

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**EMPIRE DISTRICT ENCOURAGES CUSTOMERS
TO STAY SAFE AROUND ELECTRICITY THIS SUMMER**

JOPLIN, MO – May 01, 2018 – The month of May is National Electrical Safety Month. It's also the time of year many people begin spending more time enjoying the outdoors. As you head out to trim hedges, plant trees, clean the pool, or work on home improvements, remember to steer clear of power lines and stay safe.

Ladder Safety

- Observe the “10-foot rule.” Keep ladders at least 10 feet from power lines, including all parts of your body and anything you are holding in your hands.
- Know where the power lines are located when carrying your ladder. Carry in the horizontal position, parallel to the horizon, instead of upright where it could catch on overhead wires.
- Make sure that, should the ladder fall from its upright position, it would clear any nearby electrical lines. Take extra care to “plant” or secure the ladder in place before you climb it.
- When working with long items on a ladder, such as gutters, antennas, pipes, or conduit, be very careful not to place them where they could come into contact with energized wires. Remember the 10-foot rule.

Swimming Pools

- Be sure all electrical equipment for your swimming pool is properly installed and grounded. Ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) should be installed on electrical equipment. Should a fault occur in the equipment, the GFCI instantly cuts the power, reducing the likelihood of serious electric shock.
- Before installing a new pool, take note of power line locations and always observe the 10-foot rule when using skimmers and cleaning equipment with long handles.
- Avoid using electrical equipment near the pool.

Electrical Tools

- If you plan to use an electric lawn mower, hedge trimmer, or weed eater, be sure to keep the cord behind you and away from blades and moving parts. Be careful not to cut or damage the cord.
- Always unplug electrical equipment if you meet with an obstruction. Free obstructions only after you've disconnected power.
- Keep tools in good operating condition, inspect their grounding connections frequently, and follow manufacturer's operating instructions.

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Tree Trimming

- Never trim trees near power lines! If you need assistance trimming near your service line, call us. We will disconnect it free of charge to allow you or your contractor to work safely. Please call at least 48 hours in advance.

General Tips

- Protect outdoor electrical outlets with weatherproof covers and GFCIs.
- Never operate electrical equipment on a wet surface or in the rain.
- Never enter a flooded basement to turn off electricity. First, call your local fire department, then call Empire.
- If your outdoor project involves digging, make sure to call 811 from any state to have your underground utilities located. Call at least three, but not more than ten, working days before beginning your project.

Downed Lines

- Stay away from power lines. They are bare wires and not insulated. Downed power lines may appear to be harmless but could be energized and dangerous.
- If a person or object is in contact with a power line, don't touch the person, object, or line. The electric current could flow through to you. Call 911 and Empire immediately.
- If your vehicle is in contact with a power line, stay inside the car! Warn others not to touch the car or the power line.
- If you must leave your vehicle, jump clear to avoid being in contact with the car and the ground at the same time.

For more safety information, visit us online at www.empiredistrict.com.

Liberty Utilities – Empire District, Joplin, Missouri, is a subsidiary of U.S. based Liberty Utilities Co., and headquarters for the Company's Central Region, providing electric, natural gas, water, and wastewater service to nearly 320,000 customers across six states. A subsidiary of the company provides fiber optic services. For more information regarding services in the Empire area, visit www.empiredistrict.com. For more information about Liberty Utilities, visit www.libertyutilities.com.

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