

TEP Offers Spring Electrical Safety Tips

TUCSON, Ariz., Apr 30, 2010 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Spring's warm weather is a great time for yard work, swimming and many other outdoor activities. At work or at play, it's important to keep electrical safety in mind. Tucson Electric Power (TEP) offers these tips to help you stay safe around electricity when you're outdoors.

- Look up and look out for overhead power lines. Be mindful of any nearby lines before you climb a ladder or extend the handle of a pool-cleaning tool.
- Keep materials, tools and all parts of your body at least 15 feet away from any overhead power lines at all times. If you plan to get any closer, state law requires you to make arrangements with TEP that will allow your work to proceed safely. Keep this in mind when installing or repairing an antenna or satellite dish or preparing your evaporative cooler for summer use.
- Before you trim tree limbs and shrubs, watch out for power lines that could be hidden by foliage. Contact TEP's Customer Care line at (520) 623-7711 if you have questions or concerns about tree limbs growing into or around overhead power lines on your property.
- Customers who wish to clear tree limbs or other foliage away from an electric service line must first call TEP's Customer Care line to ask that their power be turned off for the duration of their work. Customers are responsible for keeping foliage at least 15 feet away from the service lines that connect their homes and businesses to TEP's electrical distribution system. There is no cost for this temporary suspension of electric service.
- Inspect power tools and electric lawn mowers for frayed power cords, broken plugs and weathered or damaged housings before every use. Don't use damaged equipment until it has been repaired properly. Keep tools unplugged and stored in dry areas when they are not in use. And always use an insulated extension cord designed for outdoor use with the correct power rating for that equipment.
- Always keep power cords and electrical equipment away from water, wet grass or other wet areas. Keep this in mind when using electric-powered mowers or other lawn equipment.
- Never fly kites or model airplanes near power lines. If a kite does get tangled with overhead lines, don't try to get it down yourself, as a kite string can conduct electricity. Instead, call TEP for assistance. Don't fly your kite when a thunderstorm is brewing.
- Call before you dig. Whether you're a homeowner landscaping your yard or a professional contractor digging utility trenches, remember to call 811 or Arizona Blue Stake at 1-800-STAKE-IT (1-800-782-5348) at least two working days before you dig. It's a free service, and it's required by state law.
- Keep vegetation and permanent structures away from the large, green ground-level boxes that house components of TEP's underground electrical system. TEP workers may need to access the underground lines and equipment near these boxes during power outages and for routine maintenance.
- Treat all electric lines with caution and respect. Even low-voltage electric lines and cords can be hazardous if damaged or improperly handled. And if you EVER see a downed power line, call 911 immediately; don't get near it.

TEP, a subsidiary of UniSource Energy Corporation (NYSE: UNS), provides safe, reliable power to more than 400,000 customers in southern Arizona. For more information, visit tep.com. For more information about UniSource Energy, visit uns.com.

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