

Protecting Your Family: Electrical Safety Month Guide

Electricity powers our lives every day, but it's important to remember that it can be dangerous if not handled properly. This Electrical Safety Month, JOEMC encourages all members to take a few extra precautions to stay safe at home and at work.



Always Turn Off AND Unplug

Even when an appliance or device is turned off, it's still connected to electricity as long as it's plugged in. After you're finished using any portable device—like a hair dryer, blender, or power tool—turn it off and then unplug it. When unplugging, always hold the plug, not the cord, to avoid damaging it. And never use electrical appliances with wet hands or near water sources like sinks, tubs, toilets, or showers.

Be Smart About Outlets and Fixtures

Avoid overloading outlets, power strips, or surge protectors. Plugging in too many devices at once can lead to overheating or fire. Also, make sure to use the correct wattage bulbs for your light fixtures—using a bulb with too high a wattage can be hazardous.

Install Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) outlets anywhere water and electricity might meet—such as kitchens, bathrooms, garages, and outdoor areas. Test these outlets monthly to make sure they're functioning properly.

Use Cords with Care

Extension cords are great for temporary needs but shouldn't be a permanent fix. Regularly inspect cords for fraying,

cracks, or broken plugs. If you find damage, don't patch it with tape—replace the cord entirely to prevent shocks, short circuits, or fires.

Stay Clear of Power Lines

Always keep your distance from power lines. Never approach a downed line—leave the area immediately and call JOEMC. Don't drive over downed lines either. Keep ladders, poles, kites, and drones away from power lines and substations.

Protect Children from Electrical Hazards

Teach kids not to put their fingers or objects in electrical outlets. Use childproof outlet covers and keep cords and appliances out of their reach.

At JOEMC, we're committed to keeping you and your family safe by delivering reliable electricity and sharing important safety information. For more tips, visit joemc.com or follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and X.

Stay safe—this month and every month!



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Teachers, it's Time to Apply for a **Bright Ideas Grant!**



Jones-Onslow EMC is partnering with outstanding educators to bring their creative lesson plans to life! Applications opened on April 1 and teachers can apply for a Bright Ideas education grant to fund projects that enhance student success in the classroom. Applications and more information about the program can be found at www.ncbrightideas.com.

The 2025-26 school year marks the 31ST year that North Carolina's electric cooperatives have funded educators' innovative projects. During that time,

Jones-Onslow EMC has awarded more than \$1.7 million for 2,600 projects that have benefited well over 650,000 students in Jones, Onslow and Pender counties. Grants are available in all curriculum areas including art, science, history, music, mathematics and more.

Bright Ideas grant applications will be accepted through **September 15**, but teachers are encouraged to apply early.

Supported by all 26 electric cooperatives in North Carolina, Bright Ideas grants have contributed nearly \$16.5

million to N.C. classrooms, funding more than 15,400 projects and benefiting close to four million students statewide since 1994.

Support for youth and education is part of our continued commitment to building a brighter future for the communities we serve. To learn more, visit joemc.com/community/bright-ideas/.

A Look Back: 2025 Virtual Annual Meeting Recap

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the 2025 Jones-Onslow EMC Virtual Annual Meeting! Held online for the convenience of our members, the event offered an opportunity to stay connected, informed, and engaged with your cooperative—all from the comfort of home.

The virtual format featured updates from JOEMC leadership on the accomplishments of the past year and the exciting plans ahead. Members enjoyed special video features highlighting community programs, reliability efforts, and member-focused initiatives.



While we couldn't gather in person this year, we still brought the fun with exciting prize drawings and interactive content. Members who registered for the meeting were entered into our prize giveaways—and the lucky winners were thrilled! Pictured are JOEMC employees Michelle Hefner and Wanda Jones with the grand prize winner Cynthia Simpson.



Routine maintenance is important to keep your refrigerator running efficiently. Lint and dirt should be cleaned from the refrigerator coils every six months to a year—and more often if there are pets in the home. When coils are coated with lint, dust or pet hair, your refrigerator works harder than it's designed to, which can prevent the appliance from cooling properly and efficiently. The additional work can increase the energy costs of the refrigerator by as much as 35% and shorten the life of the appliance.

Source: energy.gov

Hurricane Season is Coming PREPARE NOW!

Hurricane season is around the corner, and Hurricane Preparedness Week in May is the perfect time for JOEMC members to get storm-ready. A little planning today can save you from major headaches later!

