



JUNE 2021

## THE WHEAT BELT CONNECTION

### TAKE COVER WHEN A STORM IS BREWING

Sometimes a storm pops up or changes direction without any warning, while other times it is forecast days in advance and follows its predicted course. In either case, knowing what to do right before, during and after a storm can help to keep you safe.

**When a storm hits.** When stormy winds blow, follow these weather-related reminders from FEMA and the Red Cross:

- Never seek shelter under an isolated tree, tower or utility pole, since lightning tends to strike tall objects.
- Immediately vacate elevated areas such as hills and mountain ridges and peaks.
- Get away from ponds, lakes and other bodies of water.
- Stay away from objects that conduct electricity, including wires and fences (and golf clubs). (Approximately five percent of annual lightning deaths and injuries in the United States happen on golf courses, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.)
- Never lie flat on the ground.
- Pick a safe place in your home, away from windows and doors, for family members to gather during a thunderstorm.
- Know the difference between a watch and a warning for extreme weather such as a tornado or severe thunderstorm. A watch means that the weather is possible in and/or near the area. A warning means that severe weather has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar. A warning is more serious than a watch and means

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Editor - Yolanda Hruska

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### LUCKY DRAWING

Congratulations to Logan Criswell, our April "Lucky Winner"!

Mr. Criswell has received a \$50.00 credit on his account. If you would like to be included in our next drawing, and avoid the \$5 delinquent fee, please send your payment before the 15th of the month.

For your convenience, we offer several payment options. Please contact us, 308-254-5871/800-261-7114, or visit [wheatbelt.com](http://wheatbelt.com) and select the Customer Engagement page for details on payment options.

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that there is imminent danger to life and property.

**After the storm.** Once the storm is over, follow these safety tips from Safe Electricity:

- Never step into a flooded basement or other standing water. The water could be covering electrical outlets, appliances or cords. Never touch (or use) electrical appliances, cords, wires or switches while you are wet or standing in water.

- After a storm, a downed power line could be covered by standing water or debris. Never go near a downed line and warn others to stay away. If you see a downed line, call 9-1-1, and a crew will be dispatched to de-energize the power and address the problem safely.

- The same safety know-how applies to a downed power line you might encounter while driving or after an auto accident. In either case, do not get out. Instead, call 9-1-1 to report the downed line (pull over first if you are driving). If you must exit your vehicle after an accident because of a fire or smoke, make a solid, clean jump out, landing with both feet together. Then make solid hops with your feet together, hopping as far away as you can.

- If your home has been damaged by a flood, turn off the power to your house if it is safe to do so. (Do not turn power off at the breaker box while standing in water or in damp conditions.)

- If the wiring, electrical system or appliances have been damaged by water, have your home inspected by an electrician; also, have appliances serviced by a qualified technician before using them.

For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

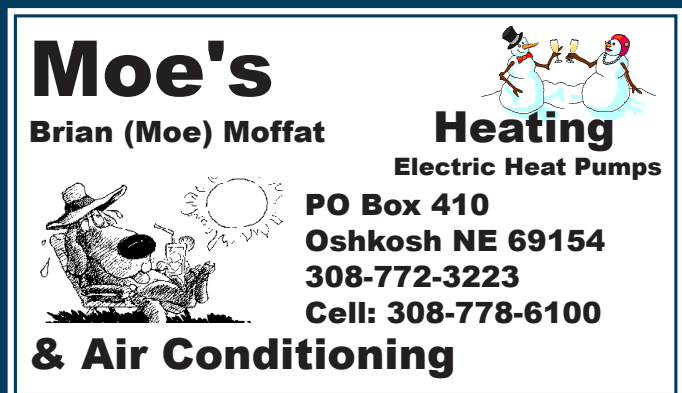


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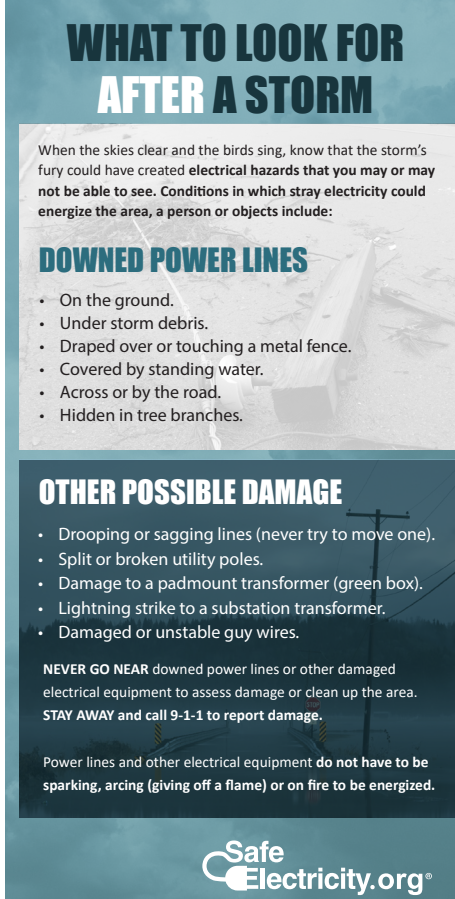
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## WHAT TO LOOK FOR AFTER A STORM

When the skies clear and the birds sing, know that the storm's fury could have created electrical hazards that you may or may not be able to see. Conditions in which stray electricity could energize the area, a person or objects include:

### DOWNED POWER LINES

- On the ground.
- Under storm debris.
- Draped over or touching a metal fence.
- Covered by standing water.
- Across or by the road.
- Hidden in tree branches.

