

Staying safe

I heard a pretty amazing story the other day. It involved two teens in Indiana, Lee Whittaker and Ashley Taylor, who were driving down the road with some friends when their car started to fishtail. Lee did his best to keep the vehicle on the road. But before he knew it, he was sliding straight into a utility pole — and that pole came down, lines and all, right on top of his overturned car.

Now, most folks faced with this situation would do what comes naturally: get out of the car. But Lee and Ashley knew better. Not a week earlier they had attended a

safety demonstration at their school sponsored by their local electric co-op. One of the key messages relayed was, “If your car hits a power pole, stay inside it where you’ll be safe from any electrical current.”

The two did just that and kept their friends in the car and family members at a safe distance once they arrived. As a result, the entire group walked away with just a few minor injuries. However, without a basic knowledge of electrical safety, the outcome that night could have been much different.

The electricity Holston Electric Cooperative provides day in and day out is a phenomenal resource, powering our modern lifestyles in a safe, reliable and affordable way. But electricity must be respected: If safety isn’t made a priority, what changes our lives for the better could change them for the worse in an instant.

Lee and Ashley know this from experience, and we’re striving to keep you informed of electrical

safety so you don’t have to learn a similar lesson the hard way.

Safety has been a part of the fundamental culture at Holston EC since day one. Being an electric lineworker is ranked by the U.S.

Department of Labor as one of the 10 most dangerous jobs, on the same list as fishermen, loggers and military servicemen. We demand that not only those out in the field but employees at all levels make safety a top priority. We also strive to educate our members — from the youngest to the oldest — about the dangers associated with electricity through informative

school safety programs like “Louie the Lightning Bug,” “History,” “What About That Electricity?” and “Electrojuice.” And seasonal tips in this magazine, local newspapers and radio announcements remind folks that everyday activities involving ladders, digging underground or even unplugging an appliance should be done with respect for the power of electricity.

As part of our safety commitment, please take time to learn how you can be safe around electricity at home. Spending just a few minutes with some helpful resources can make all the difference when you’re faced with a possible unsafe situation. For more information on electrical safety, please visit our Web site, www.holstonelectric.com, as well as SafeElectricity.org and Electrical-Safety.org.

I hope there won’t be any stories about Holston EC members getting into sticky situations like Lee and Ashley. But if there are, a few minutes spent studying safety today could ensure a happy ending.



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To report an outage or
electrical emergency, call
423-272-8821 or 423-235-6811
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Celebrate national electrical safety month

May marks National Electrical Safety Month, and Holston Electric Cooperative is teaming up with the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) to launch a public-awareness campaign to promote the importance of electrical safety and educate key audiences about the steps that can be taken to prevent electrical fires, injuries and fatalities in the home.

“Eliminating electrical hazards begins with education and awareness,” says ESFI President Brett Brenner. “National Electrical Safety Month is a time for all of us to re-examine our surroundings and determine what steps we can take to prevent the hundreds of deaths, thousands of injuries and billions of dollars in economic losses that occur each year because of electrical hazards.”

Electricity is the cause of more than 140,000 fires each year, resulting in more than 500 deaths, 4,000 injuries and \$1.6 billion in property damage in the United States. In the workplace, more than 300 fatalities and approximately 4,000 injuries occur each year due to electrical hazards, according to a study published by the Itasca, Ill.-based National Safety Council.

To help raise awareness of electrical safety, ESFI will focus on a different electrical safety topic each week as part of a broader outreach effort this May:

May 2-8 — Educating Your Children: Do your children know what it takes to stay safe when it comes to electricity? Visit ESFI’s Kids Corner, a brand-new online resource designed as a one-stop shop for teachers, educators, parents and students!

May 9-15 — Staying Safe at Work: Electrical accidents in an office environment usually occur as a result of faulty or defective equipment, unsafe installation or misuse of equipment. During the second week of National Electrical Safety Month, perform an electrical safety inspection of your office.

May 16-22 — Renovating the Right Way: Whether you are a first-time do-it-yourselfer or a regular “weekend warrior,” practicing safe habits can reduce your risk when it comes to home electrical work. Use

ESFI’s “Electrical Safety Workbook” to help better understand and maintain your home’s electrical system.

