

# VOLTS News

## Valuing Our Lives Through Safety

May 2024—Volume 126

## VOLTS Data Report for April

Total Observations: 259  
IPSC Emp. Contact Rate: .89  
Total Safe Behaviors: 2,210  
Total At-Risk Behaviors: 11

### Top 3 Safe Behaviors

- Required PPE (222)
- Focus on Task (218)
- Eyes on Path (180)

### Top 3 At-Risk Exposures

- Hot Work (2)
- Walking/Work Surfaces (2)
- Lighting (1)

## VOLTS Steering Committee Members

Alan Wood

Amy White, Secretary/Editor

Brandon Webb

Bryan Chapman

Dusty Smith, Co-Chair

Joe Pruitt

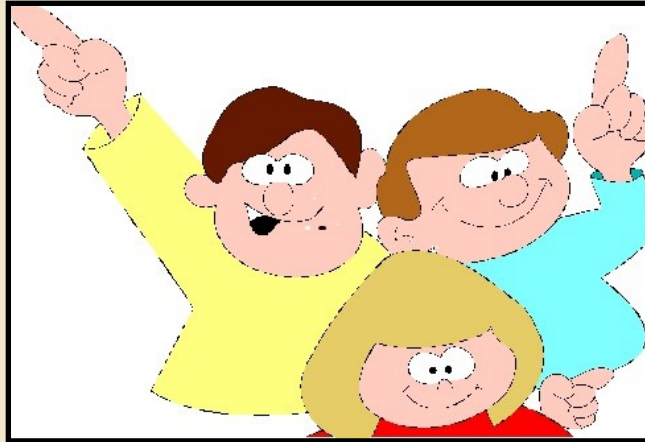
Rod Moore, Co-Chair

T.J. Taylor

Van Beckstrom, Jr.

Mark Shipley, Sponsor

## Electrical Safety at Home by Amy White



### New VOLTS Steering Committee Members

**We need you!** The VOLTS Steering Committee is looking for a few people to add to the Committee. If you're interested in serving on the VOLTS Steering Committee, contact one of the current Committee members.

### Electrical Safety at Home

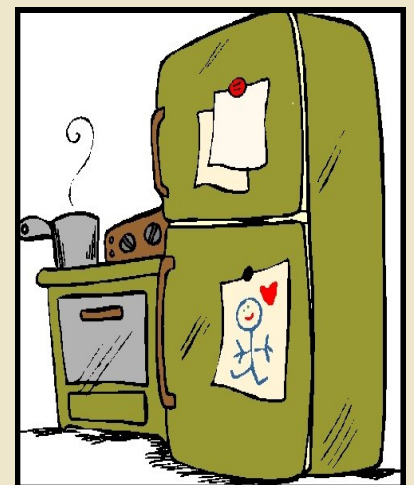
Since May is National Electrical Safety Month, this month's VOLTS newsletter is going to focus on Electrical Safety at Home. This information is from the Edison Electric Institute (EEI) in Washington, D.C. and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

#### General Extension Cord Safety Tips

- Never use extension cords as a constant, long-term extension of your household's electrical system. Continuous use can cause an extension cord to deteriorate and can result in a potentially dangerous electric shock or fire hazard.
- Never plug a space heater into an extension cord or power strip.
- Never plug two extension cords together. Doing so can result in overloaded circuits, short circuits, and damaged cords, which could lead to fires or electric shocks. Instead of plugging extension cords together, consider installing additional outlets where needed.
- Do not run cords through walls, doorways, ceilings, or under rugs or carpet—have a qualified electrician install more outlets. If a cord is covered, heat cannot escape and can create a fire hazard.
- Make sure that your extension cord or power strip is properly rated for the device that will be plugged in and is marked for either indoor or outdoor use.
- Regularly inspect electrical cords and extension cords for damage.

#### General Safety Tips

- Have all electrical work done by a qualified electrician.
- When buying or remodeling a home, have it inspected by a qualified private inspector or in accordance with local requirements.
- Only use one heat-producing appliance (such as a coffee maker, toaster, space heater, etc.) plugged into a receptacle outlet at a time.
- Major appliances (refrigerators, dryers, washers, stoves, etc.) should be plugged

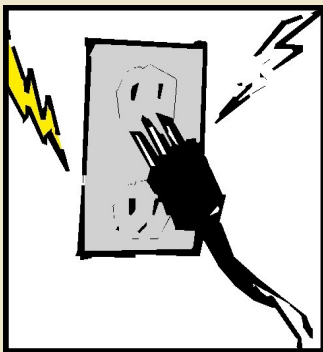


# Electrical Safety at Home

by Amy White (cont.)

directly in a wall receptacle outlet. Extension cords and plug strips should not be used.

- 👉 Inspect your home for hidden electrical hazards.
- 👉 Check electrical cords to make sure the wires are not damaged, cracked, or loose. If cords need to be repaired, take the item to a professional repair shop, hire an electrician, or replace with a new item.
- 👉 Keep children away from electric cords and outlets. Cords placed in the mouth can cause a burn, and objects placed in a receptacle can cause a shock, burns, or electrocution.
- 👉 Ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) reduce the risk of shock by shutting off an electrical circuit when the circuit could be a shock hazard. Your home should have GFCIs in the kitchen, bathroom(s), laundry, basement, garage, and outdoor areas.
- 👉 Call a qualified electrician or your landlord if you have:
  - Frequent problems with blowing fuses or tripping circuit breakers.
  - A tingling feeling when you touch an electrical appliance.
  - Discolored or warm wall outlets.
  - A burning or rubbery smell coming from an appliance.
  - Flickering or dimming lights.
  - Sparks from an outlet.



## Indoor Safety Tips

Reduce your electrical load by using energy-efficient appliances and lighting.

Unplug small appliances when not in use.

Use an outlet cover or plastic outlet cap to keep children safe around outlets.

Make sure your home has smoke alarms. Test them monthly, change batteries yearly, and replace the unit every 10 years.

Make sure that all receptacle outlets and switches have faceplates.

Never put more than one plug in each receptacle. An outlet may have one or more receptacles—one to receive each plug.

Be sure that the bulbs in your lights match what is safe for the lamp. There should be a sticker that indicates the

maximum wattage for the lightbulb—such as use maximum for a 60-watt bulb.

Light bulbs in the living area of your home, including closets, should have a shade or globe for protection. Light bulbs can get very hot and cause a fire if something that can burn is too close.

Buy only appliances that are listed by a qualified testing laboratory.

Arc-fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) protect against fire by monitoring the electrical current in a circuit and shutting off the circuit when unintended arcing occurs. AFCIs should be installed in your home. If not, have a qualified electrician install them for you.

## Outdoor Safety Tips

Know what's below before you dig. Dial 8-1-1 to have your local electric or natural gas company representative mark the location of underground lines for free.

Never touch downed power lines.

Watch for overhead power lines every time you use a ladder, work on roofs and trees, or carry long tools or loads. Keep kites, model airplanes, and metallic balloons away from power lines.

Do not overload outdoor electrical and/or extension cords or allow them to run through water or snow on the ground.

Keep ladders away from overhead power lines, including the electrical service into your home.

## Think Green!

- Turn off lights when you are not in the room.
- Unplug appliances when not in use.

This list is long, but taking care of a compromising electrical issue at your house could save you and your family heartache in the long run. In our industry, we especially know that it's best to be safe and respect electricity.

## References

<https://www.eei.org/News/news/All/dont-be-shocked-may-is-national-electrical-safety-month>

<https://www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/home-fire-safety/electrical>