### OTHER POSSIBLE DAMAGE

- Drooping or sagging lines (never try to move one).
- Split or broken utility poles.
- Damage to a padmount transformer (green box).
- Lightning strike to a substation transformer.
- Damaged or unstable guy wires.

**NEVER GO NEAR** downed power lines or other damaged electrical equipment to assess damage or clean up the area.  
**STAY AWAY** and call 9-1-1 to report damage.

Power lines and other electrical equipment **do not have to be** sparking, arcing (giving off a flame) or on fire to be energized.

[SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org)



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## SUDS AND SAVINGS

### 10 ways to save energy in the laundry room

By Abby Berry - NRECA's Straight Talk

Your clothes washer and dryer account for a significant portion of energy consumption from major appliances, and let's face it—laundry is no one's favorite chore. Make the most of your laundry energy use! There are several easy ways you can save energy (and money) in the laundry room. The Department of Energy recommends the following tips for saving on suds:

1. Wash with cold water. Switching from warm water to cold water can cut one load's energy use by more than half, and by using a cold-water detergent, you can still achieve that brilliant clean you'd normally get from washing in warm water.
2. Wash full loads when possible. Your washing machine will use the same amount of energy no matter the size of the clothes load, so fill it up if you can.
3. Use the high-speed or extended spin cycle in the washer. This setting will remove more moisture before drying, reducing your drying time and the extra wear on clothing.
4. Dry heavier cottons separately. Loads will dry faster and more evenly if you separate heavier cottons like linens and towels from your lightweight clothing.
5. Make use of the "cool down" cycle. If your dryer has this cycle option, you can save energy

because the clothes will finish drying with the remaining heat in the dryer.

6. Use lower heat settings to dry clothing. Regardless of drying time, you'll still use less energy.

7. Use dryer balls. Dryer balls, usually wool or rubber, will help keep clothes separated for faster drying, and they can help reduce static, so you can eliminate dryer sheets.

8. Switch loads while the dryer is warm. This allows you to take advantage of the remaining heat from the previous cycle.

9. Clean the lint filter after each drying cycle. If you use dryer sheets, remember to scrub the filter once a month with a toothbrush to remove excess buildup.

10. Purchase ENERGY STAR®-rated washers and dryers. When it's time to purchase a new washer or dryer, look for the ENERGY STAR® label. New washers and dryers that receive the ENERGY STAR® rating use about 20% less energy than conventional models.

To learn about additional ways you can save energy at home, visit the Department of Energy's home efficiency page, [www.energy.gov/energysaver](http://www.energy.gov/energysaver).

*Wheat Belt PPD and Tri-State Generation & Transmission, our power supplier, offer an Energy Efficiency Products Program. Our program issues rebates for purchasing and installing energy efficient products. Please call us or visit [wheatbelt.com](http://wheatbelt.com), Modern Energy, Energy Efficiency Rebates for our 2021 information.*



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## SWIMMING POOL ELECTRICAL SAFETY CROSSWORD



Water and electricity never mix! When you're cooling off in the swimming pool, remember to practice electrical safety. Complete the pool safety crossword puzzle below.

*Hint: Check your answers in the key below.*

### 1 Down:

When possible, use \_\_\_\_\_ operated devices when outside near a swimming pool.

### 2 Across:

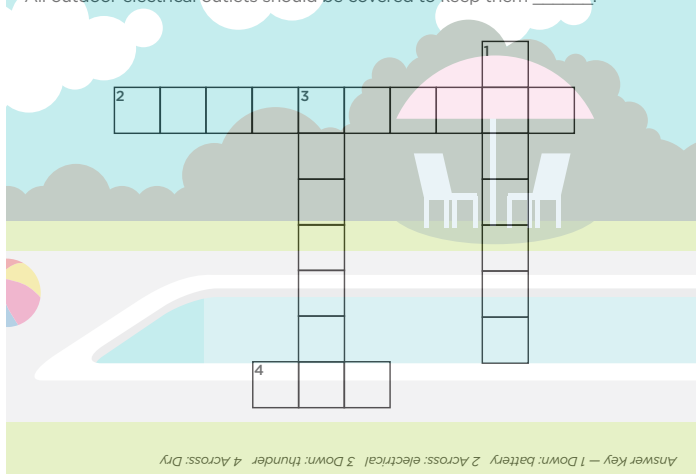
Never bring \_\_\_\_\_ devices near a swimming pool. If they come in contact with water, electric shock could occur. Devices should be kept at least 10 feet away from water sources.

### 3 Down:

If you hear \_\_\_\_\_, immediately exit the swimming pool. Storms may be near.

### 4 Across:

All outdoor electrical outlets should be covered to keep them \_\_\_\_\_.



Answer Key — 1 Down: battery 2 Across: electrical 3 Down: thunder 4 Across: dry

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

### Tip of the Month

A dirty filter causes your air conditioner to work harder than necessary. Remember to change your air filter every month (or every two months) to prevent dust buildup, which can lead to even bigger problems.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



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