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NEWS

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FROM THE MANAGER

New Ways to Use Electricity



Chuck Goeckel

If you listen carefully, you can hear a quiet transformation happening. Electric appliances and equipment are becoming more popular than ever among consumers.

Advancements in technology and battery power coupled with decreasing costs are winning over consumers looking for comparable utility and versatility. A bonus is that use of electric equipment is quieter and better for the environment.

Inside the home, consumers and homebuilders alike are turning to electric appliances to increase energy efficiency and savings. Whether choosing between a traditional electric stove or an induction stove top, both are significantly more efficient than a gas oven. That's because conventional residential cooking tops typically use gas or resistance heating elements to transfer energy with efficiencies of approximately 32% and 75% respectively (according to Energy Star®). Electric induction stoves, which cook food without any flame, will reduce indoor air pollution and can bring water to a boil about twice as fast as a gas stove. Robotic vacuums are also gaining in popularity. Fortune Business Insights attributes the growth and popularity of

robotic vacuums like Roomba to a larger market trend of smart home technology and automation (think Alexa directing a Roomba to vacuum).

More tools and equipment with small gas-powered motors are being replaced with electric ones that include plug-in batteries. In the past few years, technology in battery storage has advanced significantly. Hand-held tools with plug-in batteries can hold a charge longer and offer the user the same versatility and similar functionality as gas-powered tools. For DIYers and those in the building trades, national brands such as Makita, Ryobi and Milwaukee offer electric versions of their most popular products like drills, saws, sanders

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Environmentally Beneficial Electrification

Innovations in energy technologies are creating new ways to use electricity rather than on-site fossil fuels, like propane, natural gas and gasoline.



This concept is known as **beneficial electrification** and suggests that the use of more all-electric appliances and equipment, like water heaters, weed trimmers and electric vehicles, provides consumers with products that benefit the environment.

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and other tools. In addition to standard offerings, consumers can now purchase a wider array of specialty tools that plug-in such as power inverters, air inflaters and battery chargers.

Keith Dennis, an energy industry expert and president of the Beneficial Electrification League notes that, “A few years back, the list of new electric product categories that were making their way to the market was limited — electric scooters, lawn mowers, leaf blowers and vehicles.”

Today, the number of electric products available is exploding. “There are electric bikes, school buses, pressure washers, utility terrain vehicles, backhoes — even airplanes and boats,” says Dennis. “With the expansion of batteries and advancements in technology, we are seeing almost anything that burns gasoline or diesel as having an electric replacement available on the market.”

A case in point is the increased use of electric-powered tools and equipment, with more national brands offering a wider

selection including lawn mowers, leaf blowers, string trimmers and snow blowers. The quality of zero- or low-emissions lawn equipment is also improving.

Electric equipment also requires less maintenance, and often the biggest task is keeping them charged. In addition, electric equipment is quieter so if you want to listen to music or your favorite podcast while performing outdoor work, you can; something not possible with gas-powered equipment. On the horizon, autonomous lawn mowers (similar to the robotic vacuum cleaners) will be seen dotting outdoor spaces.

Another benefit of using electric appliances or equipment is that by virtue of being plugged into the grid, the environmental performance of electric devices improves over time. In essence, electricity is becoming cleaner through increased renewable energy generation, so equipment that uses electricity will have a diminishing environmental impact over time. Quite a hat trick — improving efficiency, quality of life and helping the environment.

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*Some program restrictions apply. Credit only valid for reductions in the months of July and August, from Monday-Friday from 3-6 p.m. (excluding July 4). This program will be active on peak load days when alerts are sent to participating members. Visit www.flinthillsrec.com for a full list of program details.

BEFORE YOU JUMP IN: Consider Potential Electrical Hazards

If you own a pool or hot tub, you know there are several steps required to keep it clean and well maintained. One aspect of owning a hot tub or pool that is not often top of mind for homeowners is the electrical system, which can pose a significant or even deadly hazard.

Since pool and hot tub areas mean wet skin and wet surfaces, the chance of electrocution increases when electricity is present.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) points out that electricity around pools, hot tubs and spas can be found in underwater lights, electric pool equipment (e.g., pumps, filters, vacuum), extension and power cords, electrical outlets or switches, electrical devices such as TVs and overhead power lines.

To keep swimmers and hot tubbers as safe as possible, be sure to have the electrical system inspected, repaired and upgraded to local and National Electrical Code by a licensed contractor. Also, do not set up a pool (temporary or permanent) where power lines are overhead or within 25 feet of water.

Electrical Safety Around Water Also Includes:

- ▶ Making sure ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) are installed on:
 - ▶ Underwater lighting circuits operating at 15 volts or more.
 - ▶ All electrical equipment, including 120- and 240-volt heaters close to the pool.
 - ▶ All outdoor receptacles (outlets) within 20 feet of the water's edge.
- ▶ Testing permanently installed GFCIs monthly. Test those that are portable or connected to a cord before each use.
- ▶ Looking for signs of mold or other growth on the inside lenses of lights, which can indicate water leakage.
- ▶ Ensuring that the power switch and GFCI for underwater lights are clearly

marked and easily accessible in an emergency.