May 23-29 — Remembering Electrical Safety in the Field: Use ESFI’s “Never Assume Electrical Safety Series” to give you and your co-workers the right frame of mind when it comes to safety in the workplace. From job planning to arc flash awareness, this one-of-a-kind video program is a must for anyone working with or near electricity!

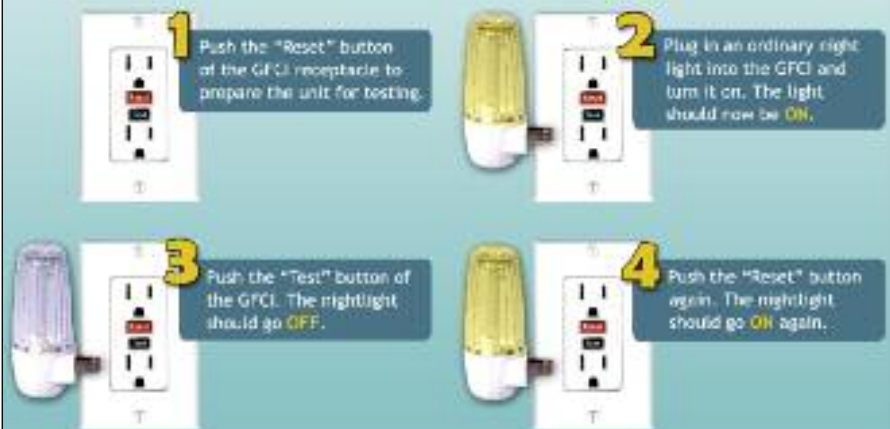
ESFI’s newly redesigned Web site offers a variety of print, online and multimedia resources for teachers, educators, parents, students and anyone else interested in learning about electrical safety or teaching others about it.

The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) is dedicated exclusively to promoting electrical safety in the home and the workplace. ESFI proudly sponsors National Electrical Safety Month each May and engages in public education campaigns throughout the year to prevent electrical fires, injuries and fatalities. For more information about ESFI and National Electrical Safety Month, visit www.electrical-safety.org.

How to test electrical outlets

Since the 1970s ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) have saved thousands of lives, helping cut the number of home electrocutions in half. The safety devices prevent deadly shock by quickly shutting off power to the circuit if the electricity flowing into the circuit differs from the amount returning. The safety devices should be used in any indoor or outdoor area where water may come into contact with electrical products.

GFCIs should be tested once a month to make sure they’re working properly. To test a device, follow these four steps:



Source: Electrical Safety Foundation International

Local youths represent co-op in Nashville

Katie McFarland of Volunteer High School and Logan Delph of Cherokee High School were among 44 high school juniors representing 22 electric cooperatives across the state who attended the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association's annual Youth Leadership Summit March 15-17 in downtown Nashville. McFarland is the daughter of Richard and Amy McFarland of Surgoinsville, and Delph is the son of Larry and Karla Delph of Rogersville. Both families live in the Holston Electric Cooperative service area.

"The annual summit teaches how important electric cooperatives are to Tennessee's rural communities and provides students an opportunity to see, in person, the legislative process in the Tennessee Capitol," said Joe Jackson, TECA director of youth and member relations.

"We had another excellent group of outstanding young leaders attend this year's summit," Jackson said. "Considering the highly competitive and selective process they undergo to earn a spot on the trip, it's no surprise. Local electric cooperatives, along with school officials and guidance counselors, chose these students based on their interest in government and their leadership abilities."

"The Magic of Leadership" was the theme of the 2010 summit hosted by TECA and funded in part by the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation, a not-for-profit cooperative financing institute that provides an independent source of financing to member cooperatives nationwide.

"The Youth Leadership Summit gives the participants a chance to see how their electric cooperative interacts with other cooperatives across the state," stated Holston EC General Manager Larry Elkins. "They also learn how proposed legislation can affect the daily operations at their cooperative."

"It is encouraging to see such motivated students in our service area," said Holston EC Communications Specialist Michelle Simpson. These young people will one day be the leaders of our communities, and Holston Electric Cooperative is privileged to provide them with this opportunity to join their peers from across Tennessee to learn about state government and rural electric co-ops."

The summit began Monday evening, March 15, with dinner at the group's hotel, the Millennium Maxwell House. Get-acquainted and leadership-development activities followed, led by cooperative employees and special guests, including 2009 Miss Tennessee Stefanie Wittler and Tennessee Titans cheerleader Lindsey Roznovsky.

