



Contact us

740-653-4422

1-800-282-5064

www.southcentralpower.com

Offices

Lancaster

2780 Coonpath Road NE
P.O. Box 250
Lancaster, OH 43130

Canal Winchester

10229 Busey Road
Canal Winchester, OH
43110

Circleville

2100 Chickasaw Drive
Circleville, OH 43113

Hillsboro

110 Danville Pike
Hillsboro, OH 45133

Barnesville

37801 Barnesville-
Bethesda Rd.
Barnesville, OH 43713

Office hours

Monday through Friday
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Outage reporting

When reporting an outage, an automated outage reporting system may answer your call. It may ask for your 12-digit account number to help locate the outage site. This number is found on your monthly bill. It's handy to write it down and keep it near the phone.

Suggestions

Please send your *Country Living* story ideas or comments to the attention of Lisa R. Hooker at South Central Power's Lancaster office.

Choose from a variety of payment options

South Central Power consumers have a number of ways to pay their monthly electric, security or WildBlue Internet bills.

Payment agents. Authorized payment agents are located across the service territory. The cooperative pays those agents a nominal fee to accept South Central Power payments. A list of authorized payment agents is available by calling the co-op or visiting www.southcentralpower.com. Click on "Billing" then "Payment options."

Consumers should be aware, though, that some locations that accept South Central Power payments are not authorized. While they forward the payments on to the cooperative, payments may not be received at the co-op by the due date.

A few pay agents, or their third-party billing service, charge South Central Power customers for accepting a co-op payment. Some consumers may find the convenience of the pay agent is worth the fee, but consumers have a number of other payment options that are fee-free.

Mail. Most consumers mail their payment, but monthly bills may be paid in person at any South Central Power office.

Each office also has a night deposit box. Please note, though, the box is emptied only once a day when the office opens. If the payment is due on the day payment is being made, do not place it in the box. Instead bring it into the office (or use the drive-through where available) to ensure timely credit for the payment.

Telephone. Customers also may call the co-op during regular business hours to pay by phone using a credit card, debit card or to have the payment deducted from a checking account.

Automatic deductions. Payments also can be set up to be automatically deducted from a checking account or charged to a credit card on the due date each month. Simply ask an office representative for assistance.

Online options. Online bill payment options are increasingly popular. Consumers can choose to make a one-time payment or a recurring payment using a credit card or debit card. Set up online payments through www.southcentralpower.com. Go to "Billing" and click on "My Account."

Consumers can count on their payment due date to fall on the same day. The only exception is when the due date falls on a weekend or a holiday. Failure to receive a monthly bill does not relieve consumers from making a payment or the consequences of a late payment or not making a payment at all.

Please call South Central Power with any questions about your monthly bill and the payment options available to you.



Be prepared for thunderstorms

Whether it's winter ice storms or spring thunderstorms, consumers often find themselves unprepared when the electricity goes out. Keep these items handy to lessen the impact.

- South Central Power's outage reporting number is 1-877-OUTAGES (1-877-688-2437). Also write down the phone numbers of local law enforcement offices and the local Red Cross.

- Nonperishable food and bottled water.

- An emergency supply of prescription medications.

- Flashlights, nonelectric lamps and a battery-powered radio.

- A back-up plan to move a seriously ill person to a safe place. **South Central Power does NOT guarantee uninterrupted service to homes where serious medical conditions exist.**

- Check in with family, friends and neighbors who are ill, elderly, have young children or who otherwise may need help.

Restoration priorities. Repair priorities are determined by the number of consumers affected.

1. *Transmission lines.* They supply power to one or more substations.

2. *Substations.* A problem here causes outages for all consumers serviced by it.

3. *Main distribution feeders.* Each feeder serves a portion of members from the substation.

4. *Tap lines.* These branch lines serve a smaller group of members, but remain without power until the main feeder line is repaired.

5. *Individual electric service lines.*

Next of Kin Registry alerts family when an accident occurs

Memorial Day marks the unofficial start of summer driving season.

Ever wonder how law enforcement would know who to call if you were in a serious accident? What if a loved one was injured and unable to tell the police to call you?

Those examples are precisely why Ohio's lawmakers created the Next of Kin registry.