- ▶ Labeling power switches for pool, hot tub and spa equipment, as well as lighting.
- ▶ Using battery-operated electronics whenever possible.
- ▶ Ensuring that hands and feet are dry while using electrical devices.
- ▶ Keeping long-handled tools and poles away from nearby power lines, including the drop-down lines to your home.
- ▶ Holding pool skimmers and other long-handled tools as low as possible to the ground and carrying them horizontally.
- ▶ Keeping electrical cords, wires and devices out of reach and at least 5 feet from the water.
- ▶ Unplugging a device that has fallen into the water before touching it. Even submersible pumps designed to run under water may not be safe to use when someone is in the water.

Electrical Shock Drowning — What to Look For

You may hear complaints of tingling or other odd sensations. Swimmers may feel a tingling sensation, experience muscle cramps or may not be able to move. You may see panicked behavior by others or a motionless swimmer in the water. You might also see underwater lights that are not working properly.

If you think you are being shocked while in the water, move away from the source of the shock and get out of the water. If possible, exit without using a metal ladder; touching metal may increase the risk of shock.

If you think someone in the water is experiencing an electrical shock, immediately turn off all power. If the power is not turned off, rescuers can also be shocked or electrocuted. After the power is disconnected, call 911, or have someone else make the call.

SOURCE: CPSC

BEFORE JUMPING IN Know These 6 Pool Safety Tips

Keep these electrical safety tips in mind before and during swimming season. These safety tips also apply to hot tubs.



Keep anything that is plugged in at least 5 feet from the pool. The farther, the better.

Have a licensed contractor inspect the pool/hot tub wiring to ensure it meets code requirements.



Keep pool skimmers and other far-reaching tools more than 10 feet away from overhead power lines.

Make sure all outdoor outlets are GFCI protected. Test them once a month.



Do not touch electrical devices when you are wet or in contact with wet surfaces.

Know where electrical switches and circuit breakers are and how to operate them.



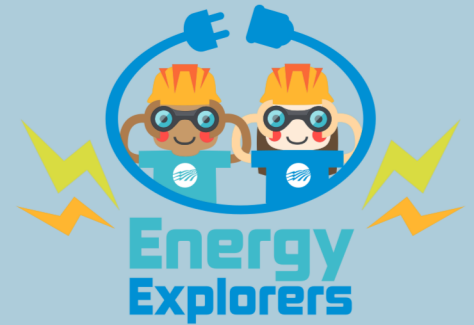
Teach these tips to kids and teens, especially when it comes to using a cellphone that is plugged into an outlet.

SOURCE: SAFE ELECTRICITY

SUMMER STORM SAFETY WORD SEARCH

Summer means fun in the sun! But the season can also bring strong thunderstorms.

Read the storm safety tips below, then find and circle the **BOLDED** words in the puzzle below.



T	D	D	N	U	D	O	L	O	H	X	W	S	X	S
K	H	H	B	K	X	S	N	J	M	I	Z	T	X	M
B	Q	U	Z	C	J	I	E	T	N	T	A	R	Z	C
Y	E	R	N	Z	T	Q	N	D	Z	Y	X	U	E	S
J	L	F	S	D	K	O	O	N	N	G	E	C	K	A
P	Q	Y	H	U	E	W	N	B	V	M	O	T	V	D
V	S	H	C	P	S	R	W	E	L	J	R	U	S	U
D	B	N	H	C	H	Q	X	T	D	T	A	R	L	U
H	X	H	M	M	U	B	V	Z	P	T	Q	E	K	X
A	R	L	L	N	E	F	Q	X	E	B	G	S	T	R
Y	X	Z	N	I	I	Q	F	T	R	T	B	E	U	S
L	I	G	H	T	N	I	N	G	L	G	W	B	G	B
T	I	K	Y	C	N	E	G	R	E	M	E	F	S	W
O	N	I	D	F	A	D	V	M	V	V	K	N	T	M
G	Q	D	F	H	Y	L	R	N	O	C	A	W	R	E

- ▶ If you hear thunder, that means **LIGHTNING** can strike nearby. Go indoors.
- ▶ Wait at least 30 minutes after the last rumble of **THUNDER** before going back outside.
- ▶ During a thunderstorm, stay away from tall, isolated **STRUCTURES** or trees, which are more susceptible to lightning strikes.
- ▶ Avoid standing near **WINDOWS** during a thunderstorm.
- ▶ Strong summer storms occasionally cause power outages. During an outage, it's best to have an **EMERGENCY KIT** on hand.