Students rose early on Tuesday, March 16, for breakfast and preparations for a visit to Legislative Plaza to meet their state legislators and sit in on House and Senate committee meetings. Motivational speaker Lynn Hodges, a former Tennessee Valley Authority employee, gave the keynote address, "The Magic of Choice," before TECA Director of Government Affairs David Callis introduced State Rep. Phillip Johnson of Pegram. Johnson answered questions submitted by the students, and Callis explained current bills affecting cooperatives and described



Holston EC Youth Leadership Summit participants and cooperative representatives meet their state legislators after a tour of the Capitol building. From left are Sen. Mike Faulk, Holston EC Communications Specialist Michelle Simpson, Katie McFarland, Logan Delph, Rep. Mike Harrison and Holston EC General Manager Larry Elkins.

what everyone should expect from the legislative committees they were to visit.

The 11th-graders then took a tour of the Capitol and saw state government in action at the committee meetings. McFarland and Delph met with Rep. Mike Harrison and Sen. Mike Faulk before posing for photos in front of the historic Capitol building.

Following the visit to Capitol Hill, the group enjoyed lunch and leadership activities at a Nashville-area YMCA camp. After dinner, students attended a Nashville Predators hockey game at Bridgestone Arena followed by a tour of Tennessee's capital city. Finally, the busy day was capped off with an ice cream social.

Wednesday morning, the students learned more about Tennessee's electric cooperatives and the vital role co-ops play in the communities they serve. Students got an overview of the history of electric cooperatives from the "Mission Possible" activity. Then they were divided into teams and competed in "M.A.G.I.C." (Mastering A Game of Interactive Cooperation), forming their own co-ops and working together to "buy" and "sell" power distribution supplies — power poles, wire, transformers, meters and trucks. Later, they put together all they'd learned, answering trivia questions about electric cooperatives and the state in the "Energy Battle" competition. Trent Sanders, founder and president of Leaders across America, brought the three-day event to a close with his address, "Road to Success."

"We offer these educational experiences for our students — our future members — because we want them to understand what makes a cooperative special," said Elkins. "We want them to appreciate all their electric cooperative provides for their communities and understand why it was so important to form electric co-ops in the first place."

Foremen earn supervisor training certificates

Holston EC linemen Wayne McCracken and Ragen Singleton recently completed 16 hours of instruction and classwork required for supplemental certificates in foreman/supervisor training. The certification is issued through the Tennessee Technology Center in Murfreesboro.

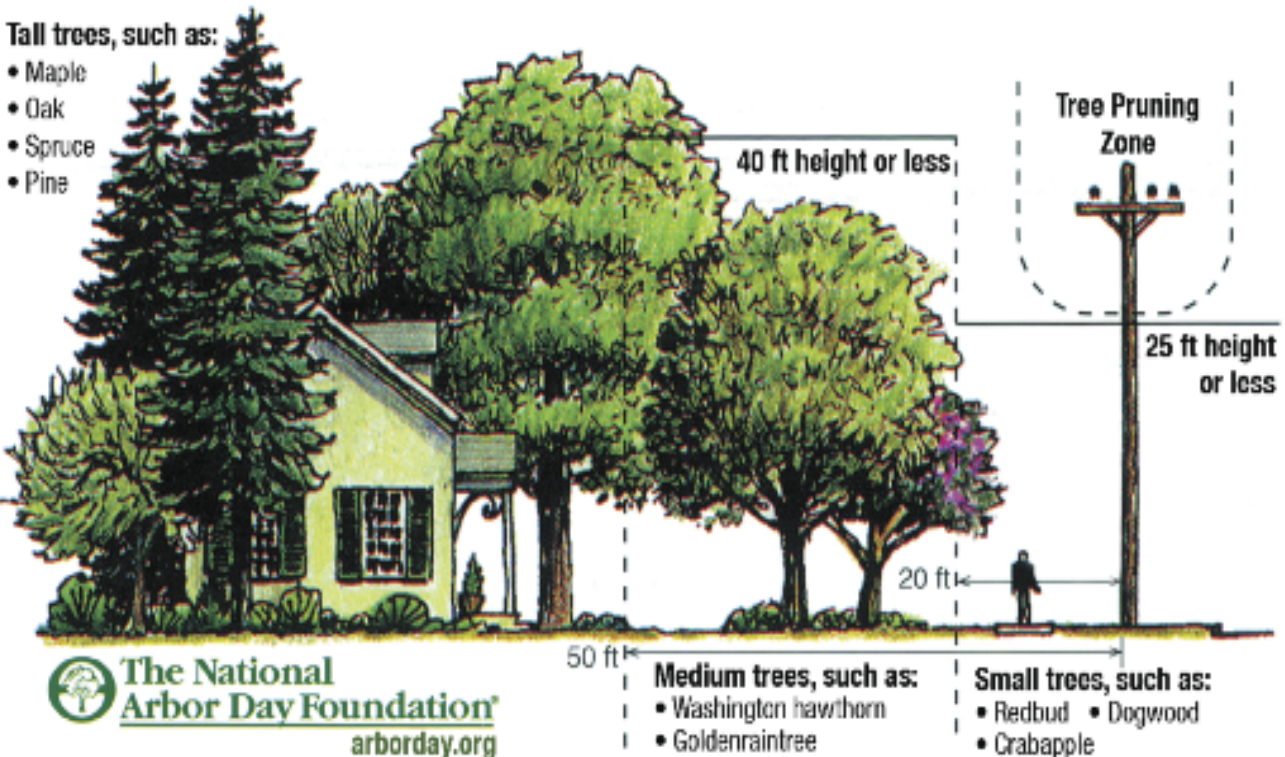
In the program, participants learn about the essential skills of leadership and communicating, developing performance goals and standards, providing performance feedback, coaching job skills, managing complaints, supporting change and resolving conflict.

