

NEBRASKA

Magazine

August 2022

NREA.org

TOY TRACTORS

A Sentimental
Connection Between
Tractors and Farmers

Inside:

- Emerging Electric Farming Equipment
- Don't Get Scammed • Working Together Cooperatively

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NREA 



 **ELECTRIFY AND SAVE**

IS AN ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) RIGHT FOR YOU?

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Most of today's electric vehicles have a driving range-per-charge between 50 to 330 miles. If your daily commute is under 250 miles per day, there is likely an EV model that will fit your needs.

+ DOES YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAVE MORE THAN ONE CAR?

If you live in a household with more than one car, an EV likely represents a big opportunity for your family to use an EV for commuting. Use your current gas-powered vehicle when it is not convenient to use an EV.

+ DO YOU HAVE OFF-STREET PARKING AT YOUR HOME?

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Rural Nebraska

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Contents



6 A Sentimental Connection Between Tractors and Farmers

Norm Mortensen of rural Crab Orchard, Nebraska, and his wife, Karen, have spent the last 35 years collecting toy tractors and miniature farm equipment. Writer Susan Barnard shares how the Mortensen's have decided it is time to take yet another leap of faith in their marriage and to downsize, move to town and begin another journey in life. Part of the downsizing includes the sale of the hundreds of toys they have collected over the years.



14 Emerging Electric Farming Equipment

Electric tractors are now commercially available from multiple manufacturers as well as niche, electric-only companies. Writer Katherine Loving explains the advantages and barriers to electric farming technologies.

Departments

Editor's Page

Safety Briefs/Murphy

Energy Sense

Down Home Recipes

Marketplace

Tractors of all brands, colors and sizes on display in the Mortensen's basement at their farmstead in rural Crab Orchard, Nebraska. See related article on Page 6. Cover photograph by Susan Barnard



Wayne Price

Think Safety as Your Student Moves into the Dorm or Apartment

It's the time of year when college campuses are preparing for students moving all of their worldly possessions into their home away from home – the dorm or a new apartment! While this is an exciting time for the students, it can be a nerve-racking time for parents. I should know since I currently have three of my children attending college this Fall. It is important for parents and students should keep electrical safety in mind.

Here are a few tips to remember:

- Don't overload outlets, extension cords, or power strips.
- Use power strips with over current protectors. This will shut off the power if there is too much power being drawn.
- Only purchase and use electrical products tested for safety. Some common approved safety labels include UL, CSA, and MET.
- Keep all electrical appliances and cords safely away from bedding, curtains, papers, and other flammable material.
- Make sure outlets around sinks are equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) before use. If they are not, contact the resident assistant, campus housing staff, or landlord.
- Unplug small appliances when not in use and all electronics when away for extended periods.
- Always use microwave-safe containers. Glass, ceramic containers, and plastics labeled "microwave-safe" should always be used. Metal and aluminum foil can damage the microwave or start a fire. If the microwave is damaged in any way, do not use it.
- Never disable a smoke detector; and never ignore a fire alarm or assume it is a drill. Every time a fire alarm sounds, residents should calmly and quickly follow practiced procedures and immediately exit the building.

When planning to move into a shared space like a dorm or apartment, it is wise to communicate with your roommates before shopping for items for the room. Often times when there is no communication room's end up with multiple refrigerators and microwaves, which can lead to a circuit overload in a small space.

And don't forget to check with your university's housing department on their specific housing laws. Many colleges across the U.S. ban cooking appliances from on-campus housing, including hot plates, coffee makers, and microwaves. Many of these institutions provide a designated area for the use of these products.



Jayson Bishop

Jayson Bishop is the General Manager of Midwest Electric Cooperative Corporation, headquartered in Grant, Nebraska

