

BURT COUNTY

PUBLIC POWER

PO Box 209
Tekamah, NE 68061

It's Your Power!



Before You Jump In, Learn More About ESD

Before taking the plunge, learn how electricity can seep into the water.

Just what is electric shock drowning, or ESD?

An unfamiliar term to many, ESD means that someone is being exposed to stray electrical current in water, usually from faulty wiring—a danger you cannot see or detect just by looking. Many people have never heard of ESD or don't even know it's a possibility when swimming, wading, boating, or hot tubbing.

While we are not suggesting that stray electricity lurks in every body of water, it is important to be aware water can become electrified and that electric shock drowning can occur.

Dangerous water that has electrical current running through it can paralyze muscles, leaving a swimmer unable to move or stay afloat. Stray electricity *could* be found in the water:

- Near a dock that uses electricity (usually in fresh water as opposed to salt water).
- Near a marina (never swim there).
- Surrounding a yacht or boat capable of generating electricity.
- In a pool or hot tub (electricity often runs the lights and motors).
- In a wading pool, kiddie pool, lazy river or water amusement feature that uses electricity.

This is not an exhaustive list; in fact, current could leak into any water source with electricity running to it (for example, a lighted fountain).

Depending on the magnitude of the current, sometimes a person can detect stray electricity in the water by the sensations they feel, such as prickly or tingly sensations. If that happens, pull your legs up close to your body and swim away from the source of electricity (e.g., a dock, boat or light post on shore). Yell to someone on land or the dock to cut the power. Again, do not swim toward the electrical source.

If you suspect someone is experiencing electrical shock while in the water, do not jump in to help. Instead, call 9-1-1, throw a life ring or lifesaver and, if you can, shut off the power source.

For more information about electrical safety, go to SafeElectricity.org.

If you feel a **SHOCK**,
swim **AWAY** from the **DOCK!**



Did you know?

Electricity can enter water from energized boats and docks.

If you are in the water and feel electric current:

- 1 **SHOUT** to let others know.
- 2 **TUCK** your legs up to make yourself smaller.
- 3 Try to go out **AWAY** from anything that could be energized.
- 4 Do **NOT** head to boat or dock ladders to get out.



If you are on the dock or shore when a swimmer feels electrical current:

- 1 Do **NOT** jump in.
- 2 **Throw** them a float.
- 3 **Eliminate** or **turn off** the source of electricity as quickly as possible.
- 4 Then **call** for help.

Learn more at

Safe Electricity.org

Burt's Briefs

Holiday Closing. Our office will be closed Monday, July 5th in observation of Independence Day. In case of emergency, please call our regular office phone number 402-374-2631 or toll free number 1-888-835-1620. Thank you!

Summer Rates. These are in effect starting June 1st. The next four months are based on a higher charge per kilowatt than the winter months.

Energy Efficient. Now is the time to be energy efficient and to conserve your kilowatt usage as much as possible. Running ceiling fans in the kitchen, living room, and possibly the bedrooms will help circulate the air in the room providing an economical air conditioning. You might find that having a ceiling fan or two might trim enough off your electric bill to pay for the ceiling fan.

Irrigation Load. Irrigation load control begins June 1st. Check your wells before you need to irrigate to make sure they are functioning properly. Notification methods for load control on our website burtpd.com, E-mail notification, call NPPD after hour's line, or by receiving a text message on your cell phone.

Air Conditioning. If your condenser on your air conditioning unit has been acting up now is the time to replace it with an add-on heat pump. Regardless of what the back up heating unit is, the add-on heat pump is a great way to extend the life of your furnace. You may also receive a cash rebate for changing to an air source heat pump. Contact our office for details.

Take Cover When A Storm Is Brewing

Sometimes a storm pops up or changes direction without any warning, while other times it is forecast days in advance and follows its predicted course. In either case, knowing what to do right before, during and after a storm can help to keep you safe.

When a storm hits

When stormy winds blow, follow these weather-related reminders from FEMA and the Red Cross:

- Never seek shelter under an isolated tree, tower or utility pole, since lightning tends to strike tall objects.
- Immediately vacate elevated areas such as hills and mountain ridges and peaks.
- Get away from ponds, lakes and other bodies of water.
- Stay away from objects that conduct electricity, including wires and fences (and golf clubs!). (Approximately 5 percent of annual lightning deaths and injuries in the United States happen on golf courses, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration).
- Never lie flat on the ground.
- Pick a safe place in your home, away from windows and doors, for family members to gather during a thunderstorm.
- Know the difference between a watch and a warning for extreme weather such as a tornado or severe thunderstorm. A watch means that the weather is possible in and near the area. A warning means that severe weather has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar. A warning is more serious than a watch and means that there is imminent danger to life and property.

