

**BURT COUNTY**

**PUBLIC POWER**

PO Box 209  
Tekamah, NE 68061

*It's Your Power!*



## Think Safety When Operating a Generator

A generator can be a valuable piece of equipment to keep appliances working during a power outage. Generators can be either temporary or permanently installed.

A permanent generator is wired into a house by a qualified electrician using a transfer switch that prevents a generator from feeding electricity back into overhead lines, which can be deadly for linemen.

A temporary generator is powered by gasoline and should not be attached to a circuit breaker, fuse, or outlet. Before ever purchasing a generator, you need to know the wattage required to run the appliances you will attach to the generator. You also need to know the surge power, which is the power it takes to turn an appliance on.

Once you have purchased the proper generator, follow these tips from Safe Electricity to properly operate your generator:

- Read and follow all manufacturer operating instructions to properly ground the generator. Be sure you understand them before hooking up the generator.
- Never operate a generator in a confined area, such as a garage. Generators can produce numerous gases, including toxic and deadly carbon monoxide. They require proper ventilation.
- Generators pose electrical risks especially when operated in wet conditions. Use a generator only when necessary, when the weather creates wet or moist conditions. Protect the generator by operating it under an open, canopy-like structure on a dry surface where water cannot form puddles or drain under it. Always ensure that your hands are dry before touching the generator.
- When you refuel the generator, make sure the engine is cool to prevent a fire, should the tank overflow.
- There should be nothing plugged into the generator when you turn it on. This prevents a surge from damaging your generator and appliances.
- Be sure to keep children and pets away from the generator, which could burn them.
- Shut down the generator properly. Before shutting down a generator, turn off and unplug all appliances and equipment being powered by the generator.
- Remember maintenance between uses. It is also a good idea to inspect the fuel and oil filters, spark plug, oil level and fuel quality and to start the generator on a regular basis before an emergency situation occurs.

For more information about electrical safety, go to [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).

## *Burt's Briefs*

**Labor Day Holiday.** Our office will be closed Monday, September 6th in recognition of Labor Day.

**Changing Address.** If you are on the move, be sure to let our office know! Simply give us a call or drop us a note! You will be responsible for the power bill until we are notified.

**Report "Clearance" Problems.** This is the time of year when a line clearance problem can become a fatality. If you know of a situation anywhere on our lines where clearance is not adequate, let us know. We would rather fix it now, than after it is too late.

**Time to Change Filters.** This is just a reminder that it is time to change your furnace filter. We recommend that you change filters once a month in heavy heating and cooling seasons. This helps air flow through your system better giving you better efficiency, not to mention your house doesn't get so dusty.

**Remember You Can Pay Online.** Customers have several ways they can pay their electric bill. Two of the more popular ways are by clicking on our website, [www.burtcoppd.com](http://www.burtcoppd.com) and paying online or having a debit or credit card on file connect to automatic withdrawal for your electric bill. And now with our new PCS Mobile app you can view and pay your bills right from the palm of your hand.



# USING A GENERATOR?

## 8 DANGEROUS MISTAKES PEOPLE MAKE



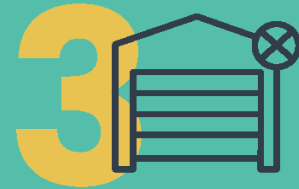
### 1 IN ENCLOSED SPACES

Always use it in a well-ventilated area.



### 2 NEAR WINDOWS OR DOORS

Place it at least 20 feet away from windows and doors.



### 3 IN A GARAGE

Even if the door is up, never use a generator in a garage.



### 4 IN THE ELEMENTS

Run it on a dry surface under a canopy-like structure (but not in a carport).



### 5 PLUGGED INTO A WALL OUTLET

This can be deadly to you, family members, neighbors or utility workers.



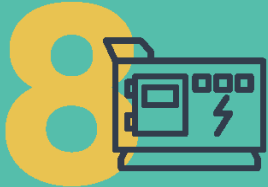
### 6 WITH THE WRONG EXTENSION CORD

Use a properly rated cord to plug appliances into a generator.



### 7 WITHOUT CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) TESTERS

CO detectors should be on every level of your home (test them monthly).



### 8 IN DISREPAIR

Make sure your generator is well-maintained and in good working order.



**Safe Electricity.org**

# Going Up or Digging In? Ten Tips for Using Rental Equipment Safely

Are you planning to rent a scissor or boom lift? Scaffolding? A backhoe?

When you rent, borrow, or use equipment that will either elevate you or break ground, be sure to use it safely. Whether you are a novice *do-it-yourselfer* eager to embark on a lofty project or you have used several types of outdoor equipment or machinery before, keep these safety tips in mind:

1. Before using equipment, obtain proper training; in some cases, certification is required.
2. Prior to each use, follow the manufacturer's checklist to verify it is in good working order.
3. Always evaluate and assess your location before using a scissor lift, a bucket truck, a boom lift or scaffolding (or anything that elevates you). Look up and look out for power line locations, and do not use equipment underneath or near a power line or utility pole. Keep in mind your equipment's reach (height and width) when fully extended, and make sure it will not get too close to a power line. Always follow the 10-foot rule: Keep 10 feet between yourself or an object you are holding and a power line or pole at all times.
4. If you rent a backhoe, a post hole digger or other digging equipment, be sure to call 8-1-1 two to three days prior to starting your project. The locating service is free and marks all public underground lines. You are responsible for having all private underground lines and pipes marked, such as those that service a garage or outbuilding, sprinkler system, invisible fence or private water system. If you or a previous homeowner had the lines installed, they are most likely private.
5. When using rental equipment that lifts you off the ground, always wear your safety harness. It's a simple step that helps keep you safe if you lose your footing.
6. Do not use a scissor or boom lift (or any other piece of equipment) for a job it was not designed for.
7. Before starting a job, account for external conditions, such as wind. High winds could push you too close to or into a power line, and you could be seriously injured or electrocuted.
8. Starting a project can be exciting, but don't just jump in. Instead, read and review the operating instructions first and take the time to familiarize yourself with the equipment. For example, learn how to use the controls close to the ground before using them at a higher elevation.
9. Don't ignore the specifications for each piece of equipment, such as maximum platform capacity.
10. When you are elevated, keep both feet on the platform at all times and use appropriate boots or shoes that have slip-resistant soles. Make sure your shoes or boots are not oily, muddy or greasy.

