



**Merry Christmas and  
Happy New Year**  
from the  
Pickwick Electric  
Cooperative employees,  
directors and attorney



Pickwick  
Electric  
Cooperative

Serving members in all of  
McNairy County and  
portions of Chester,  
Hardeman and Hardin  
counties in Tennessee and  
Alcorn and Tishomingo  
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These five pages contain local  
news and information  
for members of Pickwick  
Electric Cooperative.



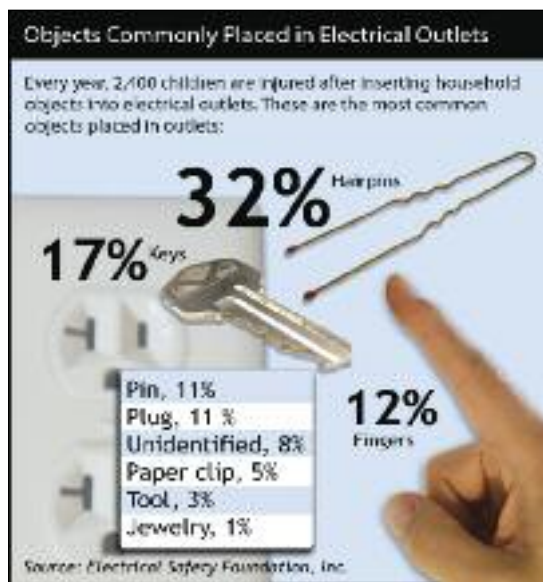
## Invest in safety with tamper-resistant outlets

**H**airpins, the building blocks for many fancy “dos,” are perfect for holding back unruly tresses. But these slender, metal objects are also easy for children to manipulate. As a result, hairpins are the dominant household item improperly stuck into electrical outlets.

Each year, approximately 2,400 children — an average of seven a day — receive emergency room treatment for injuries caused by inserting conductive material into electrical outlets, according to a 10-year report released by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). More than 70 percent of these incidents occur at home, with adult supervision typically present.

Hairpins are involved 32 percent of the time, followed by keys, 17 percent, and fingers, 12 percent. Other common culprits include pins, screws, nails, twist ties and paper clips.

The end result? Children receive a burn about 95 percent of the time, according to CPSC. Though ranging in severity, a significant number of serious and fatal burns occur, and even minor injuries can leave emotional trauma. Pediatric burns can be particularly serious because a child’s skin is thin and offers little resistance to electric flow or heat.



The danger of electrical outlets isn’t new; parents often use plastic outlet caps to cover outlets when “child-proofing” a home. Unfortunately, the Electrical Safety Foundation Inc. (ESFI) claims that plastic caps are not the safest option since they can easily be removed by a young child. Instead, ESFI suggests installing tamper-resistant outlets.

Although normal-looking, these types of outlets include a shutter mechanism to protect against harm from inserting foreign objects. The spring-loaded system only allows electricity to flow when you apply equal pressure to both sides of the outlet, as hap-

pens when you plug in an electrical device. When outlets aren’t used, both shutters are closed.

For co-op consumers with brand-new homes, tamper-resistant outlets may already have been installed; the 2008 National Electrical Code requires them. However, these outlets are cheap — costing as little as \$2 at some retailers — and can easily be incorporated into older homes.

To learn more about tamper-resistant outlets, go to [www.childoutletsafety.org](http://www.childoutletsafety.org).

*Sources: Electrical Safety Foundation Inc. and U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.*

## Lower your energy bill Top 10 low-cost steps you can do this winter

1. Caulk and weatherstrip around windows and doors to stop air leaks. Seal any gaps in floors and walls and around pipes and electrical wiring.
2. Change filters monthly. Install a “filter whistle” to let you know when to change them.
3. Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs.
4. Repair air leaks and seal and insulate heating system ductwork.
5. Add insulation to your attic, crawl space and any accessible exterior walls. Add pipe insulation to first five feet of water pipe coming from your water heater. Install light switch and electrical outlet seals on exterior walls.
6. Have an Energy Star programmable thermostat installed and set it at 68 degrees Fahrenheit for heating. For heat pumps, ask your contractor for an intelligent recovery thermostat.
7. Look for the Energy Star label when replacing large or small appliances.
8. Wrap your water heater with insulation or install an insulating blanket.
9. Install aerating, low-flow faucets and showerheads and repair leaky faucets.
10. Use power strips for home electronics and turn off power strips when equipment is not in use. TVs, DVD players, etc., still use power when their switches are off.