While the voluntary program took effect in September 2008, less than 150,000 people, or about 2 percent of Ohio's 7.9 million licensed drivers, have signed up for it.

Drivers with a valid Ohio driver's license, commercial driver's license, temporary permit or identification card can submit two emergency contacts to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV).

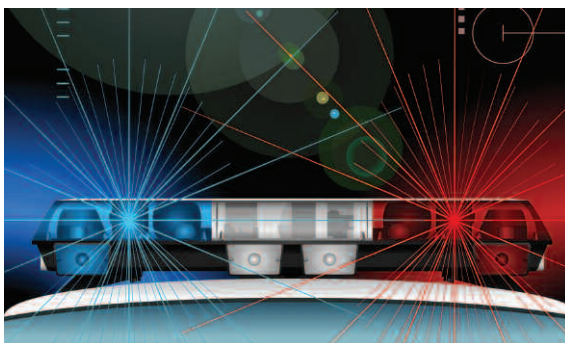
Law enforcement officials save precious time by having access to emergency contact names when a registrant is left seriously injured, incapacitated or unresponsive because of a vehicle accident. It also allows law enforcement to properly notify the family of the accident.

The contacts likely could also provide important information regarding medical conditions, medications and allergies.

Registration is free and information can be submitted online at www.bmv.ohio.gov. The Next of Kin form also is available at any deputy registrar office.

Registrants should obtain permission from their next of kin contacts before submitting the information to the BMV. A parent or guardian must be one emergency contact for registrants under the age of 18.

Registrants also are responsible for updating their next of kin information as needed.



Using mulch effectively

Remember when no one mulched their flower beds?

Through the years, though, homeowners have become enamored with mulch. It's useful and attractive.

Primarily used around trees and in garden beds, it suppresses weed growth and conserves moisture.

Mulch also helps maintain a steady soil temperature. This is useful in the summer when temperatures climb and plants benefit from cooler soil temperature.

Mulch applied too early in the spring delays soil warming, and thus the emergence of perennials. Many garden experts recommend waiting until the soil has warmed, usually late May or early June, before laying mulch.

Assess your home during Electric Safety Month

In an effort to keep people safe all year round, National Electrical Safety Month is recognized in May. The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) has come up with a month-long plan to help keep people safe around something that has become such an important part of everyday life.

“Modern homes run on electricity, but if you don’t properly maintain your electrical products, they can create hazards,” warned ESFI president Brett Brenner. “The good news is that eliminating electrical hazards from your home doesn’t have to be difficult or expensive.”

In the U.S., home electrical problems annually cause more than 51,000 fires, resulting in more than 490 deaths, 1,400 injuries and \$1.3 billion in property damage, according to the National Fire Protection Association. Statistics from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission show that nearly 400 people are electrocuted in the United States each year.

The Electrical Safety Foundation International sponsors National Electrical Safety Month (NESM) each May to increase public awareness of the electrical hazards around us at home, work, school and play. This year’s campaign challenges people across the country to evaluate the electrical safety of their homes, learning more about their electrical systems and devices in the process.

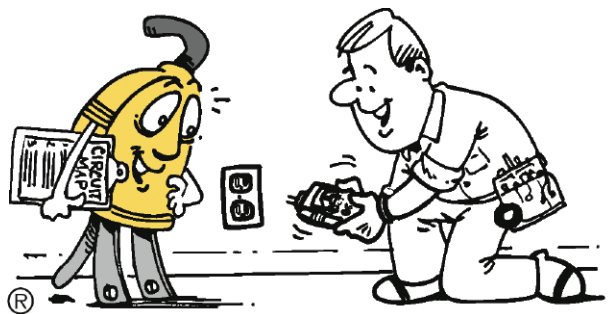
This year, ESFI is focusing on the electrical safety of a different area of the home each week during May:

Cooking Up Safety in the Kitchen (May 2–6): The kitchen is where families gather to cook favorite recipes, share warm meals and reconnect with each other, but it’s also the location where two-thirds of all home fires start. Identify and eliminate potential hazards in your kitchen before someone gets hurt.

Plug into Safety in the Family Room (May 9–13): The

family room is an area of the home where many people go to unwind, but there are often many electrical appliances and devices in use in this area. Learn to recognize electrical hazards that can exist in common areas of your home.

