

May is Electrical Safety Month

Electrical wiring – improper installation, and/or damaged or deteriorated wiring and cords – sparks an estimated 53,600 home fires each year.

These fires cause more than 500 deaths, 1,400 injuries, and \$1.4 billion in property damage and loss each year.

Additionally, emergency rooms treat approximately 2,400 children every year for injuries caused by inserting objects into electrical receptacles, according to a 10-year report released by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). This equates to about seven children each day. Even more alarming is that the report found that over 70% of these electrical incidents occur at home, with adult supervision typically present.

Objects children insert are everyday, easily accessible household items:



Hairpin—32%
Keys—17%
Finger—12%

Pin, wire, screw or nail—11%
Plug—11%
Paper clip or staple— 5%

Tool (tweezer, file or knife)—3%
Jewelry or belt buckle—1%



How serious are the injuries?

CPSC reported almost 95% of injuries involve burns. These range in severity, but a significant number of serious and fatal incidents result, and even minor injuries can leave emotional trauma. Pediatric burns can be particularly serious, because the skin is thin and offers little resistance to electric flow or heat. With infants and toddlers, burns and scars are even more severe.

These injuries can be prevented

Using a plastic outlet cap is a common solution to prevent children from sticking objects into outlets. Unfortunately, plastic caps are not the safest option and can be easily removed by a young child. A safer solution is installing tamper resistant outlets. These specialized outlets have been so effective in preventing injuries to children that the 2008 National Electrical Code requires that tamper resistant outlets be installed in all new homes constructed. However, these inexpensive products can easily be incorporated into older homes as well.

Direct Payment Plan

An option for a different due date would be a Direct Payment Plan. You authorize regularly scheduled payments to be made from your checking or savings account. If the first two digits of your BPU account number are between 01-10, your automatic payment date will be the 25th of each month. If the first two digits are between 11-18, your automatic payment date will be the 10th of each month. You will still receive your monthly utility billing statement and proof of payment will appear on your monthly bank statement.

AUTHORIZATION FOR DIRECT PAYMENT

I authorize **Brainerd Public Utilities** & the financial institution named below to initiate entries to my checking/savings account once each month in the amount of my current billing beginning ____/____/2009. **This authority will remain in effect until I notify BPU in writing to cancel it in such time as to afford the financial institution a reasonable opportunity to act on it.**

_____ (Name of Financial Institution)	_____ (Branch)	_____ (Address)	_____ (City)	_____ (State/Zip)
_____ (Bank Account Number)		_____ Checking or Savings (circle one)	_____ (Name, as it appears at the Bank-Please Print)	
_____ (Service Address)		_____ (Signature)		
_____ (BPU Account No.)	(_____)_____ (Home Phone No.)	_____ Date	_____/_____/2009	



To take advantage of this service, complete this authorization form and return it to us with a voided check.