



Point out overhead power lines and electrical equipment to your children, and emphasize that they should never climb on or play near them.

Fly kites, drones and other toys in large open areas like a park or a field. Stay far away from power lines. If a kite gets stuck in a tree that's near power lines, don't climb up to get it. Contact Slope for assistance.

Spring into safety

Dear members,

February was the second-coldest month since 1936 for parts of the Slope Electric Cooperative service area. We are thankful for spring and warmer weather.

Spring is a great time to tackle do-it-yourself projects. You don't need to be an energy expert to seal air leaks with caulk and apply weather stripping to exterior doors. By making small improvements when you have time, you may start to save energy and money, and increase the comfort level in your home. Learn more details in this quarterly newsletter.

Spring is an important time for our members who are farmers and ranchers. The size of machinery

and extensions has increased substantially over the years. In this issue, we'll identify clearance safety around Slope's power lines and poles. You'll also read tips to keep you safe in the event an emergency occurs, and you come into contact with electrical infrastructure.

Spring presents an opportunity for electric cooperatives across the state and nation to highlight National Electrical Safety Month in May. Also in this issue, we'll identify some potential electrical hazards and simple precautions you can take to avoid injury.

For more information on safety, visit our website at www.slopeelectric.coop and other

credible news sources. We also encourage you to "like" and follow us on Facebook, to learn timely cooperative and community news.

Thank you for taking time to read this important information. If there are topics you'd like us to feature in the coming months, we appreciate hearing from our members. Email us at comments@slopeelectric.coop, or call 701-579-4191 or 800-559-4191 Monday through Friday, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. MT.

Thank you for being active and involved co-op members. We appreciate the opportunity to serve you. ■



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You've planned every acre Have you planned for your safety?

As spring planting nears, Slope Electric Cooperative reminds hardworking farmers and ranchers to stay safe.

Overhead power lines are necessary to deliver electricity, but those same power lines can be deadly if not treated with respect. While you need to focus on the field and your machinery, Slope Electric Cooperative urges you to also watch for electrical hazards around the farm or ranch.

Be aware

Farmers and their equipment should always be 10 feet away from power lines on all sides. Field equipment such as seeders, sprayers or tillage equipment can reach as high as 19 feet in the air. Practice extreme caution and use a spotter to make sure you stay far away from power lines when you use tall equipment.

If you have purchased new equipment, be aware of antennas or other attachments that may pose new hazards. A newer, bigger piece of equipment may no longer clear a line. In addition, shifting soil may also affect whether or not machinery avoids power lines from year-to-year.

Power lines also may sag over the years. If power lines on your property

are sagging, contact Slope Electric Cooperative to repair the lines. Never move a power line on your own.

Overhead power lines are not the only electric hazard on the farm. Pole guy wires, used to stabilize utility poles, are grounded. However, when one of the guy wires is broken, it can become charged with electricity. If you break a guy wire, call the cooperative to fix it. Don't do it yourself.

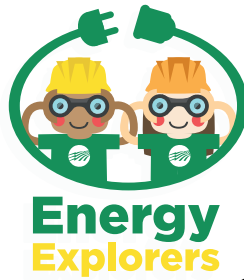
Follow these tips:

- Check areas carefully for overhead power lines and utility poles. Make sure you, your family and employees know the location of overhead power lines, and use routes to avoid the lines when moving equipment. Do this every year, as equipment sizes and soil conditions may change.
- Be aware of increased heights of equipment, especially new equipment with higher antennas.
- Avoid moving large equipment alone. Have someone watch as you move equipment to ensure you are clear of power lines. ■

Farm Safety Coloring Sheet

Whether you live on a farm or in the city, always remember to avoid playing near power lines and other electrical equipment.

Kids, if you are in preschool or elementary school, color and return this sheet to Slope. If we publish your artwork in the *North Dakota Living* local pages, you will earn a prize!



Remember to play safely around electricity.