Working Together Cooperatively

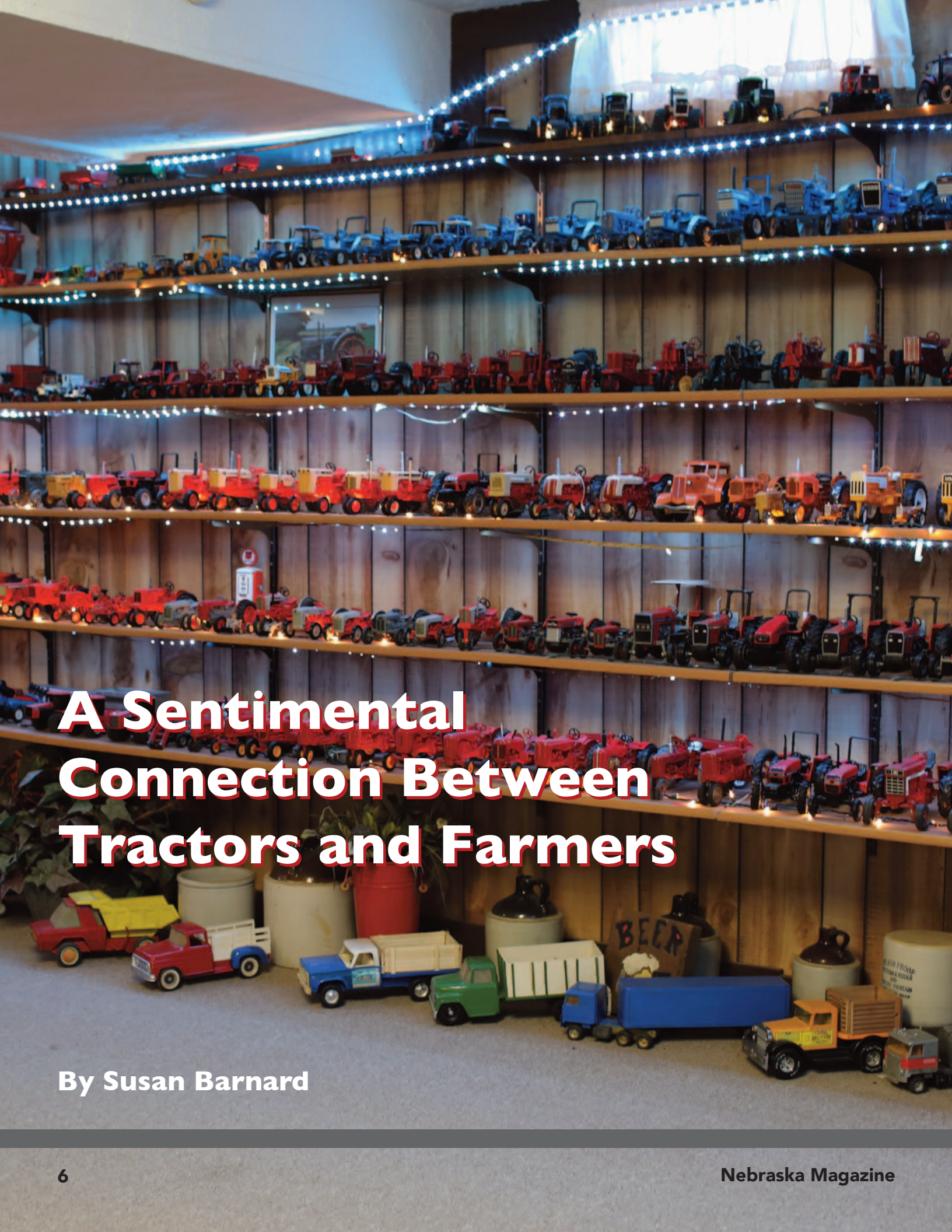
The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association supports electric cooperatives and public power districts across the country. They are strong proponents of the Seven Cooperative Principles as a set of core philosophies for their members. Several of the principles are almost second nature to many of us in Nebraska. Open and Voluntary Membership (Principle #1) reflects our values that anyone should be able to participate regardless of their background or circumstances. We are very familiar with Democratic Member Control (#2) and the idea that everyone should have a say in decisions that affect them. Concern for Community (#7) is a feeling shared by nearly everyone in rural Nebraska that wants to see their communities thrive and continue to be a great place to live, work and raise their families.

Cooperative Principle #6 is another idea that is very familiar to people across the state. Cooperation among Cooperatives says that cooperatives and public power districts are often stronger when they find ways to work together and share resources. We see examples of cooperation by our friends and neighbors all the time. Many if not most of you are involved in your communities in many ways. It can be volunteering your time to be on the local fire department or ambulance crew to help others out in emergency situations. Many look to help by being on the board of any number of local organizations such as a school board, fair board, or church board. Others help sponsor the local 4-H club or coach a youth sports team. There are many ways to help your neighbors because it's a good thing to do.

Your electric cooperatives and public power districts across the state use the same ideas and values when we look for ways to help each other. The most obvious example would be providing Mutual Aid to other utilities when weather conditions cause large outages. When ice, tornados, wind, or any number of other weather events damage electric systems, it can cause widespread outages that can take days or even weeks to repair if the utility had to do it all themselves. Fortunately for us – and our customers – neighboring utilities are always ready to help. When one utility needs help, it's likely that several neighboring systems would be willing to send crews to assist. The crews sent to help might spend days or weeks living out of a hotel and away from their families, but they are happy to help, especially knowing that they might be the ones in need of assistance the next time.

The cooperatives and PPDs across the state also find other ways to work together. The Nebraska Rural Electric Association coordinates a Job Training and Safety program to make sure all our employees can work safely and go home to their families every night. There is a consortium of IT professionals from across the state that collaborate and share ideas on how to accomplish different tasks and implement cybersecurity measures. There are regional meetings for smaller groups to share ideas.