## When the lights came on

As time passes, few people can remember the day the lights came on in rural West Tennessee. Before electricity came to this area, a typical day meant drawing drinking water from a well, reading by a coal oil lamp, washing clothes outside by hand and cooking meals on a wood cook stove. Farmers would work from sunrise to sunset because natural light was the only light available. Today this drudgery is gone thanks to the organization of electric cooperatives.

For people in this area, the formation of Pickwick Electric Cooperative on Dec. 16, 1935, brought with it the magic of electricity. This one event probably did more to change the lives of local citizens than anything else during the 20th century because it allowed even backwoods areas to have the luxuries of modern living.

At the annual meeting scheduled for September 2010, PEC will be celebrating our 75th anniversary. From time to time throughout the coming year we will run old pictures in *The Tennessee Magazine* of events that took place following the formation of PEC.

We hope you enjoy these pictures, and if you have a story to tell about when the lights came on, please give us a call at 646-3786 or 646-3825.



In the early years, PEC's annual meeting was an all-day event, sometimes held in the Selmer City Park or Shiloh National Military Park. Everyone brought their favorite dishes, above. Below are the prize winners at the 1949 annual meeting. Their names, in no particular order, are O.L. Wilkins, Charlie Shannon, Herman Treece, Charlie Luter, Mrs. Mark Swiney, Mrs. Ida Smith, Mrs. Ronnie Hutton, Hoover Alexander, Clarence Harris, J. W. Jones, I. M. Meek Sr. and Mrs. L.I. Tidwell.





# Get the jump on drafty windows

Windows provide our homes with light, warmth and ventilation. But when winter sets in, they can have a downside.

Placing your hand against a window pane on a chilly fall morning proves the point: If the pane feels cold, it's a good bet you can reduce energy costs by either insulating your existing windows or installing new, energy-efficient upgrades.

Insulating with draperies is a low-cost quick-fix to drafty windows and can reduce heat loss from a room by as much as 10 percent. And they're just as helpful in hot summer months by blocking sunlight. White, plastic-backed drapes can reduce heat gain by up to 33 percent.

Interior storm window panels (available at most hardware stores) are another low-cost fix. They consist of flexible or rigid plastic installed over or adhered to

existing window panes, and installation is fairly simple. Panels are either taped on or mounted with Velcro, magnetic strips or snap-in seals. Put them up in autumn and remove them in spring to reduce winter heat loss by up to 50 percent.

If you're in the market for new windows altogether, be sure to choose energy-efficient models that will shave heating, cooling and lighting costs year-round.

Energy Star has established a set of energy performance ratings, tailored to four climate

zones across the United States, to guide you in selecting windows perfect for your home. These performance ratings are broken into several categories, although the two most basic are U-Factor and Solar Heat Gain Coefficient (SHGC), which can be found on window stickers or packaging.

In simple terms, U-Factor measures how easily heat can flow through a window, not counting direct sunlight. The lower the number, the more energy-efficient the window.

SHGC measures how much heat from sunlight can be absorbed by the window. A high number means the window remains effective at collecting heat during winter. A low number provides greater shading ability and may be best for Southern climates.

In Pickwick Electric Cooperative's service territory, windows for the South/Central climate zone are best. Look for a U-Factor of 0.40 or less and an SHGC of 0.40 or less (not all Energy Star windows qualify for energy-efficiency tax credits). You can also visit [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov) for more details on our climate zone and other criteria to consider when shopping for new windows.

*Sources: U.S. Department of Energy Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Energy Star*



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Turn off kitchen, bath and other exhaust fans within 20 minutes after you are done cooking or bathing. When replacing exhaust fans, consider installing high-efficiency, low-noise models.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

## *Holiday Closing*

*The PEC office will be closed on  
Thursday, Dec. 24, 2009  
Friday, Dec. 25, 2009  
Friday, Jan. 1, 2010*

## PEC employees receive service awards

Congratulations to 16 PEC employees who received service awards during 2009.

They have a combined total of 225 years of service.



**Jay Durbin**  
Five years



**Brent Hanna**  
Five years



**Jon Hughes**  
Five years



**Matt Rickman**  
Five years



**Trey Riley**  
Five years



**Eric Smith**  
Five years



**Phillip Burns**  
10 years



**Trent Chandler**  
10 years



**Stacy Dancer**  
10 years



**Scotty Ashe**  
15 years



**Darren Smith**  
20 years



**Jimmy Dickey**  
25 years



**Clyde Garrison**  
25 years



**Mike Harris**  
25 years



**Keith Taylor**  
25 years



**Morris Carothers**  
30 years