

QUICK TIPS FOR SPRINGTIME ELECTRICAL SAFETY

Outside the home

- When planting in your yard, make sure you leave at least ten feet of space around ground level transformers.
- Leave three feet of accessible space in front of your electric meter or around your electric pedestal.
- Call the North Carolina One Call Center by dialing 811 before you do any digging.
- Ladders conduct electricity. Be especially careful not to let ladders or trimmers come in contact with overhead wires.
- Have a qualified electrician install Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) receptacles in outdoor outlets. After installation, test your GFCIs monthly.

Inside the home

- Be alert when using electrical products. Follow manufacturer's instructions, and read care and maintenance manuals and warnings carefully before you use the product.
- Keep extension and electrical cords out of the reach of children and pets. Don't run electrical cords under rugs or carpets. If they overheat, they could cause a fire. Use extension cords only on a temporary basis; they are not intended for use as permanent household wiring.
- Avoid overloading outlets, and never force a plug into an outlet if it doesn't fit. Check that all of your outlets in the bathroom and outlets near the kitchen sink are GFCI. If you don't have them, get them installed. If you do have them, test them regularly.
- Don't use appliances with frayed, cut, or damaged cords; they can cause a shock or fire. Unplug all counter appliances when not in use.
- Place all appliances away from the sink. Water and electricity don't mix. If a plugged-in appliance falls into the water, never reach in to pull it out – even if it's turned off-- unplug first.
- Schedule an electrical safety inspection by a licensed electrical contractor or inspector to help identify areas for improvement and insure the safety of your home.

Take a few minutes to look for and correct electrical safety hazards in your home. It does not take too long to check the insulation on a cord, move an appliance away from water, check for correct wattage light bulb or install a GFCI. Invest your time. It could prevent an electrical safety hazard and save a life.