

Watts Working

Home Safe Home

We all like to think that our homes are safe, but did you know that many families experience fires, injuries or death in their homes each year? According to the U.S. Fire Administration, faulty home electrical wiring causes at least 26,000 residential fires a year, hundreds of deaths, and thousands of injuries. With the right precautions, you can avoid electrical hazards that could lead to disaster.

May is national electrical safety month and an excellent time to detect and neutralize any threats lurking around your home. Randolph EMC wants to help you find these electrical dangers and correct them. Follow these tips below to keep your home not only a sweet home but also a safe place for you and your family.

- ▶ Check electrical outlets for loose-fitting plugs that can cause shocks or start fires.
- ▶ Replace missing or broken wall plates so the inner wiring components are not exposed.
- ▶ If you have young children, use safety covers on unused outlets. Install tamper-resistant receptacles with a built-in shutter system that prevents hairpins and other small objects from being inserted into the outlet.
- ▶ Check the cords, plugs and connectors of the appliances in your home. Make sure they are not frayed, cracked or damaged, placed under rugs or carpets, resting on furniture or in high-traffic areas. Do not nail or staple cords to walls, floors or any other objects.
- ▶ Extension cords should be used on a temporary basis

May is National Electrical Safety Month



Never allow babies to play with cords or near outlets.

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only. They are not a permanent wiring solution. Have additional outlets installed where you need them. If you are using extension cords, make sure they have safety closures to protect young children from shocks or mouth burns.

- ▶ Never use an indoor extension cord for outdoor use. Use an extension cord specifically for outdoors; they are heavier and less likely to be damaged.
- ▶ Check your electric panel to make sure the breakers and fuses are properly rated for the circuit they are protecting. Have a qualified electrician identify and label the correct size to be used if you are unsure. When replacing a fuse, use the same size.
- ▶ Check light bulbs and appliances to make sure the wattage matches fixture

requirements. Do not replace bulbs with higher wattage than recommended. The bulb should be securely screwed in to prevent overheating.

- ▶ If an appliance repeatedly blows a fuse, trips a circuit breaker or gives you an electrical shock, immediately unplug, repair or replace it.
- ▶ Check for or install ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). A GFCI is an inexpensive electrical device that shuts off power instantly if there is problem. GFCIs should be installed in all “wet” areas of the home, such as bathrooms, kitchens and basements.
- ▶ GFCIs should be tested monthly to ensure they are working properly. The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates GFCIs could prevent more than two-thirds of the

roughly 300 electrocutions that happen each year in the home.

- ▶ Consider installing arc-fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) on bedroom circuits, have smoke detectors in all bedrooms and in hallways within 15 feet of bedrooms and at least one smoke detector on every level. Carbon monoxide detectors should also be within 15 feet of each bedroom. As always, check with your local electrical inspector if you have questions or concerns.
- ▶ Inspect all outdoor connections, appliances and tools for frayed cords, broken plugs and cracked or broken housings. Repair or replace damaged cords and appliances.

Following these guidelines will keep your family safe from electrical dangers, not only during May, but year-round.

86% of reported
home electrical injuries
happen to **children**
between the ages of **1 and 4**.



**Safe
Electricity.org**

research collected from the American Academy of Pediatrics

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Thermostat placement can impact your HVAC system's ability to maintain an ideal indoor temperature. Thermostats should be placed in the center of the home, away from air vents, plumbing pipes and exterior doors. Avoid placing items like lamps near your thermostat, which can cause the HVAC to run longer than necessary. Avoid installing thermostats in rooms that feel warmer or colder than the rest of the home.





Students showed keen interest in the bucket truck and how to operate it.

Randolph EMC Teaches Students about Electrical Careers, Safety

On the morning of March 24, Randolph EMC lineworkers visited Donna Lee Loflin Elementary in Asheboro for the school's career day. Journeyman Lineman Kevin Loflin and Apprentice Lineman Chris Ingold explained the responsibilities of an electrical utility worker and the tasks they perform on any given day.

The students in the elementary school enjoyed learning about the functions of the bucket truck and trying on the flame-resistant gloves that lineworkers wear on the job. Randolph EMC employees encouraged the students to think about their future—especially the stable and rewarding job of keeping the lights on for rural North Carolina.

Randolph EMC has a long history of supporting educators and students in our five-county region. If your school is planning a career event in the coming school year, please contact Communications and Public Affairs Manager Nicole Arnold at Nicole.Arnold@RandolphEMC.com for more information or call her at 336-625-5177.



Kevin Loflin helps children try on rubber gloves, which protect lineworkers from electrical shock.



Kevin Loflin and Chris Ingold keep the students entertained while teaching them about the career of a lineworker.

Small Change, Big Difference



It's only small change: 1¢ to 99¢ per month. But when you multiply that by thousands of generous REMC members who participate in People Helping People, it's a big difference. Members who round up their electric bill to the nearest dollar each month fund this program helping other members in need.

Visit the People Helping People booth at this year's Annual Meeting to learn more about this unique program and how it benefits our local communities.