Wake Up to Safety in the Bedroom (May 16–20): The



average adult sleeps almost eight hours per night, spending at least one-third of every day in their bedroom. Take steps to make sure your bedroom is safe — you’ll sleep better!

Build a Foundation of Safety in the Basement (May 23–27): Heating equipment and electrical distribution systems are two of the leading causes of home fires. Help keep your home safe by learning the basics of how these systems work and making sure they are properly maintained.

New resources featured in ESFI’s 2011 National Electrical Safety Month Toolkit, such as the Home Electrical Safety Challenge, were designed to teach people of all ages to identify and correct potential electrical hazards before a more serious situation can result.

GFCI outlets serve as a fail-safe

Ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) are designed to protect people from electrical shock and electrocution. A GFCI constantly monitors electricity flowing in a circuit. If it senses any loss of current, it quickly switches off power to that circuit.

GFCIs can be installed at the main service panel or in place of ordinary outlets. Typically, GFCIs are installed in areas where water and electricity mix in close proximity, such as a bathroom, kitchen, basement or garage.

GFCIs can be damaged or wear out due to voltage surges from lightning, utility switching or normal use.

Just because an outlet works does not mean that the GFCI is functioning. GFCIs should be tested monthly to ensure they are in working condition.

Whether you have a receptacle-type or circuit breaker-type GFCI, pushing the TEST button should turn off the power of the circuit.

Portable GFCIs should be tested before every use. Simply press the RESET button.

NEWS CURRENTS

Help your electric cooperative prevent copper thefts

The cost for scrap copper goes up and down, but recently it's been on the rise — and so have robbery attempts.

South Central Power asks for your help to keep our equipment safe, prevent outages and save lives.

The cooperative uses copper to ground its equipment, protecting it from electrical surges and lightning by giving electricity a safe path to ground. We use a lot of copper wire in our substations, where we step-down high-voltage electricity arriving from distant power plants before it travels to your neighborhood. Then another transformer near your home — either mounted on a utility pole or in a green box on the ground — lowers the voltage again so you can use the power at home. Copper is an essential component every step of the way.

Our linemen are highly trained professionals who understand the dangers of working with electricity and take proper safety precautions. To protect the public we surround our substations with secure fencing and post warning signs. Some substations have been outfitted with additional security measures, such as security cam-

eras. But some thieves will not be deterred.

While the safety hazards are obvious, the material replacement costs are significant, too. Ongoing copper thefts and associated vandalism impacts your electric bills, because the increased costs impact the co-op's finances. As a not-for-profit entity, South Central Power passes the increased costs through to consumers.

Call law enforcement and South Central Power if you notice anything unusual, such as an open substation gate, open equipment or hanging wire, call law enforcement. Or if you see anyone other than our utility personnel or contractors around substations or other electric facilities.

For your safety, do not approach anyone.

The cooperative reports all damage and thefts to the appropriate law enforcement agency. When and if the perpetrators are found, South Central Power will prosecute to the full extent of the law.

South Central Power offers a \$5,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the people who steal the co-op's copper.

Call OUPS before you dig for spring and summer projects

It's that time of year when people begin thinking about yard work. New trees, shrubs, fence posts, mail boxes, patios, you name it. All require some digging and a hole from one foot to several feet deep.

The problem these days is that you don't really know what you're digging into. It may only be a few earth worms or the ball point pen you lost a few years ago.

On the other hand, it could be a buried utility line and 220 volts of electricity. Or you may chop right into the cable TV line, just in time for your favorite program.

Cutting through a buried utility line is not only inconvenient, but it can be downright dangerous.

Don't take chances with underground lines. Call the Ohio Utilities Protection Service (OUPS) to find out if any underground utility wires, cables or pipelines run underneath the area where you'll be digging.

OUPS will contact South Central Power and all of the other affected utilities, so your underground services can be properly marked.

That simple telephone call, first and foremost, protects your personal safety. Although underground electric lines are insulated, you can still be seriously hurt if you cut through the insulation while standing on the ground. Even if you only nick the insulation, your home, or those of your neighbors, may be without power weeks or months later when moisture seeps into the line.

It can also be expensive. If you are lucky enough to walk away from a digging accident, you could receive a bill for the repairs.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

Call OUPS at least two business days before you dig.

1-800-362-2764