

*Are you safe around*

# ELECTRICITY?

Ameren Illinois  
**1.800.755.5000**  
***AmerenIllinois.com***

TTY Illinois Relay  
**711**

JULIE Underground  
Locating

**811**  
***Illinois1Call.com***

## Teach Kids About Electricity To Keep Them Safe

Children are often unaware of the many dangers lurking near areas they like to play. Be proactive and protect them by teaching children about the dangers of electricity and electrical equipment. Resources for students, teachers and parents are just a few clicks away at **[AmerenIllinois.com/EnergySmartKids](http://AmerenIllinois.com/EnergySmartKids)**. Every year, our Energy Smart Kids® initiative reaches more than 50,000 K-8 students with energy lessons that can last a lifetime.

## Make a Splash With Safety

When summer begins to sizzle, many of us head for the nearest lake or swimming pool. But before you take that plunge, be aware of electrical dangers that could be hidden in the water.

Electric shock drowning can occur when electricity leaks into the water from poorly installed and maintained electrical wiring. To minimize the risk, do not swim around docks with electrical equipment or boats plugged into shore power. If you are swimming and feel a tingle, swim away from the area and don't use metal ladders or objects. Exit the water in an area further away where you no longer feel a tingle.

Frequent inspections and maintenance of electrical equipment by a professional, as well as GFCI protection, can help prevent shock and electrocution around swimming pools and boat docks.



If a swimmer is in the water and feels electricity or appears to be shocked, don't jump in or you could be shocked as well. Unplug or turn off the source of power and then use a fiberglass shepherd's hook to pull the victim out of the water.



**May is National Electrical Safety Month**

Visit **[SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org)** to learn about electrical hazards.  
Then teach your kids the ABCs of electrical safety.



# Flooding Can Hide Electrical Hazards

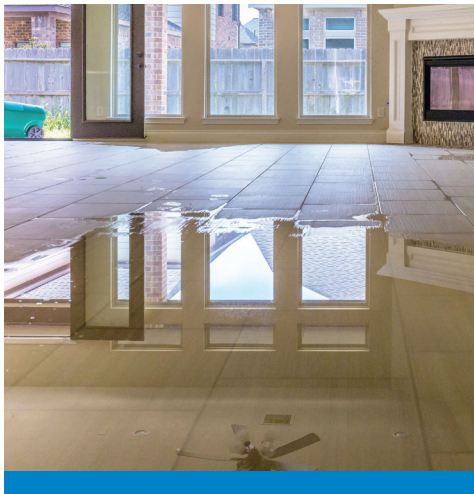


Flooding is one of America's most common natural disasters — and it can create hidden hazards

related to your energy service. Take extra care following a flood:

- Never step into a flooded basement or other room if water may be in contact with electrical outlets, appliances or cords.
- Never attempt to turn off power at the breaker box if you must stand in water to do so.
- Never use electric appliances or touch electric wires, switches, or fuses when you are wet or standing in water.
- Keep electric tools and equipment at least 10 feet away from wet surfaces, indoors and out.

Make sure that neighborhood kids understand that flooded areas are never safe spots to wade or play in.



*Teach your children:*

## Don't Play With Danger

To a curious child, electrical equipment may appear enticing and fun. Be sure to teach the young people in your life about the hazards of electricity.

Kids should never climb utility poles or towers, play around pad-mounted electrical equipment, or enter an electric substation to retrieve a ball or toy. Contact with this type of energized equipment can kill.

And remember — electricity can travel down a tree branch or a kite string. If your child likes to climb trees or fly kites, be sure they do so far away from overhead power lines and only in good weather.

Make sure the children in your life know to stay away from downed power lines and to report any fallen or dangling wires to an adult.



*Pruning near power lines?*

## Leave It To The Professionals

Fallen tree limbs are a leading cause of power outages and safety hazards. To get to the root of these issues, Ameren Illinois inspects and trims trees along every circuit once every four years.

While Ameren Illinois takes care of the main power lines, the customer is responsible for maintaining trees near the smaller service line that connects to the home.

Never attempt to prune trees near power lines yourself. Only qualified line clearance tree contractors are allowed to work near power lines. To request a service drop disconnection so trees can be trimmed safely, call Ameren Illinois at **1.800.755.5000**.