People Helping People

Round Up to Give a Hand Up with Randolph EMC

RandolphEMC.com/people-helping-people



Memorial DAY

**REMEMBER
& HONOR**

Randolph Electric offices
will be closed
Monday, May 29,
in observance
of Memorial Day.

Little Boy Lost, but Found:

Phil Culberson Recalls When Linemen Saved Him

On a warm February day earlier this year, REMC staffers visited Siler City resident and member Phillip Culberson and his wife, Faye. During this visit, Culberson recalled life before electricity on his family's farm in Chatham County.

"Back then, things were different. We had no water heater, television or telephone," said Culberson. "Inside bathrooms and air conditioning were unheard of."

Around the time Culberson was 10 years old in 1960, Randolph Electric had electrified his home, and daily life in his household changed significantly.

But in 1952, the farm was not fully electrified but did have a well pump, which ensured that the family had running water. Culberson was not quite three years old then. On one chilly November day when just he and his mother were at home, he toddled off into the woods.

"My loving Mama sold hatching eggs, and her chicken houses held 500 hens. She watered, fed and gathered eggs all by hand. My Daddy worked in a local chair factory and farmed at night and on Saturdays," said Culberson.

Phil's older sisters were not on the farm on that cold day in late November 1952, and his father had not come home from work yet. Mrs.

Culberson watched Phil pull his red wagon near his father's beagle puppies. When she next stepped



Phil Culberson on his Chatham County farm in 2023

outside one of her chicken coops, her heart stopped. Little Phil was nowhere in sight.

Frantic, Mrs. Culberson hunted for Phil for an hour, even searching the pond on their property. Eventually, Mrs. Culberson heard the sound of the Randolph Electric right-of-way crew from the direction of the road. She ran to tell the REMC employees of her lost little boy. The crew stopped all work immediately and spread out to form a search party.

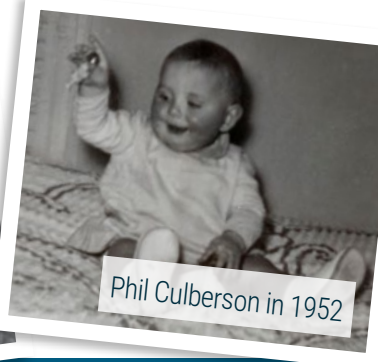
From the chicken houses, the linemen followed the gently sloping fields down toward the woods and a creek. One lineman spotted a little red wagon at the edge of the forest. Deeper in the woods, the linemen found little Phil sitting in the leaves and sad that he could not keep up with the dogs. His father's beagles had run away across the creek and left behind the sobbing toddler.

Today, Phil Culberson still enjoys walking the family farm and following beagles into those same woods. He remembers the impact that REMC linemen had on his family, and the positive changes that electrification brought to his life.

"I appreciate Randolph EMC for all you've done and all you continue to do," said Culberson. "You've always been there."



Mrs. Culberson at the chicken coop, circa 1950s



Phil Culberson in 1952

Watch a video of Phil's story at the annual meeting!



The staff of REMC would like to thank Phil Culberson for his willingness to share his story of how Randolph Electric touched his life. If you attend our annual meeting on June 16, you can watch this story unfold in more detail through a video presentation.

A Word About Randolph Electric

From CEO Dale Lambert

PAST AND FUTURE, ALWAYS PRESENT: *Join us for our 85th Annual Meeting*

Dear Members,

What a tremendous history your cooperative has! Several books could be written about the experiences, struggles and successes of the early visionaries of Randolph EMC. They saw a great need and took a risk to pull together like-minded friends and neighbors. Their goal was to form an electric utility with the sole purpose of improving the lives of those living in rural, central North Carolina.

Back in 1938, some naysayers predicted the co-op would never survive. They pointed out the financial difficulties of installing power lines to serve areas with low density: the lower revenues may not cover the cost of the lines. That's the very reason for-profit power companies refused to serve rural areas originally. But these naysayers were proven wrong, and Randolph EMC is stronger than ever.

Yes, we still have our challenges. When you look at our distribution system spread over five counties, we're still very rural. Randolph EMC has, on average, 7.4 meters per mile of line. This contrasts with neighboring investor-owned utilities that average around 25 meters per mile of line and municipalities that average over 40 meters per mile of line.

The challenge is this: we must collect revenues from fewer than

eight members to pay for installing, maintaining and cutting the right-of-way of that one mile. Meanwhile, other utilities can spread their costs over three to five times as many customers. This is just one of the challenges that forces us to work harder in our strategic focus and be efficient in our operations.

Speaking of the co-op's history, my first cousin recently gave me a copy of a Randolph EMC *Watts Working* from August 1966. He found it in a drawer at his mom's house. I'll just interject right here that I was three years old at the time and was probably in attendance at the meeting—I just can't recall. But I've got to believe that I was really excited to hear Mr. Alton Wall, the General Manager at the time, give his annual meeting speech. The

headline read, "Over 2,000 Attend 28th Annual Meeting." Here's a picture of the "overflow crowd" in attendance (see below).

