

# Florence Energy News

## ELECTRICAL FIRE SAFETY

Electrical fires in our homes claim the lives of 485 Americans each year and injure 2,305 more. Some of these fires are caused by electrical system failures and appliance defects, but many more are caused by the misuse and poor maintenance of electrical appliances, incorrectly installed wiring, and over-loaded circuits and extension cords.



The United States Fire Administration (USFA) would like consumers to know that there are simple steps you can take to prevent the loss of life and property resulting from electrical fires.

### THE PROBLEM

During a typical year, home electrical problems account for 67,800 fires, 485 deaths, and \$868 million in property losses. Home electrical wiring causes twice as many fires as electrical appliances.

### THE FACTS

December is the most dangerous month for electrical fires. Fire deaths are highest in winter months which call for more indoor activities and increase in lighting, heating, and appliance use. Most electrical wiring fires start in the bedroom.

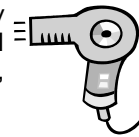
### THE CAUSE

◆ Most electrical fires result from problems with “fixed wiring” such as faulty electrical outlets and old wiring. Problems with cords and plugs, such as extension and appliance cords, also cause many home electrical fires.

- ◆ In urban areas, faulty wiring accounts for 33 percent of residential electrical fires.
- ◆ Many avoidable electrical fires can be traced to misuse of electric cords, such as overloading circuits, poor maintenance, and running the cords under rugs or in high traffic areas.
- ◆ The home appliances most often involved in electrical fires are electric stoves and ovens, dryers, central heating units, televisions, and radios.

## SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

- ◆ Routinely check your electrical appliances and wiring.
- ◆ Frayed wires can cause fires. Replace all worn, old, or damaged appliance cords immediately.
- ◆ Use electrical extension cords wisely and don't overload them.
- ◆ Keep electrical appliances away from wet floors and counters; pay special attention to electrical appliances in the bathroom and kitchen.
- ◆ When buying electrical appliances look for products which meet the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) standard for safety.
- ◆ Don't allow children to play with or around electrical appliances like space heaters, irons, and hair dryers.



- ◆ Keep clothes, curtains, and other potentially combustible items at least three feet from all heaters.
- ◆ If an appliance has a three-prong plug, use it only in a three-slot outlet. Never force it to fit into a two-slot outlet or extension cord.
- ◆ Never overload extension cords or wall sockets. Immediately shut off, then professionally replace, light switches that are hot to the touch and lights that flicker. Use safety closures to “child-proof” electrical outlets.
- ◆ Check your electrical tools regularly for signs of wear. If the cords are frayed or cracked, replace them. Replace any tool if it causes even small electrical shocks, overheats, shorts out, gives off smoke, or sparks.

Finally, having a working smoke alarm dramatically increases your chances of surviving a fire. And remember to practice a home escape plan frequently with your family.

*Information from U.S. Fire Administration, a division of the Department of Home Land Security.*

## **ATTENTION**

**The City of Florence Gas Department will be reducing natural gas rates with the March 2006 billing cycle. For residential customers, this will be approximately 11% reduction.**

## April-May Calendar of Events

April 25: Kevin Smith Memorial Golf Tournament  
*Sponsored by Baptist Campus Ministries*  
Location: Robert Trent Jones at the Shoals  
Admission: \$240/team of four  
Contact: 764-5083, Eddy Garner

April 27-28: 16th Annual Master Gardener Conv.  
Location: Marriott Shoals Conference Center  
Hours: 12 noon Thur. and 8 am Fri.  
Admission: \$55/\$65 after 4/20/06  
Contact: 757-4111 or [www.alabamamg.org](http://www.alabamamg.org)

April 29-30: Spring Gardens of the Shoals Tour 2006  
Location: Various Gardens in the Shoals  
Hours: 9 am-5 pm Sat. and 1 pm-5 pm Sun.  
Admission: \$12  
Contact: 757-4111 or [www.alabamamg.org](http://www.alabamamg.org)

May 12-13: Waterloo Heritage Days  
Location: Main Street-Waterloo, Alabama  
Contact: 766-6476, Williard South

May 19-20: Florence Wagon Works Festival  
Location: McFarland Park  
Hours: 9 am-until  
Admission: Free  
Contact: 740-4141

May 20-21: Arts Alive  
*20th Annual Fine Arts & Crafts Festival*  
Location: Kennedy-Douglass Center for the Arts & Wilson Park  
Hours: 9 am-5 pm Monday-Friday  
Admission: Free  
Contact: 760-6379

**ATTENTION**  
**Florence Utilities will be closed**  
**MEMORIAL DAY**  
**Monday, May 29, 2006.**

## TVA RATE INCREASE

Citing coal, natural gas, and purchased power costs that are significantly higher than budgeted for 2006, the TVA Board of Directors approved an increase in firm wholesale electric rates. This rate adjustment will be applied to all Florence Utility meters read beginning with the April billing cycle.

Obviously, rate increases are never welcome news. TVA's need to increase wholesale power rates is due to a period of high price volatility in coal, natural gas, and purchased power markets since last summer. In addition, TVA has absorbed a significant percentage of the increase costs and worked hard to hold the rate increase as low as possible.

## CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

The Florence Utilities Gas Department is a member of the Alabama One Call Line Location Center. If you are planning on digging on or around your property, please call the Alabama Line Location Center at **1-800-292-8525**. This is a free call, and you need to call two working days before you start to dig. A representative will come to your location and locate all underground utilities free of charge to you.

By calling before you dig, you could avoid damaging the environment, interruption of your service, job/project delays, legal problems, accidents, and injuries.

Even if you are not a customer of the Florence Utilities Gas Department, you still might have gas lines around your property. That's why we are asking EVERYONE to **CALL 1-800-292-8525 BEFORE YOU DIG.**

REMEMBER THIS IS A FREE SERVICE TO YOU.

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# Florence ENERGY

NEWS YOU CAN USE FROM FLORENCE UTILITIES

During a typical year, home electrical problems account for 67,800 fires, 485 deaths, and \$868 million in property losses. Home electrical wiring causes twice as many fires as electrical appliances. Take a moment to read over the "Electrical Fire Safety" article which provides simple steps you can take to prevent the loss of life and property resulting from electrical fires.

Obviously, rate increases are never welcome. Citing coal, natural gas, and purchased power costs that are significantly higher than budgeted for 2006, the TVA Board of Directors approved an increase in firm wholesale electric rates. More about this rate adjustment, which will be applied to all Florence Utility meters read beginning with the April billing cycle, is included in this issue.

It's a good time to be working outdoors with the warmer weather. Before you dig around your property, contact the Alabama Line Location Center at 1-800-292-8525, and a representative will come to locate all underground utilities. The "Call Before You Dig" article gives more details about this free service to you.



*Mayor Bobby Irons*

[www.florenceal.org](http://www.florenceal.org)