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*Serving Electric, Water & Wastewater Since 1886*

# News Release

## Stoughton Utilities

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **May is National Electrical Safety Month** *How safe is your home?*

In honor of National Electrical Safety Month, Stoughton Utilities is joining Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) and 2,000+ other public power utilities across the nation to help educate people about electrical safety and encourage them to take steps to reduce the number of electricity-related fatalities, injuries, and property losses each year.

"As our dependence on electricity grows, accident prevention becomes more critical," says Robert Kardasz, Utilities Director.

While electricity is a necessary resource for powering our modern lifestyles, it is important to treat it with respect and exercise proper safety practices.

Each year, approximately 2,400 children suffer severe shocks and burns from sticking items into the slots of electrical receptacles. An average of 70 electrocution fatalities are associated with consumer products each year. Electrical failure or malfunction can also lead to house fires. Between 2010 and 2014, U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 45,210 such fires every year. These fires resulted in 420 deaths, 1,370 injuries and \$1.4 billion in property damage.

Stoughton Utilities encourages people to consider the following safety tips to make their homes safer.

## **Switches and Outlets**

- If an outlet displays any of the following characteristics, shut off the circuit and consult a professional:
  - It's warm or hot to the touch
  - It makes a cracking, buzzing or sizzling sound
  - Plugs don't fit snugly in it
  - It's discolored by heat
- If you have young children, try to get tamper-resistant outlets or outlet covers with a sliding cover mechanism instead of removable plastic outlet covers. A study conducted by Temple University's Biokinetics Laboratory found that 100 percent of children ages 2 to 4 years old were able to remove plastic outlet covers from the sockets in less than 10 seconds.

## **Electrical Cords**

- Make sure your electrical cords are in good condition, aren't located in high traffic areas or places where they can be pinched by doors, windows or furniture, and aren't attached using nails or staples.
- If you're using an extension cord, make sure it's rated for where you will use it (indoor or outdoor). Extension cords should only be used on a temporary basis.

## **Lamps and Appliances**

- Avoid using electrical appliances, such as hair dryers and charging equipment, near a sink or other area where the appliance or electrical cord could come into contact with water.
- Some general safety checks you can do:
  - Check that the bulbs you're using are the correct wattage
  - Make sure portable space heaters, entertainment centers and computer equipment have plenty of space around them for ventilation
  - Keep electrical cords away from areas where they can come into contact with a heat source

## **Electrical Panel**

- Check the label on the cover of your home's electrical system to determine when the electrical system was last inspected. If you are due, have a qualified, licensed electrician inspect your outlets and electrical system.

## **Smoke Alarms**

- Make sure you have enough smoke alarms in your home and that they are in working order. It is recommended to place one alarm in each bedroom and another outside of each sleeping area, test them once a month, and replace the batteries once a year.

Electrical safety awareness and education among consumers, families, employees, and communities will prevent electrical fires, injuries, and fatalities. For more information, visit [stoughtonutilities.com](http://stoughtonutilities.com) and [esfi.org](http://esfi.org).

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Founded in 1886, Stoughton Utilities serves electric customers in Stoughton and the surrounding area, and wastewater and water customers in Stoughton.

#### About ESFI

The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) sponsors National Electrical Safety Month each May to increase public awareness of the electrical hazards around us at home, work, school, and play. ESFI is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated exclusively to promoting electrical safety. For more information about ESFI and electrical safety, visit [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org).