All part of Cooperatives helping Cooperatives.



A Sentimental Connection Between Tractors and Farmers

By Susan Barnard



When most farmers add a new tractor or piece of equipment, they build a shed. For Norm Mortensen of rural Crab Orchard, Nebraska, he just adds another shelf in the basement. Mortensen and his wife, Karen, have spent the last 35 years collecting toy tractors, miniature farm equipment, Coca-Cola memorabilia and other collectibles. Some are new, some used and some refurbished. Farmers seem to remember their first toy tractors they played with and many still have their old toys which are now collectibles. There's a sentimental connection between toy tractors and farmers and what they grew up with, and the Mortensen's are no exception.

Both Norm and Karen grew up on farms in the Omaha/Sarpy County area. Their early years of marriage and farming in the Omaha area resulted in numerous years of lost crops due to flooding. Norm was in search of ground with rolling hills, and this search led them to locating near Crab Orchard, Nebraska, nearly 50 years ago. Together they took a huge leap of faith, moved away from their families to farm and raise their family. They also began a lifetime hobby of collecting.

Norm and Karen have always liked going to auctions, flea markets, toy shows and road trips on junk jaunts.

"One year I gave Norm a subscription to the Toy Farmer magazine which listed upcoming toy auctions and that is when things really took off," said Karen.

While Norm grew up with Case IH equipment on the farm, his collection includes Case IH, John Deere, Massey-Ferguson, International and more. The color

Opposite: : Tractors of all brands, colors and sizes on display in the Mortensen's basement at their farmstead in rural Crab Orchard, Nebraska.

Above: Norm Mortensen is pictured with one of his Case IH tractors. While he collected all kinds, Case IH has always been near and dear to him.

palette for the most popular farm toy tractors includes International Harvester Red, John Deere Green, Minneapolis Moline Yellow and Ford Blue, among others. At least 80 percent of his collection also includes the original box. A room in the basement was dedicated to boxes until it became full and then Norm purchased an enclosed trailer and the boxes were moved to the shop.

In the early years of collecting, Norm and Karen would attend auctions together. Karen became the "runner" at auctions – meaning she'd run for coffee or a donut for Norm while he waited to bid on items he didn't want to miss. There were times when Karen wouldn't attend a sale, and if Norm was interested in bidding on something, he would give her a call at home and say, "run down to the basement and see if I have this one." Karen said they never really had a set budget for collecting – but they didn't go overboard either. "It was the thrill of the hunt at times," said Norm. When he found himself at a flea market or auction, and a toy tractor or farm implement piece was sitting in a corner

Continued on Page 8

From Page 7

being overlooked, he knew its potential and what he could do to bring it back to life. And if he got it for a bargain, even better. He would tote his newly found items home in a cardboard box with handles, set it on the kitchen table, and the planning and restoring began.

In addition to collecting pieces, Norm found his passion in refurbishing the small replicas, which includes taking the item completely apart, sandblasting, repainting and putting on new decals. The 86-year old retired farmer still refurbishes toys for himself or other people who know his skill and quality of work. It's not uncommon for their doorbell to ring and someone, perhaps a local farmer with their kids or grandkids, asking for a tour of Norm's "tractor museum" in their basement. A request Norm is always happy to oblige, with a smile on his face and a genuine sense of pride in telling the story of the hundreds of pieces he's spent nearly half his life collecting and refurbishing.

After spending the last 50 years on the farm, the Mortensen's have decided it is time to take yet another leap of faith in their marriage and to downsize, move to town and begin another journey in life. Part of the downsizing includes the sale of the hundreds of toys they have collected over the years.

They held their farm equipment sale on April 2, 2022 and the first of three other auctions was held June 10, 2022 at the Gage County Fairgrounds in Beatrice which featured the sale of over 233 tractors, semis and other memorabilia. Two more auctions will be held following this sale. The Auctioneers of Beatrice (Dennis Heinrichs, Rick Jurgens, Gale Hardin and Ryan Sommerhalder) have overseen the Mortensen sales. Norm and Karen couldn't be happier with the service, time and dedication that they have provided to them.

"This is the first time we have ever done four consecutive sales for the same customer," said Dennis Heinrichs, one of the auctioneers. "We've done three, but never four and we've never done a total sale of strictly toys and collectibles. It's definitely taken some planning and organizing."

The Mortensen's will keep a few special pieces, such as the original first tractors that their sons, David and Dean, played with as kids. When asked about how he will feel seeing his collection sold at auction, it spawned



The bidding starts at the Gage County Fairgrounds for the first of three auctions for Norm and Karen Mortensen.

a tug of emotions for Norm.

