

**BURT COUNTY**

# PUBLIC POWER

PO Box 209  
Tekamah, NE 68061

*It's Your Power!*



## Solar Farm Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



**Friday June 4th @ 10:00 AM**

Burt County Solar Farm Location

1332 HWY 75, Tekamah NE (Across the Highway from Lee Valley)

Come join us for a ribbon cutting celebration for the completion of two solar farms in BCPPD's service territory. Take a tour of the facility and get any questions answered.

### *Burt's Briefs*

**Nebraska Youth Energy Camp.** Stop or call our office if you are interested in attending this year's energy camp. We are still taking applications.

**Office closed.** Our office will be closed Monday, May 31st in observation of Memorial Day. In case of emergency please call our regular office phone number 1-888-835-1620. Thank you!

#### **Remember These Safety Rules When Starting Outdoor Projects:**

- Call Diggers Hotline (1-800-331-5666) 48 hours before you begin digging. Make sure you know the location of buried electrical lines.
- Contact our office before pruning, trimming or cutting down trees that are near overhead electric lines.
- Remember to keep electrical equipment at least 10 feet from a pool or wet surface.
- Stay away from substation fences or electrical equipment.
- Make sure that trees where children play don't have wires passing through them. Don't climb in or build anything in a tree with wires running through it.
- Electric outlets are for electric plugs only and should be weatherproof and protected by a GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) on all outside locations.
- Never build a pool, spa or place a child's pool under electrical lines. And stay out of lakes, pools, and spas during storms.
- If a victim is touching a downed power line, stay clear. Don't try to move the wire or the victim. Call 911 for help.

## Considering A New Home or Apartment? Check Out Electrical Concerns Too

Whether you are renting or buying, the process of looking for a house, condo or apartment can be overwhelming, especially for young people moving out on their own or new families ready to relocate to larger places. Along with looking for a good value, the right neighborhood or curb appeal, it's also a good idea to look for signs of potential electrical trouble before making a home buying or renting decision.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, electrical failures or malfunctions are present in an estimated average of 47,000 home structure fires per year in the United States, which result in 430 deaths, 1,280 injuries, and \$1.5 billion in property damage. Based on figures from the National Center for Biotechnology information, electrical injuries in general cause approximately 1,000 deaths per year in the U.S.

Aside from having a professional electrical inspection completed, look for the following warning signs of larger electrical safety hazards before signing on the dotted line:

- Outlets and light switches that are warm to the touch.
- Outlets that are loose, scorched or discolored.
- Wall or light switches that cause shocks upon contact.
- Strange smells (such as something burning or overheating).
- Smoke or sparks.
- Exposed wires.
- Lack of GFCIs (ground fault circuit interrupters) on certain outlets (those near a water source or that could get wet).
- Lack of AFCIs (arc fault circuit interrupters); these help to prevent fires and are required in new builds.
- Faulty appliances.
- Evidence of frequent blown fuses or circuit breakers.
- Missing or broken wall plates.
- Delayed responses after switching lights on or off.
- Flickering lights.

Another good house-hunting practice is to take note if there are too few outlets to accommodate your need — for electronics, appliances, and other items that will increase the electrical load. If you will need to use extension cords and large outlet strips on a regular basis, you risk overloading your electrical system and creating an electrical hazard.

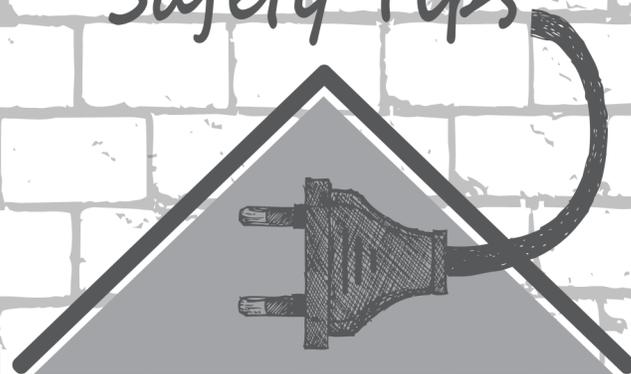
If you are buying a home, a reputable home inspector should note electrical wiring or other electrical deficiencies and code violations. Make sure electrical items are addressed by a qualified electrician before you call your new place home. If you already own your home and detect electrical issues, call a reputable electrician so that problems can be addressed immediately.