McCracken and Singleton are both certified journeyman linemen and past participants on Holston EC's lineman rodeo team.



Holston EC General Manager Larry Elkins, center, presents Wayne McCracken, left, and Ragen Singleton certificates following their successful completion of coursework required for all supervisors and foremen.

Plan before you plant this spring Plant taller trees away from overhead utility lines



Winners announced in 2010 Washington Youth Tour Writing Contest

The Washington Youth Tour Writing contest for high school juniors that began in October of 2009 has concluded, and the winners from Cherokee, Volunteer and Morristown-Hamblen East high schools have been determined. The competition has been conducted in 11th-grade English classes for more than 40 years, and the winners receive expense-paid trips to Washington, D.C., as participants of the Washington Youth Tour or cash awards.



Cherokee High English teacher Linda Jackson, left, congratulates Tosha Edens, first-place and grand-prize winner of the 2010 Washington Youth Tour Writing Contest.

Cherokee High School student Tosha Edens, daughter of Bob and Jeanette Edens of Bulls Gap, is the grand prize winner among all three high schools that participate in Holston EC's contest. Her story will be entered in the statewide competition for one of three college scholarships available. Cambren Gibson, son of Charles and Carol Gibson, second place, and Whitney Boyd, daughter of Daren and Michelle Boyd, third place, round out the top three from Cherokee High.

Morristown-Hamblen East High School winners are Becky McBee, daughter of Sherry Frye and Randy McBee of Morristown, first place; Jazmine Richmond, daughter of Gail Richmond of Morristown, second place; and Rebekah Smith, daughter of Barry and Deborah Smith of Russellville, third place.

The top short stories from students at Volunteer High School were written by Ashley Wallace, daughter of Brian and Brenda Wallace of Church Hill, first place; Brittany Lindsey, daughter of Danny and Kristie Lindsey of Rogersville, second place; and Jessica Stewart, daughter of Rick Stewart and Donna Stewart of Rogersville, third place.

The Washington Youth Tour Writing Contest is conducted each year as part of a statewide program to help educate young people about basic cooperative values and the history of rural electrification. The Youth Tour is sponsored by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association, Holston EC and 22 other electric cooperatives across Tennessee. This year, students wrote on the theme "Electric Cooperatives: Energizing Our Communities" and were encouraged to develop unique, original story ideas to convey information about electric cooperatives.



Claiming second- and third-place prizes, respectively, at Cherokee High are Cambren Gibson and Whitney Boyd.



The top three scores at Volunteer High are claimed by, from left, Ashley Wallace, Brittany Lindsey and Jessica Stewart.



Morristown-Hamblen East winners in the Washington Youth Tour competition are, from left, Becky McBee, first place; Jazmine Richmond, second; and Rebekah Smith, third.