"It'll be hard to see things sell, but honestly I'm excited to see who all buys them and knowing they will be well taken care of for future generations is a pretty neat thing," said Norm.

The day of the first toy auction over 100 people filled the Gage County 4-H building and buyers from across Nebraska who couldn't attend the sale had secured bids with the auctioneers. It was an emotional day for the Mortensen's, but seeing people like the little boy who went home with a John Deere silage cutter like his grandpa uses, or the new grandma who was starting a toy tractor collection for her grandson, go home with some of their prized pieces, made the day all worth it for Norm and Karen.

When asked if he had any advice to people who are wanting to start a new collection such as tractors or other memorabilia, Norm said "start slow and don't buy everything at once. It's been a great hobby for us that we've enjoyed. We've met a lot of great people and traveled to a lot of places together."

Susan Barnard is an Adult Interstate Compact Probation Transfer Coordinator for Nebraska State Probation and was a former Norris Public Power District employee for 16 years.

“My mom’s done so much for me . . . I finally gave her something that’s a game-changer.”

The So Lite™ Wheelchair is one of the lightest on the market yet has all the features for superior versatility and portability.

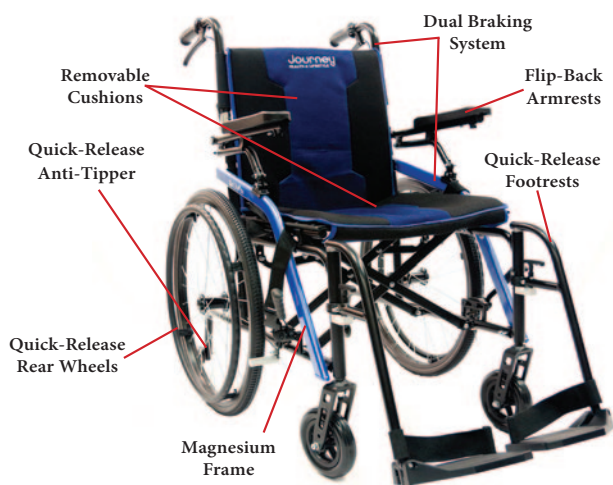


My parents spent years taking care of all my needs, and I enjoy taking care of Mom now. We used to enjoy walks together, but mobility issues made that impossible. Now, thanks to a revolutionary new wheelchair, we can finally enjoy our time together again. It’s the *So Lite™ Wheelchair*, and there’s nothing else like it.

Its 16.5-pound frame is crafted with military-grade magnesium, known for its combination of light weight and strength, so it can easily handle a person weighing 250

pounds. The light weight makes it easier to maneuver, whether by the person sitting in it or the one pushing it from behind. The seat and back feature comfortable yet durable cushions that can be removed easily for cleaning. The rear wheels, swing-way foot rests, and anti-tip supports all feature easy, quick-release, tool-free removal. The backrest folds for convenient storage in a closet, underneath a bed or in a car trunk, and the armrests fold up so you can roll up closely to a desk or table. The tires have a flat-free design that do not require maintenance, and there is a dual braking system featuring manual locks and hand brakes.

Why spend another day watching a loved one struggle with mobility? Call now, and a helpful, knowledgeable product expert will answer any questions you have. The *So Lite™ Wheelchair* comes with a one-year manufacturer’s warranty. Call now.



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Stay One Step Ahead of the Utility Scammers

Whether it's a high-tech hack or an in-person con, the best defense is the same—call your local electric utility.

In 2021, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) received 5.7 million incident reports in the consumer marketplace. About half of those were identified as fraud and a quarter as identity theft. Those statistics don't tabulate utility fraud specifically, but the Better Business Bureau says it receives about 1,000 complaints of utility scams each year.

Let's look at a few common scenarios of utility scams:

- You receive a random call. The caller says you didn't pay your last electric bill and your power will be cut off immediately—unless you pay right now by credit card over the phone. Caller ID shows it came from the utility; they even told you the exact amount of your most recent bill.
- You receive an alert that you overpaid your utility bill and to get the refund, you need to provide your financial information.
- A friendly couple in uniform knocks on your door saying they're from the power company and are following up on high-bill complaints from your neighbors. They just need to take a look at your utility bill so they can get the information code to make sure you aren't being double-charged.

These real-life stories may seem like obvious scams. Who would ever fall for them? It turns out about one in four people.

Scammers take you by surprise

While most people do the right thing and hang up the phone or contact their utility rather than handing over money or private information, more than \$6 billion in losses to various scams were reported in 2021. According to Utilities United Against Scams, the typical cost for each victim who lost money was about \$500.

Reading about avoiding utility scams makes it sound pretty simple. But the thing about scammers is they take you by surprise. They might be the most charming people you ever met. They might be the meanest and most intimidating, bullying you into acting. It can be hard to say "no" in the moment. One busy businessperson ended up handing over \$1,000 just to get through another one of the day's fast-paced distractions.