Easy DIY projects to save energy

Spring is here, and it's the perfect time to tackle do-it-yourself (DIY) projects for your home. If you're willing to take a hands-on approach, these projects can help you save energy.

Seal air leaks with caulk

Applying caulk around windows, doors, electrical wiring and plumbing can save energy and money. There are many different types of caulking compounds available; the most popular is silicone. It is waterproof and flexible, and it won't shrink or crack.

Before applying new caulk, clean and remove any old caulk or paint with a putty knife, screwdriver, brush or solvent. The area should be dry before you apply the new caulk.

Apply in one continuous stream, and make sure it sticks to both sides of the crack or seam. Then, use a putty knife to smooth out the caulk, and wipe the surface with a dry cloth.

Weather strip exterior doors

Weather-stripping exterior doors can reduce drafts and help you control energy costs.

When choosing material, make sure it can withstand temperature changes, friction, and general "wear and tear." You will need separate materials for the door sweep (at the bottom of the door) and the top and sides.

Before applying the new weather stripping, clean the moulding with water and soap; then let the area dry completely. Measure each side of the door, and cut the weather stripping to fit each section. Make sure the weather stripping fits snugly against both surfaces so it compresses when the door is closed. ■

What if you contact a power line?

- DON'T climb out. If your equipment or vehicle does contact a power line, stay in the vehicle and call for help. Warn others to stay away and wait until Slope arrives. Most utility lines are uninsulated, bare wires. Do not let your body become a direct link between the power line and the ground.
- If you must leave the equipment or vehicle due to immediate danger, such as a fire, jump as far away as you can, making sure that no part of your body touches the vehicle and the ground at the same time. Land with both feet together and hop or shuffle your feet a few inches at a time, making sure to never break contact with the ground or cause separation between your feet.
- Once you're off, do not go back until Slope disconnects the power line.



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May is National Electrical Safety Month

More than a thousand people are killed and tens of thousands injured each year in electrical accidents and fires, according to www.safeelectricity.com. The vast majority of electrical accidents can be prevented if people understand the dangers and steps they can take to be safe around electricity.

May is National Electrical Safety Month, and it's a great time to raise awareness on how to avoid potential electrical hazards.

Listed are a number of safety tips to help you spring into safety:

- Learn about your home's electrical system so you can safely navigate and maintain it.
- Never attempt a project that is beyond your skill level.
- Knowing when to call a professional may help prevent electrical fires, injuries and fatalities.
- Always turn off the power to the circuit you plan to work on by switching off the circuit breaker in the main service panel.
- Unplug any lamp or appliance before working on it.
- Never touch plumbing or gas pipes when performing a do-it-yourself electrical project.
- Use ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) with every power tool to protect against electric shocks.
- Do not use power tools with an extension cord that exceeds 100 feet in length or without the proper guards. Never use power tools near live electrical wires or water pipes.
- When using a wet-dry vacuum cleaner or pressure washer, follow the manufacturer's instructions to avoid electric shock.
- Use caution when cutting or drilling into walls where electrical wires or water pipes could be accidentally touched or penetrated.
- When working with electricity, use tools with insulated grips.
- Wear appropriate personal protective gear when using power tools. Invest in safety goggles, hearing protection, dust masks, gloves and other safety gear as recommended for each tool.



CALL BEFORE YOU DIG!

Planting a tree? Installing a fence? Remember to contact North Dakota One Call first! The first step to any project is safety, and damaging an underground facility while you dig can cause injury or even death.

Numerous utility lines may be buried on your property, ranging from electric and telephone lines to water and sewer lines, but North Dakota One Call will help you locate these lines before your project begins.

Contact North Dakota One Call and utility line owners will locate and mark their lines. These locates do not include any lines you may have installed to your private facilities, such as detached garages, wells or yard lights.

Go online at www.ndonecall.com or call **800-795-0555** or **811**.

It's free, it's simple and it's the law.