# Electric Shock Survivor Speaks Out

It was Cody Conrady's next-to-last day as an assistant manager for an ag fertilizer company. They were understaffed that day, and Cody jumped in the truck to get ahead of the sprayer. What happened next changed everything.

Inside the cab, Cody and his coworker were unaware that the sprayer boom had either made contact or gotten too close to a power line, energizing the equipment and ground around it. When Cody hopped out of the truck to fill the sprayer tank with fertilizer, 7,400 volts of electricity traveled through his body as part of its path to ground.

In the minutes and hours that followed, Cody was brought back to life, rushed to a local hospital, and then transferred by air to a Level 1 trauma center. Thus began a long and arduous road to recovery that included many surgeries, rehabilitation, and prosthetics fittings.

With the benefit of hindsight, Cody advises anyone working around power lines to "pay attention a little more. Keep an eye on your surroundings. Just take an extra second to look at things, to see how your situation is going to unfold."

Cody's wife, Bailey, says this type of accident could happen to anyone, and that one instant can change lives forever. "We knew life wasn't going to be the same."

**To stay safe, maintain a minimum 10-foot clearance from power lines in all directions. If your machinery or vehicle comes in contact with a power line, stay inside the cab or vehicle and call 911.**

## PLAN AHEAD WHEN PLANTING

Trees can grow into power lines as they mature.

To enjoy your tree for decades to come, avoid planting trees directly beneath power lines, near poles or too close to electrical equipment. Consider planting small trees or shrubs under 12 feet tall if you have a utility line less than 20 feet away. For more planting tips, go to **MySafeTrees.com**.



## IS IT SAFE TO CHARGE MY ELECTRIC VEHICLE IN THE RAIN?

Yes. While it's normally a bad idea to plug something in while standing on a wet surface, electric vehicles are built for that. It is generally safe to use a quality EV charging device in the rain — as long as the plug is not sitting in a puddle of water or the charging port on the car is not packed with snow.

According to Safe Electricity, the charging equipment is designed to be insulated and waterproofed and undergoes testing by the Society of Automotive Engineers for almost any weather condition (with the exception of extreme weather such as floods and hurricanes).





## Choose and Use Extension Cords Safely

When shopping for extension cords, choose one that is properly rated for the devices you will have plugged into it and the environment (indoors or outdoors) where you plan to use it. Look for labels such as UL, ETL or CSA that show the product has been tested for safety.

Check the condition of extension cords before you use them, and replace any damaged cords. Do not use cords in wet conditions.

Avoid overloading extension cords with too many electronics or power tools — and always unplug the cord when you are finished with it.

*Planning a home improvement project?*

## Consider Clearances First

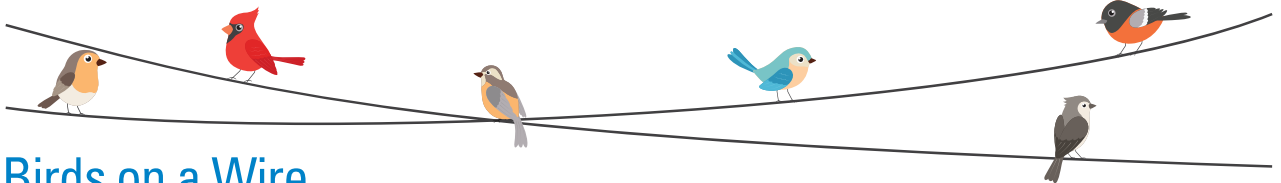
Before you begin construction on that new room, deck or garage, consider utility clearances and easements. Remember — all structures must be located a safe distance from overhead and underground utility equipment, and comply with easements and National Electric Safety Code (NESC) requirements. Ask your contractor to check for any utility easements and clearance requirements affecting your property before you break ground.



## Dial Before You Dig



Before you begin any project that involves digging, call JULIE at 811. This will ensure that potentially hazardous underground public utilities are located and marked, so you can dig safely. The service is free, and it's the law.



## Birds on a Wire

We've all seen birds perched on a power line — and we all know the dangers of power lines. So, how do these birds escape injury?

Electricity is always looking for the most direct path to the ground. Our feathered friends can stay safe as long as the wire is the only thing they're touching. But they put themselves in danger if they touch a utility pole or tree — anything touching the ground — while perched on that wire. Even briefly making contact with another wire carrying a different voltage could make the bird part of the electricity's path to ground and put it in harm's way.