Scammers are notorious for recognizing when people are most vulnerable—Christmas, right after a hurricane or tornado, or with the approach of really hot or cold weather. Fraud reports skyrocketed during the Covid-19 pandemic—FTC figures show complaints rising from almost 3.5 million in 2019 to more than 5.5 million in 2021.



Don't fall for
scammers
pretending
to be utilities.

The latest trends in utility fraud

Con artists keep up with technology—they'll come at you through email and texting. In one of the top recent scams, you're told to pay by gift or cash card, giving the swindlers the card and PIN number so they can have easier access to your money. (Hint—a utility will never ask you to pay by gift card.)

Another new scheme tells you to pay your bill with cryptocurrency. Your electric utility will not require you to pay by bitcoin or similar methods.

The best way to avoid being a victim of a utility scam is to call your electric co-op directly. Scammers will try to rush you into acting, but no billing situation is so urgent you can't check on it.

If you do lose money on a scam, don't be embarrassed. Report it to your electric utility. The state attorney general is responsible for going after fraud and will want to know about any suspicious schemes. You might even be able to get your money back.

Letting the appropriate contacts know about a scamming operation can help protect others in our community and let you feel secure in enjoying your electric service.



Utility employees
will never ask
you to pay
immediately.

Beware of Scammers!

Here are some warning signs of a utility scam:

- If you know you already paid, stop. Even if the caller insists you have a past due bill. That's a big red flag.
- Never give out your banking information by email or phone. Utility companies don't demand banking information by email or phone. And they won't force you to pay by phone as your only option.
- Did the caller demand payment by gift card, cash reload card, wiring money or cryptocurrency? Don't do it. Legitimate companies don't demand one specific method of payment. And they don't generally accept gift cards (like iTunes or Amazon), cash reload cards (like MoneyPak, Vanilla, or Reloadit), or cryptocurrency (like bitcoin).

If you get a call like this, here's what you can do:

- Concerned that your bill is past due? Contact the utility company directly using the number on your paper bill or on the company's website. Don't call any number the caller gave you.
- Never give banking information over the phone unless you place the call to a number you know is legitimate.
- Report it to the real utility company. If you already paid, tell the payment provider – such as the wire transfer or gift card company. You may not get your money back, but it's important to tell them about the scam.
- Don't provide personal or financial information to a caller or visitor you don't know.
- Don't get scared. A scammer will try to convince you the lights or water are about to go out. If you're actually behind on payments, the utility will send you a delinquent notice, probably more than once, and tell you the prospective shutoff date.

Skip the Trip to the Gym

When the pandemic closed the gyms, a fitness instructor moved her classes online.

When her weekly Zumba Gold classes at the local adult center were cancelled due to Covid-19, Elizabeth Moakler had a new challenge.

“How can I keep my gang moving? Would online classes work?”

Am I willing to commit to teaching free LIVE classes online?

What if nobody joins me?”

She wouldn't have to wonder for long. At first, the online classes were small. Just a few ladies from her nearby Dell Webb community danced along at home in front of their computers. Today participants from six countries join her classes 4 times per week from her home studio over Zoom, including Rita, her 80-year old mum in England. According to her students, she plays favorite songs from yesterday and today, and there is a real sense of community in the group. 50 to 90 people join in for each live class. When asked why she teaches the classes at no charge, she'll say she just loves putting the energy out there.

“We stay positive and share a real sense of caring. Today so many are still facing loneliness and isolation. We welcome and celebrate everybody,” said Elizabeth Moakler. “If exercise came in a bottle, it would sell out immediately because it's so darn good for you. Live longer and feel great doing it.”



7 Benefits of Zumba Gold Online for your Health

1. Get that heart rate up. Increase blood flow with aerobic benefits for the lungs.
2. Move your Joints. Reduce stiffness, pain, and inflammation. Promote muscle tone and strength. Zumba Gold is low impact, and gentle on the joints.
3. Burn calories. Over time, you just might fit into those old jeans again.
4. Keep your brain sharp. By following Elizabeth's moves, you're doing mental exercise, fending off forgetfulness and dementia.
5. Joy. Move to the Latin beats and Disco hits. Maybe the most fun you'll have all day.
6. Human connection. Be part of a group. Interact with others online before and after class.
7. No commute to the gym. No parking. No membership fees.

If you want to try Elizabeth's free classes, just send her an email to: emoakler@carolina.rr.com and say, “I want to try Zumba at home”.

You'll receive an email every Sunday containing four invite links, one for each class that week. Mon, Wed, Fri and Sun. You can take up to four live classes per week.