We would be happy to answer any questions or discuss the details of any outdoor projects that could potentially take you close to a power line, whether overhead or underground. Your safety is our top priority.

These recommended safety tips are not exhaustive. Always read and follow the safety guidelines and operating instructions provided by the manufacturer.

For more information about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org).



**You can't AVOID what you CAN'T SEE**

Starting a job — big or small — without first getting utilities marked could result in serious injury, service disruptions for you and your neighbors, and a hefty fine.

**Call 8-1-1 before you dig.**

Learn more at: [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.SafeElectricity.org)

# Nebraska Extension News

By Kathleen Cue, Extension Educator

## Planting Spring Flowering Bulbs

If you have a fall to do list, be sure to add spring flowering bulbs to your tasks. Nothing welcomes spring quite like bulbs, with their wide array of color, texture, resiliency, and beauty. Don't forget that many spring bulbs are flowering when little else is, providing pollen and nectar for emerging pollinators.

Everybody knows and loves the two most common spring-flowering bulbs-tulips and daffodils-but there are many, many more possibilities to add to the garden. Consider ornamental onions, species iris, and miniature tulips, to name a few. Many of the modern-day hybrids came from these little-known ancestors. They may not be as tall, but they are certainly showy. If you've had problems with your tulip patch gradually getting smaller, many modern-day hybrids have widened the offerings in color and flower form at the expense of plant hardiness. Looking for something different? Give these species a try. They enrich the spring garden and are winter hardy.

## Species Tulips

These little-known harbingers of spring offer beautiful colors and winter hardiness. They're also likely to be forgotten in the mad rush to plant the tall showy Triumph tulips and other hybrids. One of my favorite species, *Tulipa batalinii* is a charmer at just 4-6 inches tall. Look for the cultivars 'Bronze Charm' and 'Salmon Gem'. Other species tulips worth growing: 'Lilac Wonder', 'Cynthia', and 'Little Beauty'.

## Dogtooth Violet

Dogtooth violet (*Erythronium* spp.) is not a violet at all but a welcome addition to woodland areas. Flowers resemble lilies, though downward facing with recurved petals in shades of yellow or white. The foliage is handsome too, with wide strap-like mottled leaves. The plant gets its name from the bulb's resemblance to a canine's tooth.

## Glory of the Snow

A long name for a small gem of a plant, glory of the snow (*Chionodoxa* spp.) are short grass-like plants that send up starry flowers through the snow. In flower shades of true blue, white, lavender, and pink, glory of the snow is an excellent naturalizer for open spaces, rock gardens and woodlands.

## Snowdrops

The fragrance of snowdrops' (*Galanthus* spp.) white three-lobed nodding flowers is not to be missed by humans or pollinators. Snowdrops will emerge through the snow and are well-suited to both rock gardens and woodland paintings.

## Species Iris

*Iris reticulata* is the species name for this collection of extremely early flowering iris. Sporting colors of purple, lavender, white, or yellow, *I. reticulata* is a great addition to the rock garden. Flower petals and falls are slender, with splotches of yellow and white (called "droplets") on the falls.

## Ornamental Onion

Going by the collective name of ornamental onions, some species don't even have a common name. The short ornamental onions (*Allium karataviense*, *A. moly*, and *A. flavum*) are excellent additions to rock gardens and the front of the flower border. Taller ornamental onions are showstoppers with large round heads of purple, pink, or white. Taller varieties to look for in-

## Burt County Public Power District News Tekamah, Nebraska 68061 Phone 374-2631 or 1-888-835-1620 Board of Directors

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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.**

clude *Allium christophii*, *A. schubertii*, and *A. giganteum*.

## Daffodils

Besides not being a favored food source for voles and rabbits, daffodils have a wide diversity in fragrance, height, and season of bloom, with early, mid, and late season varieties. Double cup varieties, small cup, large cup, split cup, colors of pink, white, yellow, and orange, reflexed, and miniatures are the options. Varieties worth trying: 'Thalia', 'Avalanche', 'Sun Disc', 'Mite', and 'Hawera'.

## When and How to Plant

Spring flowering bulbs are planted in the fall, after soils have cooled to below 60 degrees F. Planting too early promotes foliage growth, which in turn can affect flowering next spring. Planted in cooler soils, bulbs will send out roots, keeping bulbs hydrated during the winter months. Be sure to pay close attention to planting at the correct depth, often stated on the packaging material. Having the right side up is important too. Bulbs planted upside down will not grow.

After flowering next spring, do not trim away the bulb foliage while it is still green. The foliage may be looking ragged, but those leaves are producing the sugars to form the flowers for next year. Once the leaves have yellowed, give them a gentle tug to remove them from the bulb.

To find out more about spring flowering bulbs, check out this link to the NebGuide "Spring Flowering Bulbs" <https://go.unl.edu/dpnx>.