

# ELECTRICAL SAFETY

## THINK OUTSIDE THE HOME



It's that time of year when we're dusting off our outdoor cleaning tools and getting ready to give some much-needed TLC to the yard. But before you begin, **LEARN HOW TO STAY ELECTRICALLY SAFE OUTDOORS!**

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The sun is shining, and we're finally seeing May flowers blooming. What better way to transition from spring to summer than by spending it outdoors? Those at your electric cooperative remind you electrical hazards are not only present indoors; they can also occur outside.

When working outside, take a moment to look around you. Look up and down when you begin your next outdoor DIY project. When you look up, you may spy power lines close to the spot you're working on. Always keep yourself and equipment at least 10 feet away; electricity can jump to nearby objects, like your ladder, shovel or hose. When looking down, you may not see anything, but there could be dangers lurking underground. That's why it's important to always call 8-1-1 before you dig. A trained professional will locate and mark underground facilities, helping you avoid any electrical dangers.

When starting a project that requires power tools, always ensure your outdoor outlets are up to standards. Make sure you have ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) installed, which automatically cut power when a plugged item comes in contact with water. If you're using an extension cord, do not use unless it is labeled "for outdoor use."

Operating power tools outdoors comes with a few guidelines that should be followed during and after use. These guidelines include:

- Inspect the tool before and after each use.
- Replace or repair worn or defective equipment immediately.
- Keep the tools and the area you're working on clean to avoid fire hazards, and always store them in a dry place.
- Never use electric tools or mowers in wet areas.