Danger Doesn't Take a Vacation

By Larry Oetken



Vacations are a chance to get away, unwind, and explore new places and cultures. Prepare your home for electrical safety while you are away and protect your property by learning about the differences in electrical systems you may find while traveling.

Before You Go

Before you leave home, protect appliances from a possible power surge. Walk through each room to make sure appliances that will not be used in your absence, such as TVs and computers, are unplugged.

If traveling abroad, familiarize yourself with the differences in electrical systems beyond our borders. There is no universal standard for electrical voltage, with variations between 110 to 240 volts and 50 to 60 hertz common around the world.

Converters & Transformers

Because U.S. systems produce 120-volt and 60-hertz electricity, our appliances are designed to work with this level of power. There are two ways to protect your devices from burning out in areas with higher levels of electricity, and they depend on what type of electronic you are using.

If you are using an item that will only be plugged in a few minutes, like a hair dryer, you can use a convertor. Convertors turn the 220-volt current on and off, which simulates a 120-volt current.

Before plugging in your device, make sure that both the voltage and wattage are compatible.

Anything with computer components or that is plugged in for an extended amount of time can be damaged by a converter's rapid on and off switching of the current. If you are using a computer, or charging electronics, you need a transformer. The transformer actually reduces the electricity to 120 volts so it is suitable for your electronics.

Larry Oetken is the Job Training & Safety Coordinator for the Nebraska Rural Electric Association.

Bruce Vitosh, Norris PPD General Manager and CEO, Elected President of CFC Board of Directors

Norris Public Power District General Manager and CEO was elected as President of the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation Board of Directors during the 53rd CFC Annual Membership Meeting in Boston on June 20, 2022. He represents District 7 which incorporates Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado and Wyoming.

"It is truly an honor to be selected as the President of the CFC Board of Directors," Vitosh said. "I appreciate the trust and support of the CFC Directors who are committed to continuing the CFC tradition of service, integrity and excellence. The future of CFC is bright under the



leadership of CEO Andrew Don and his Senior Staff, along with the professionalism and dedication of the CFC employees."

CFC provides credit and industry-leading financial products to America's 900-plus local, not-for-profit, consumer-owned public power districts and electric cooperatives. CFC provides a range of services including

financing for infrastructure such as distribution lines and power plants, emergency lines of credit so power can be restored quickly after a disaster, loan syndications and loan resale, strategic planning and financial analysis, financial education and training.

Emerging Electric Farming Equipment

It's no surprise that sensitivity to fuel costs and a growing desire for energy independence are driving innovation in electric vehicles. Similarly, these same factors are creating increased interest in electric farming equipment.

Running a farm is traditionally dependent on oil and gas to keep the machinery operating. Fuel costs impact the bottom line of agricultural production and are a major driver of food prices and farming revenue.

One major new change for farming equipment is the trend of switching fossil fuel-powered equipment to electric equipment.

Electric tractors are now commercially available from multiple manufacturers as well as niche, electric-only companies. There are many benefits of replacing diesel motors with electric motors. Highly-efficient electric motors can operate at 90% thermal efficiency, which helps to provide cost savings over time, compared to diesel motors that operate at 30% to 40% thermal efficiency.

But there are significant barriers to electric farming technologies. Electric tractors cost about a third more than traditional tractors. Battery life for electric tractors typically ranges from three to six hours depending on hauling weight and workload, which can be a nonstarter for many larger farms where tractors are expected to run all day doing heavy-duty work.

While battery life can be problematic, advancements have been made over the last few years. Some tractors can carry two batteries, allowing for a mid-day switch without returning the tractor to a charging point. At this stage of development, electric tractors are likely better suited to smaller farms or vineyards.

There are additional electric equipment options available for the farm.

Utility terrain vehicles tend to look more like their gas-powered counterparts in terms of capability and price, making them an easier entry into electric equipment on the farm.

The future of electrification on farms may be focused



on renewable energy, either in the form of solar power or waste heat recovery systems. There is ongoing research into the feasibility of placing solar panels on farms coupled with a battery storage system, then using that system as a fuel source for electric tractor batteries. Solar power is already being used to directly power autonomous precision sprayers for row crops.

There are still limitations on heavy-duty use of electric farming equipment, but research and development will continue until these electric technologies are on par with their diesel or gas counterparts.

With more time and investment, electric farming equipment will likely become more widespread in the coming years.

John Deere showcased the first, fully battery-powered



Electric tractors are now commercially available from multiple manufacturers, like the John Deere SESAM shown here, as well as from niche, electric-only companies. Nicknamed SESAM, for Sustainable Energy Supply for Agricultural Machinery, this all-electric tractor is modeled after John Deere's 6r series tractors. Photograph provided by John Deere



tractor in 2017 at SIMA, an international agribusiness tradeshow in Paris. This technological innovation was given a 'special mention' as it truly the first of its kind. Nicknamed SESAM, for Sustainable Energy Supply for Agricultural Machinery, this all-electric tractor is modeled after John Deere's 6r series tractors.