If you are or will be a renter and notice any of these issues, advise the landlord right away. If your landlord won't make repairs, tenants have the option to hire someone to make the repairs and deduct the costs from the rent (at least in most states). However, remember that a certified electrician is the only person who should be hired to assess and repair electrical hazards or address issues, so be sure to verify credentials before hiring one. Renters may also have the option to withhold rent until the landlord makes repairs. Research laws in your area to determine renter protection provisions.

Both renters and homeowners should test all GFCIs once a month to make sure they are working and keep an eye out for other electrical hazards.

For more information on electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

# Top 10 Home Electrical Safety Tips



 use a qualified electrician for repair work	repair loose outlets; replace cracked, worn electric cords 	watch for hot or discolored switch plates, flickering lights, or buzzing sounds. 
get regular check-ups for older homes 	use bulbs with correct wattage for the fixtures 	if children are present install tamper resistant outlets to protect against shock 
use extension cords temporarily, not as permanent wiring 	unplug electrics if you smell something burning 	keep cords out of walkways and high traffic areas 
educate the household on electrical safety 		

Learn more about home electrical safety at

 Safe  
Electricity.org

# NEBRASKA RURAL ELECTRIC YOUTH ENERGY LEADERSHIP CAMP



**July 19-23, 2021**

High school students, grades 9 - 11  
Nebraska State 4-H Camp - Halsey, Neb.



If you are interested in applying for this all-expense paid camp, complete the application form and return it to your local electric system.

## WIN A FREE TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

Three campers will be selected to serve as Nebraska's Ambassadors to the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Rural Electric Youth Tour in 2022.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION  
CONTACT YOUR LOCAL ELECTRIC UTILITY**

Zach Olson  
Burt County PPD  
Box 209  
Tekamah, NE 68061  
402/374-2631  
[www.burtcoppd.com](http://www.burtcoppd.com)

### YOUTH ENERGY LEADERSHIP CAMP APPLICATION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Current Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Name of parents \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of your sponsoring rural electric system

\_\_\_\_\_

# Nebraska Extension News

By Kathleen Cue, Extension Educator

## Tomato Plant Diseases

### Blights

Tomato blights cause rapid decline in plant health, decreasing yield. Early blight, caused by two species of *Alternaria* fungi, and late blight, caused by the fungal-like pathogen *Phytophthora infestans* are the main contributors to blight in our region. Blights should not be confused with other fungal diseases of tomatoes which tend to progress at a slower pace than blights. Blights spread rapidly, both within individual plants and throughout entire crops. Once blight spores contact plant tissues, full blown infections can take place in as little as 5 days.

Early blight infections occur when water droplets splash pathogens from the soil to lower parts of the plant, including stems, leaves, and fruits. Once a plant is infected, the disease progresses upward. Symptoms of early blight are concentric rings of dark tissue surrounded by a yellow halo. Fruit lesions are similar in appearance and usually occur near the stem end. Conditions that promote disease development are temperatures ranging from 59-86 degrees Fahrenheit, rain or high humidity events, and a susceptible tomato variety. As early blight gains a foothold, re-infections occur from spread by human contact, equipment, and wind.

Late blight is caused by a fungal-like pathogen that attacks tomatoes, potatoes, peppers, and eggplant during cool, wet weather late in the season. (Late blight's claim to infamy is the human starvation it caused during the Irish potato famine.) Late blight does not overwinter in soil but does survive winters on infected potatoes left in the soil and on infected plant debris placed in the compost pile. (Warmer temperatures in compost piles help the late blight pathogen to survive.) Like early blight, late blight re-infections can occur, the most common dispersal of spores occurring from spread by rain and irrigation water. Late blight symptoms are water-soaked spots of green or brown that can sometimes have a greasy appearance. Leaves, stems, and fruits are all affected. As the disease progresses, sporulation (fruiting bodies that release spores) gives the appearance of white fuzzy growth.