After the storm

Once the storm is over, follow these safety tips from Safe Electricity:

- Never step into a flooded basement or other standing water. The water could be covering electrical outlets, appliances or cords. Never touch (or use) electrical appliances, cords, wires or switches while you are wet or standing in water.
- After a storm, a downed power line could be covered by standing water or debris. Never go near a downed line and warn others to stay away. If you see a downed line, call 9-1-1, and a crew will be dispatched to de-energize the power and address the problem safely.
- The same safety know-how applies to a downed power line you might encounter while driving or after an auto accident. In either case, do not get out. Instead, call 9-1-1 to report the downed line (pull over first if you are driving). If you must exit your vehicle after an accident because of a fire or smoke, make a solid, clean jump out, landing with both feet together. Then make solid hops with your feet together, hopping as far away as you can.
- If your home has been damaged by a flood, turn off the power to your house if it is safe to do so. (Do not turn power off at the breaker box while standing in water or in damp conditions).
- If the wiring, electrical system or appliances have been damaged by water, have your home inspected by an electrician; also, have appliances serviced by a qualified technician before using them.

For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR AFTER A STORM

When the skies clear and the birds sing, know that the storm's fury could have created **electrical hazards that you may or may not be able to see**. Conditions in which stray electricity could energize the area, a person or objects include:

DOWNED POWER LINES

- On the ground.
- Under storm debris.
- Draped over or touching a metal fence.
- Covered by standing water.
- Across or by the road.
- Hidden in tree branches.

OTHER POSSIBLE DAMAGE

- Drooping or sagging lines (never try to move one).
- Split or broken utility poles.
- Damage to a padmount transformer (green box).
- Lightning strike to a substation transformer.
- Damaged or unstable guy wires.

NEVER GO NEAR downed power lines or other damaged electrical equipment to assess damage or clean up the area.

STAY AWAY and call 9-1-1 to report damage.

Power lines and other electrical equipment **do not have to be sparking, arcing (giving off a flame) or on fire to be energized**.

 Safe
Electricity.org®

No Game Is Worth Getting Struck By Lightning

Perhaps you've been a parent, coach or player at an outdoor sporting event in a similar predicament: the clouds roll in and the sky gets dark, but you have *finish-game itis*. After all, it will only take a few more minutes.

Or, not wanting to appear overly cautious or paranoid, you wait for others to give the signal.

This is one situation when finishing the game, match or inning is not worth the risk. Each year, thunderstorms produce an estimated 20 to 25 million cloud-to-ground lightning flashes in the United States, each of which is a potential killer, according to the National Weather Service (NWS). Some flashes strike directly under the storm where it is raining. Other times, the flashes reach away from the storm in places where people perceive the lightning threat to be low or nonexistent and catch people off guard.

About 30 people are killed by lightning each year and hundreds more are injured, some suffering devastating and permanent neurological injuries. About two-thirds of the deaths are associated with outdoor recreational activities.

The NWS recommends that outdoor recreation organizers have an established **lightning safety plan** and follow it every time inclement weather conditions are present.

As part of the plan, coaches or organizers should establish who will listen to the latest accurate weather forecasts prior to a sporting event. It should also be clear who will make the decision to postpone or cancel if necessary.

The lightning safety guidelines should also address the following, according to the NWS:

- Once in play, when should the activities be stopped?
The short answer: When you see lightning, hear thunder or the skies look threatening.
- Where should participants, officials and spectators go for safety? *No place outside is safe. Substantial building with wiring and plumbing are ideal. Small outdoor buildings, including dugouts, rain shelters, sheds and pavilions are NOT safe places to seek shelter.*
- When should activities be resumed? *A minimum of 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder. Electrical charges can linger in clouds after a storm has seemingly passed.*
- Who should monitor the weather and make decisions about play? *A level-headed and objective person should be the designated weather and lightning monitor. This should NOT be the coach, umpire or referee. The lightning monitor should know the weather safety guidelines and be empowered by teams, parents, coaches and spectators to make decisions.*
- What should be done if someone is struck by lightning? *Call 9-1-1 for immediate medical attention. Victims do not carry an electrical charge. CPR or AED may be needed if the individual's breathing or heart has stopped.*

The NWS webpage on lightning safety and outdoor sports activities answers these questions in more detail.

Don't make decisions on when to call the game or match based on personal experience or pressure from others.

For more information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

WHEN TO CALL IT

Between 2006 and 2018, **396 people were struck and killed by lightning** in the U.S.

62% Two-thirds of the fatalities happened during outdoor leisure activities.

Outdoor sports accounted for 13% of lightning-related deaths.