In a press release by John Deere, SESAM is said to have all of the same "features and functionality of a 'conventional' tractor while offering the benefits of electric power." This emissions-free tractor runs at a lower noise level than other traditional tractors and is operated using two independent electric motors. The electrification of this tractor simplifies the moving parts and thus, greatly reduces the need for maintenance.

These two motors power an adapted DirectDrive

transmission, producing 130 kilowatts of continuous power with a peak output of 400 horsepower, according to Farm-Equipment.com. The website also affirms that the tractor takes 3 hours to fully charge and can run up to 4 hours in the field with speeds ranging from 2 to 30 mph.

Although SESAM's battery technology may not yet be practical for a full day of farming, the all-electric tractor is a very exciting development for the agriculture industry. This is one of many future steps in the direction of electrifying agricultural machinery and integrating this equipment with renewables. As the press release stated, "The SESAM tractor is a major part of John Deere's vision of the energy-independent farm of the future."

We don't have to remind those who work the land and raise livestock that they have a potentially dangerous occupation. However, due to the nature of the job, and because of long days and tiring work, here are some reminders about electrical dangers on the farm or ranch.

If you make contact with a power line, don't get out

If you make contact with a power line, guy wire, power pole, electrical box or any other electrical equipment, do not get out of your cab or truck. Stay put and call 9-1-1 to dispatch the local utility to de-energize the power. If you must get out due to smoke or fire, make a solid jump out without touching any part of the tractor or vehicle, and hop away as far as you can, keeping both feet together as you hop. Another option (after you make a clean exit) is to shuffle or waddle away while keeping your feet together and on the ground.

Once you are out, never try to re-enter the vehicle

Remember: *If your machinery or vehicle comes in contact with a power line or other utility equipment, do not get out of the cab. Stray power could energize your equipment and the ground. Call 9-1-1 and wait for us to arrive and cut the power so that you can safely exit your tractor or vehicle.*

Determine proper clearance

Contact us to measure power line heights; do NOT do this yourself. Once you know the heights, you can

determine appropriate equipment, implement and extension clearances. Always maintain at least 10 feet between the power line and the tallest height of the equipment that will be transported. Keep in mind that due to wear, age and even weather conditions, power lines can change height. Please contact us with any concerns. It's good to know power line clearance, but always have a spotter.

Always dig safely

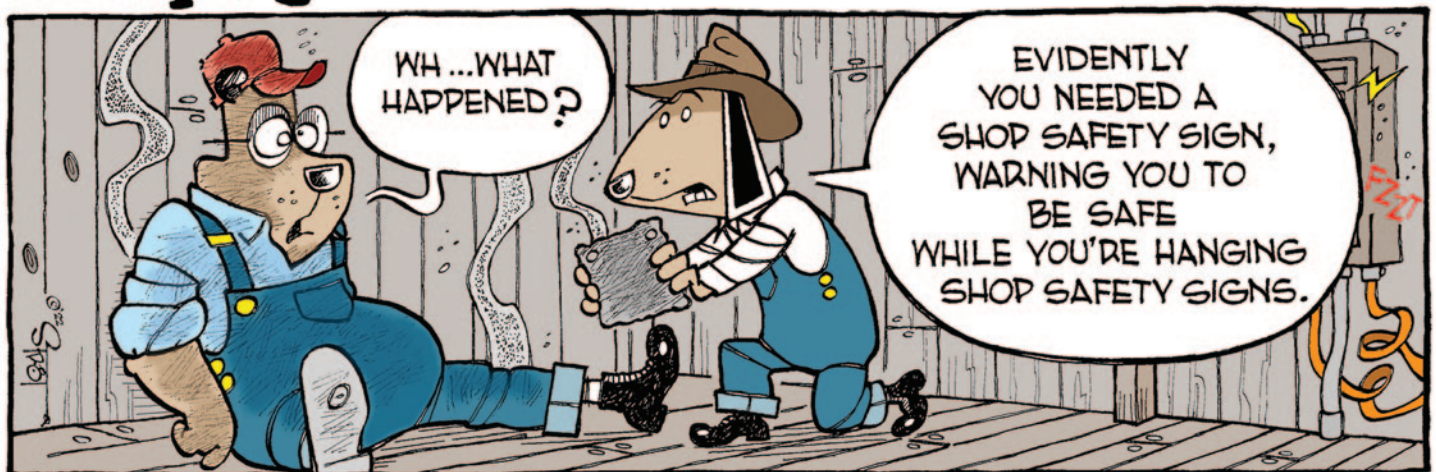
Whether you are installing new fence posts or using large tillage tools, call 811 before you dig to have underground utilities marked. Even if you think you know where buried gas, power and other lines are, don't rely on your memory. Get all utilities marked so that you know for sure. Utility locators dispatched by 811 do not mark private lines.