As I turned to the back page, there was a picture with the caption that said, "Major prize winners." To my surprise, my uncle, Edward Maness, and my grandfather, Daniel Jones, were the two grand prize winners that year. They each had won an electric range.

It's pretty amazing when I think about growing up eating fried chicken, gravy and biscuits that my Grandma Jones cooked on the range Grandpa won that year at the co-op's annual meeting. And the food I devoured at regular family gatherings was cooked by my Aunt Betty on the stove my uncle had won. How I miss those days!



At this point, it's appropriate to thank Randolph Electric for providing the appliances that helped feed me in my formative years. Just to be clear, before some of you call me out on this, I was three years old at the time and not yet an employee of REMC. There was absolutely no conflict of interest with multiple family members winning the big prizes.

Randolph EMC's past success can be directly attributed to an engaged membership, among whom were my grandfather and uncle. Generations of members have supported the co-op during good times and bad times, served on committees when called upon and faithfully participated in the operations of their electric utility through attendance at annual meetings.

If our past success is because of an engaged membership, then your engagement is just as critical to our future success. I have a suggestion of how you can carry on the legacy of member engagement.

We are currently planning your cooperative's 85th Annual Meeting, which will be held on Friday, June 16, 2023, at Southwestern Randolph High School in their air-conditioned gymnasium. Registration opens at 5:00 p.m. Members will enjoy music from the Hazy Ridge Bluegrass Band from 5:15 to 6:15 p.m., and the business portion of the meeting will start at 6:30 p.m. Our theme this year, in special celebration of 85 years of service, is "Past and Future, Always Present."

In addition to the business portion of the meeting, members will elect three individuals to represent their interests on the board of directors. Randolph EMC's Board is comprised of nine members who meet monthly to hear reports, make decisions and set the strategic direction for the cooperative. The three directorate districts up for election this year



Major prize winners: Edward Maness (left); D. H. Jones (right).

are the following: district 2, currently held by Scott Cole; district 4, currently held by Jerry Bowman; and district 7, currently held by Tammie Phillips.

In addition to the music, we will have homemade ice cream and lots of information about the many programs we offer. These programs deliver value, help you save money on your electric bill and make your lives easier.

Of course, another reason to attend the annual meeting is that we award more than 100 really nice door prizes. These prizes range from small appliances to local pottery. We'll also have a children's program, bicycles of all sizes and other fun prizes for the kids who attend.

No one leaves empty-handed. Each registered member attending will receive a gift at the conclusion of the evening.

In next month's *Carolina Country*, you will receive the annual report and additional information about our 85th Annual Meeting. I encourage you to be an active member-owner of your electric utility. I'll be looking for you.

Cooperatively Yours,

Dale F. Lambert
Chief Executive Officer



Randolph Electric Membership Corporation provides safe and reliable power with exceptional value to more than 33,000 member accounts in Randolph, Moore, Montgomery, Chatham and Alamance counties.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Electric Service

Asheboro (336) 625-5177
..... (800) 672-8212
Robbins: (910) 948-3401
..... (800) 868-7014
Report Outage (877) REMC-OFF
..... (877) 736-2633
Account Info
& Bill Payments: (877) 534-2319
Business Hours: 8 am – 5 pm, M-F

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Nicole Arnold Editor

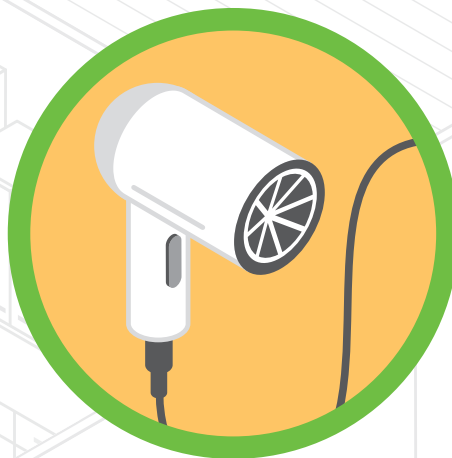
Visit Randolph EMC Online
RandolphEMC.com

A Safe, Happy House

Four Easy Ways to Boost Electrical Safety at Home

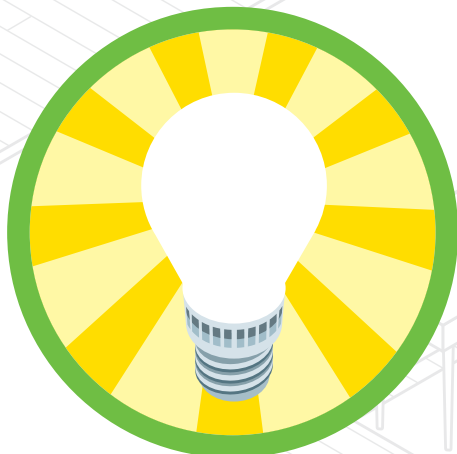
DON'T

place flammable items, like potholders, napkins or dish towels near the stove while cooking.



DO

keep electrical devices away from water to prevent electric shock.



DO

ensure you're using the correct wattage in all light fixtures.



DON'T

overload electrical outlets with more devices than the circuit can handle.

May is National Electrical Safety Month.