With early and late blights, every precaution must be taken to prevent introducing pathogens into the garden, as pathogens can persist for years. Disease-free seeds and plants are a must. Fungicides containing copper or chlorothalonil may be applied preventatively to protect tomato plants grown in areas with a history of early and late blight. Reapplying is necessary as plants grown and rainfall washes fungicides away. There are no products that will eradicate the disease from plant tissues, so removal of infected plants is critical to prevent spread. When irrigating, keep watering can tips and garden hose ends close to the ground to minimize droplet splash. Remove affected tomatoes and plant debris from the garden. Never compost plant debris suspected of having early or late blight. Instead, infected debris can be buried, burned, or put into a clear plastic bag and placed in the sun to kill pathogens. Resources for blight-resistant tomato varieties may be found by using these links. [Early blight of tomato UMN Extension](#) and [Managing Late Blight in the Organic Tomato Crop \(wisc.edu\)](#)

### Fungal Leaf Diseases

*Alternaria* stem canker, anthracnose, gray leaf spot, and powdery mildew are common foliar fungal disease of tomato. While they progress at a slower rate than blights do, the results of infection will reduce yield too. The reason tomato crops are not affected by every one of these foliar disease each growing season is that diseases are dependent on weather conditions conducive to their growth, like temperature, humidity, and wind. Add into the mix that not all tomato varieties are equally susceptible to pathogens and you will have an understanding why all diseases do not occur every year.

Plant pathologists speak of the disease triangle-the factors that must be present for a disease to develop. Two of these, weather conditions and plant susceptibility have been mentioned. The third factor, presence of a disease pathogen, is widely understood to be a consistent factor in this region. *Alternaria*, anthracnose, and gray leaf spot overwinter in soil and plant debris; powdery mildew is blown in on wind currents. Changing any of the three legs of the disease triangle can be difficult but there are things that can be done to promote good tomato plant health.

Choose seeds and plants that have resistance to the disease problem,  
May, 2021

## Burt County Public Power District News

Tekamah, Nebraska 68061

Phone 374-2631 or 1-888-835-1620

### Board of Directors

Michael J. Chatt  
Michael R. Williams  
Dwane Pierce  
Greg Johnson  
Gerald Bohling  
Scott Lindstrom  
Jonathan Dockhorn  
RVW, Inc.  
Blankenau Wilmoth Jarecke LLP

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Vice President  
Treasurer  
Secretary  
Director  
Director  
Manager  
Engineer  
Attorney

### 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.

lems you see most often. These will be designated on the plant tag or seed packet by a series of letters. Each letter denotes resistance to that disease, with EB showing resistance to early blight, F for Fusarium, and so on. Be sure to put tomato plants on a four-year rotation in the garden, with no tomato relatives like pepper, eggplant or potato plants put into the space in the intervening years as this promotes pathogen carryover in the soil. Mulch to minimize droplet splash which carries pathogens from the soil to plants. As with blights, keep irrigation water low to the ground to further reduce droplet splash. Cooper or chlorothalonil fungicides may be used as preventatives but only slow down progression of foliar fungal diseases when disease is already present.

### Wilts

Fusarium and verticillium wilts are also soil-borne fungal diseases. What makes them a challenge to manage, however, is wilt pathogens are taken up by tomato plants through root systems and spread throughout vascular tissues. Wilt pathogens clog water-conducting vessels, giving plants the appearance of drought damage. Cutting into the stem will reveal brown or black streaks, indicating the presence of fungal pathogens. There is no cure for vascular wilts. Roguing out affected plants is the only option. Choosing resistant tomato varieties and rotating where the crop is planted will help next year.

### Virus Diseases

Symptoms of viral diseases affecting tomato plants include leaf yellowing or streaking, leaf curl, and stem twisting. These symptoms resemble herbicide damage, but the yellow coloration is specific to viral diseases. Cucumber mosaic, curly top, and tomato spotted wilt are commonly vectored by insects, most notably aphids, thrips, whiteflies, and leafhoppers. Utilizing wilt-resistant tomato varieties is a good start. Monitor plants for insect outbreaks and if this occurs, rinse down the undersides of leaves with a spray of water.

### The Rewards

Perusing these disease problems, one may ask "How is it possible to harvest any tomatoes at all?" The wonderful thing about tomato plants is their vigorous growth, producing prolific amounts of tomatoes and giving rise to many possibilities in flavor, size, color, and shape. For gardeners, the trouble is worth the reward!