TOP SPORTS-RELATED LIGHTNING FATALITIES

1) Soccer	38%
2) Golf	31%
3) Running	16%
4) Baseball	9%
5) Football	3%
6) Disc Golf	3%

70% of the fatalities occurred in **June, July, or August.**

Have a **GAME PLAN** to stay safe when severe weather **STRIKES.**

1. **Check weather forecasts** in advance.
2. At first signs of stormy weather, **seek shelter** in a **hard-top car** or **four-sided** building.
3. **Do not** seek shelter under a pavilion or tree.
4. **Do not** sit on or lean against **metal** (e.g. bleachers, fencing).
5. Before resuming activities, **WAIT at least 30 MINUTES** after the last rumble of thunder.

Safe Electricity.org

Source: National Lightning Safety Council

Nebraska Extension News

By Aaron Nygren , Extension Educator

Be on the Lookout for Japanese Beetles in Field and Yards

One pest that we should expect to see this month is the Japanese beetle, those lovely metallic green bugs that love to congregate and feed on linden trees, roses, soybeans, corn, and many other plants. For those who need a reminder, Japanese beetle adults are roughly a 1/2 inch long and have a metallic green head and thorax. Japanese beetle population have been increasing across Nebraska the last few years as well as spreading to new areas of the state. Unfortunately, the numbers of beetles and their ravenous feeding are increasingly becoming an issue in corn and soybeans in addition to their feeding on landscape trees and shrubs.

Looking at the lifespan of Japanese beetles, there is only one generation per year, but both the adult and larvae can potentially cause damage, one above ground and the other below ground. One thing that makes their damage worse is that they often feed in clusters due to an attraction to the female pheromone and an attraction to volatile chemicals produced by damaged plants.

Looking at our crop fields, Japanese beetles can contribute to defoliation in soybeans, along with a complex of other insects, such as bean leaf beetles, grasshoppers, and a variety of caterpillars such as the thistle caterpillar. They feed by skeletonizing the leaves in the upper canopy, leaving only the leaf veins. In soybeans, insecticide treatment is recommended when insects are present, and damage exceeds 30% defoliation in vegetative stage and 20% in reproductive stage soybeans. Remember that this defoliation percent is for the whole plant, so look at leaves throughout the canopy not just at the top of the plant.

For corn, Japanese beetles behave a lot like corn rootworm as they will scrape off the green surface tissue on corn leaves before silks emerge but prefer silks once they are available. Japanese beetles feed voraciously on corn silks and may interfere with pollination if they are abundant enough to severely clip silks before pollination. University of Illinois Extension recommends: "An insecticidal treatment should be considered during the silking period if:

- There are three or more Japanese beetles per ear,
 - Silks have been clipped to less than 1/2 inch,
- AND
- Pollination is less than 50% complete."

Be aware that Japanese beetle numbers are often highest on field margins, so scout across the whole field before making a treatment decision for the entire field. If control is warranted, a variety of insecticides labelled on corn and soybeans would be expected to provide control of Japanese beetles.

Burt County Public Power District News

Tekamah, Nebraska 68061
Phone 374-2631 or 1-888-835-1620
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Meetings

In accordance with Nebraska Statute, notice is hereby given that the regular meetings of the Board of Directors of the Burt County Public Power District are held on the 1st Thursday of each month, commencing at 9:30 A.M. at the district office located in Tekamah, Nebraska. In the event that a holiday falls on the said 1st Thursday, the meeting date shall be as set by the Board of Directors and published in the Legal Notice.

An agenda for each regular meeting of the board is available for public inspection during business hours at least three (3) days prior to each meeting; provided however, that the Board of Directors shall have the right to modify the said agenda to include items of an emergency nature.

Office Hours

7:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

In landscapes, one way to avoid damage going forward is to use plants that are not as attractive to Japanese beetles. What about the established plants that we already have? If you like a challenge and have a small plant, you can try to pick beetles off and put them in soapy water. Otherwise, insecticidal sprays will be effective like they are on crop fields but be careful to avoid harming pollinators. Ways to do this include only spraying in the evening and avoiding applications to flowering plants. Multiple treatments may be needed if populations are high, so be sure to monitor for new feeding after applications.

Lastly, avoid buying Japanese beetle traps. While they do trap some adults, they usually end up inviting many more that avoid getting caught and cause damage to plants in your landscape.

Information for this article was taken from Crop-Watch and Community Environment articles. For more information on Japanese beetles, feel free to give me a call at 402-352-3821, e-mail me at anygren1@unl.edu, follow me on Twitter at [@colfaxcountyext](https://twitter.com/colfaxcountyext), or contract your local Nebraska Extension office.

