always hold hands. If I let go, she shops.
- My wife told me the car wasn't running well because there was water in the carburetor. I asked where the car was; she told me "In the lake."
- She got a mud pack and looked great for two days. Then the mud fell off.
- She ran after the garbage truck, yelling "Am I too late for the garbage?" The driver said "No, jump in!"
- I married Miss Right. I just didn't know her first name was Always.
- The last fight was my fault though. My wife asked "What's on the TV?" I said "Dust!"



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