



## KEEP SAFE

A Monthly Publication for Texas Electric Cooperatives








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### Scary tales from the past

*As a kid I always thought that Halloween was pretty scary. You know ghosts, goblins, bloody axes and homemade popcorn balls. Just the stuff that brings nightmares to any thrill seeking adolescent kid. But as an adult...*

Ok... middle-aged baby boomer... I've discovered something even scarier than all of that Halloween stuff... a reunion of old friends. I returned to my telephone "roots" after an absence of 18 years. Seeing all of my old buddies with graying hair (if any at all) and reading glasses was enough to scare me sober.

By now I'm sure you're wondering what visiting with Steve, Tom, John, Burl and a bunch of other old buddies has to do with safety. Well... actually it has to do with "unsafety." Captain Knucklehead (yours truly) and the guys spent hours around the campfire reminiscing about all of the foolish and stupid things that we used to do. What we found most amazing was that we were there to talk about it at all, and had the majority of our body parts still attached! So here's some of the stupid stuff that we got away with... see if you find yourself being this dumb. More importantly, see if you can recognize the safe way to avoid these situations.

-  Climbing without a body belt and hanging on by wrapping one leg around the pole because "I'm just gonna be up there a minute."
-  "Rubber gloves... We don't need no stinking rubber gloves, it's just a utility pole, not a hot wire!"
-  Seat belts were for sissies. We climbed in and out of the truck too much to bother... besides we were driving a TRUCK, nothing could hurt us!
-  Real linemen never belted off in the bucket. After all, how're ya gonna fall out?
-  Hard hats were worn solely as rain gear or to hold your helmet liner in place in the winter.
-  Gas tester? Sniff, sniff, sniff. I don't smell anything!
-  Work area protection consisted of a cone or two with a flag stuck in the top and maybe a small sign a ways down the road.

-  Voltage tester... What's that?
-  Wheel chocks were optional equipment until a bucket truck or two rolled away with someone in the bucket.
-  Ear protection... say what? I can't hear ya!
-  Thunderstorms meant more trouble coming up, so we just worked faster up on those poles.
-  Training was considered a waste of time, therefore we simply used the old "live and learn" method of safety training.

We weren't even scared back then. You know... young and bullet proof. But, as we all age, we like to think that we'll get smarter and put those scary days behind us. No more climbing without belts or working in a bucket without a harness. Ah yes... age is wisdom, and we've sure got age now!

Remember that according to National Safety Council statistics, every eight seconds a worker is injured on the job and one is killed every 110 minutes. When you consider that we work in an industry which is MUCH MORE dangerous than pencil pushing or teaching school, the odds of a dangerous situation occurring around our construction workplace are MUCH higher. Still, the most dangerous part of your day continues to be the daily drive to/from work where your chance of being killed is five times higher than an on-the-job accident.

(Continued on page 2)



(Scary tales continued from page 1)

I hope you'll agree that we were really dumb to have worked under those conditions, ignoring even common sense safety procedures. Unsafety at its worst! I have to tell you that the company has since changed hands and safety has become an important component of my friends' daily lives. We were awful lucky back then and we're not even Irish!

Don't depend on luck... use your head, think of the possible consequences of every action and avoid preventable accidents. Your family needs you! And by the way... watch out for scary stuff on Halloween.

*Reprinted with permission from: John Highhouse  
Program Director, Telecommunications Training  
Lincoln Trail College*

## 10 Home safety musts

Baby safety expert Debra Holtzman offers this advice to keep your home safe for little ones.

1. Install smoke alarms on every level of your home and in every sleeping area.
2. Purchase battery-operated carbon monoxide alarms or plug-in alarms with battery back-up.
3. Set your water heater to no higher than 120°F. Temperatures of 140°F can give a child a third-degree burn in just three seconds.
4. Assemble a disaster kit with enough supplies for a minimum of three days.
5. Assemble a first aid kit.
6. Post a list of emergency telephone numbers near every phone in your home.
7. Keep up-to-date on recalled products by visiting [www.recalls.gov](http://www.recalls.gov).
8. Enroll in an infant/child CPR and first aid course.
9. Always use a food thermometer to be sure foods are safely cooked.
10. Test your home for radon gas.

— Erie Insurance

### Upcoming Loss Control Schools

Underground School <i>Levelland</i> October 6 - 10	Metering School <i>Merkel</i> December 2 - 5
Hotline 1 - 4 School <i>Livingston</i> October 20 - 24	Transformer School <i>Fredericksburg</i> January 6 - 9
Advanced Pole Climbing <i>Merkel</i> November 18 - 21	Regulator, Recloser, Capacitor <i>Gonzales</i> January 20 - 23

## Halloween driving “tricks” to keep everyone safe

To help everyone bring home treats — not tragedies — follow these tips for a safe Halloween:

- ❖ Don't use a cell phone while driving through neighborhoods. A single distraction could lead to a tragedy.
- ❖ Stay well below the posted speed limit.
- ❖ Pay attention to what's happening on sidewalks and roadways. Watch for children darting across streets, especially between parked cars.
- ❖ Be extra alert when pulling in and out of driveways.
- ❖ Do not assume children can see you or are paying attention. You need to take that responsibility.
- ❖ Drivers should also check that all lights on their car work.
- ❖ Do not pass other vehicles that have stopped in the roadway. They could be dropping off children.
- ❖ If you're driving a group of children, but staying in the running vehicle at the curb, be sure to put on your hazard lights to alert other motorists.
- ❖ And if you're driving to a Halloween party, put that mask on after you park the car.

Parents can help motorists, too:

- ❖ Make sure drivers can see the children. Give them flashlights and glow sticks. Dress kids in bright, reflective clothing or use reflective tape on their costumes.
- ❖ Use makeup, rather than masks, so children have a clear, unobstructed view of their surroundings.
- ❖ Be sure children know how to cross a street — look left, right and left again before crossing.
- ❖ Instruct children to stay on sidewalks and to cross only at corners or crosswalks.
- ❖ Accompany your children as they trick or treat.

— Network of Employers for Traffic Safety

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