Home Maintenance Focus

Tackle home maintenance and storm-proofing before severe weather becomes a real threat. Start with these simple steps:

- Trim trees & remove dead branches to prevent storm damage
- Test your generator & replenish fuel supplies
- Check & reinforce your roof, siding, and gutters
- Inspect doors, windows & hurricane shutters for weak spots
- Test and maintain your sump pump (if you have one)

Build an Emergency Kit

Take time NOW to check your emergency kit. Make sure you have:

- Flashlights & fresh batteries for power outages
- Non-perishable food & water (at least 3 days' worth) for your family and your pets
- Important documents stored in a waterproof container
- Fully charged power banks for your devices

Insurance & Financial Prep

Recovering from a storm is hard enough—don't let financial surprises make it worse. Now is the time to review your insurance policy and make sure you're covered. Ask yourself:

- Do I have flood insurance? (Standard policies don't cover flooding, and it takes 30 days to activate!)
- Are my important documents (ID, insurance, bank info) stored in a waterproof, easy-to-access place?
- Do I have an emergency fund or access to quick cash if needed?



Evacuation Plan

If a storm forces you to evacuate, do you know where to go? Don't wait for an emergency—plan your evacuation route now:

- Identify multiple safe routes out of your area
- Locate your nearest hurricane shelters
- Pack a go-bag with essential supplies (medications, cash, ID, and more)
- Create a family communication plan in case you get separated

Stay Informed

With power outages and service disruptions, how will you receive emergency updates? Set yourself up for success:

- Download the JOEMC app
- Follow us on social media
- Be sure you are signed up for outage text alerts
- Make sure your contact info is up to date in your JOEMC Member Portal
- Get a NOAA weather radio for real-time updates
- Sign up for local emergency alerts & weather notifications

At JOEMC, we're always preparing for storms so we can respond quickly and restore power safely. Let's work together to stay safe and connected this hurricane season.

Summer Energy Savings: Programs and Tips

When summer heats up, electric bills tend to increase as air conditioners work overtime, driving up home energy consumption. Jones-Onslow is your local not-for-profit electricity provider, and we are committed to helping you beat the heat without breaking the bank.

As temperatures rise over the next few months, we want to inform you about a range of energy-saving offerings designed specifically for you. These programs and services can help you manage your summer energy consumption and costs.

Budget Billing

When you sign up for JOEMC's budget billing, your energy bill is calculated by averaging your previous 12 months of use. Budget billing makes your monthly energy costs easier to budget and manage, especially during seasonal fluctuations when bills increase based on the weather. Budget billing is an excellent option for anyone with a fixed income or highly variable seasonal needs.

Home Energy Audit

JOEMC's energy advisors are available to conduct a free energy audit of your

home to identify areas where energy is wasted and provide recommendations on improving efficiency and lowering your monthly bills. Or, if you have a few minutes and at least 10 months of billing history, you can take advantage of our quick and easy, do-it-yourself online energy audit. Go to our Energy-Wise page at joemc.com and look for the online energy audit section.

The co-op offers rebates on energy-efficient appliances, heating and cooling equipment, home EV charging units, and more.

Rebate Program

Smart decisions should be rewarded when you make upgrades or purchases to reduce home energy use. The co-op offers rebates on energy-efficient appliances, heating and cooling equipment, home EV charging units, and more. Visit our EnergyWise



Gary Ray, CEO

page and look for the rebates section to learn about our program and how you can receive a bill credit for making smart energy choices.

You Have the Power

Small actions combined can have a big impact on summer energy bills.

The best way to lower energy use during summer is to raise the thermostat to the most comfortable setting. Ceiling fans can also help you feel cooler, but remember to turn them off when you leave the room. On warm summer nights, fire up the grill to keep additional heat out of the kitchen. Remember to change air filters often so your cooling system doesn't have to work harder than necessary.

For additional energy-saving advice from our JOEMC energy advisors, visit joemc.com.



CHIPOTLE CHICKEN FLATBREADS

This dish is perfect for al fresco entertaining, especially when served alongside a fresh salad.

Serves: 2

Source: www.carolinacountry.com

INGREDIENTS

- 2 flatbreads
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 clove garlic, diced
- 4 chicken tenders, cooked and cubed
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, quartered
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- ½ cup ranch dressing
- 1½ teaspoons chipotle seasoning
- 2 tablespoons cilantro leaves, chopped

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Place parchment paper on baking sheet and add flatbreads. Sprinkle cheese on flatbreads. Top with garlic, chicken and tomatoes. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.
3. Bake 16 minutes until cheese is melted.
4. In small bowl, mix ranch and chipotle seasoning.
5. Drizzle ranch dressing on flatbreads and sprinkle with cilantro leaves.


the Month of May is
MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH
We thank you for your service!
**OUR OFFICES WILL BE
CLOSED FOR MEMORIAL DAY
MONDAY, MAY 26**