Use standby generators with care

If you have a standby generator to provide essential power during an outage, be sure to correctly use the transfer switch. Once you properly engage the switch, it stops your farm's generated power from entering utility lines, aka backfeeding, which can electrocute lineworkers who are working to restore power.

For more information about electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Murphy



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Sold Out at the Mint!



O PRIVY MARK



*Actual size
is 38.1 mm*

The U.S. Mint Just Struck Morgan Silver Dollars for the First Time in 100 Years!

It's been more than 100 years since the last Morgan Silver Dollar was struck for circulation. Morgans were the preferred currency of cowboys, ranchers and outlaws and earned a reputation as the coin that helped build the Wild West. Struck in 90% silver from 1878 to 1904, then again in 1921, these silver dollars came to be known by the name of their designer, George T. Morgan. They are one of the most revered, most-collected, vintage U.S. Silver Dollars ever.

Celebrating the 100th Anniversary with Legal-Tender Morgans

Honoring the 100th anniversary of the last year they were minted, the U.S. Mint struck five different versions of the Morgan in 2021, paying tribute to each of the mints that struck the coin. The coins here honor the historic New Orleans Mint, a U.S. Mint branch from 1838–1861 and again from 1879–1909. These coins, featuring an "O" privy mark, a small differentiating mark, were struck in Philadelphia since the New Orleans Mint no longer exists. These beautiful

coins are different than the originals because they're struck in 99.9% fine silver instead of 90% silver/10% copper, and they were struck using modern technology, serving to enhance the details of the iconic design.

Very Limited. Sold Out at the Mint!

The U.S. Mint limited the production of these gorgeous coins to just 175,000, a ridiculously low number. Not surprisingly, they sold out almost instantly! That means you need to hurry to add these bright, shiny, new legal-tender Morgan Silver Dollars with the New Orleans privy mark, struck in 99.9% PURE Silver, to your collection. Call 1-888-395-3219 to secure yours now. PLUS, you'll receive a BONUS American Collectors Pack, valued at \$25, FREE with your order. Call now. These will not last!

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Q : How do I operate my thermostat to use less energy and still be comfortable?

A : Heating and cooling account for about half the energy used in a typical home, so it's a great place to use less energy. When used wisely, your thermostat can help reduce wasted energy.

Here's some information on thermostat types, common operational misconceptions and best practices you can start today.

Types of thermostats

Mechanical thermostats are easy to control by adjusting a dial or sliding switch. The downfall is you must make temperature adjustments manually, which is easy to forget. They are inefficient because they typically heat or cool the home beyond the set point.

If your cooling is set to 72 degrees, a mechanical thermostat may actually cool your home to 70 degrees before it turns off, wasting energy. Then it might not come on again until the home reaches 74 degrees. That four-degree temperature change is noticeable and can lead people to adjust the thermostat setting down even more, which wastes more energy.

Also, some mechanical thermostats contain mercury. You can determine that by removing the front plate and looking for small glass bulbs. If your thermostat contains mercury, replace it and find a way to properly recycle it.

Digital thermostats are more accurate, efficient and some are programmable, which is a great option for people who don't have internet or don't want their thermostat data tracked.

Smart thermostats—which require an internet connection—are Wi-Fi-enabled and can be controlled using a smartphone app. Programming is easier, and you can track and manage use and temperature data. However, that data is shared with the manufacturer.

Misconceptions about thermostats

A common misconception is the higher you turn your thermostat up or down, the faster your home's



temperature will change. Turning your thermostat down to 55 degrees to cool your home faster is like repeatedly pushing the elevator button and expecting it to come faster. It's likely you will forget you adjusted it and waste energy by over heating or cooling the home. Set your desired temperature for heating and cooling or program your thermostat so you don't make extreme adjustments.

Many people believe it takes more energy to heat or cool a house instead of leaving it the same temperature. The larger the temperature variance between inside and outside, the more energy your system uses. Setting your thermostat 7 to 10 degrees from its normal setting for eight hours a day can save up to 10% a year on your energy bill, according to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

Best practices

Use these heating and cooling tips from the DOE to add efficiency and savings to your home:

- Set it to 78 degrees in the summer when you are home and awake, and warmer at night or when away. Set your thermostat to 68 degrees in the winter when you are home and awake, and cooler at night or when you are away.
- Upgrade to a programmable or smart thermostat that automatically adjusts the temperature throughout the day and when you leave the house.
- When on vacation, set your thermostat to 85 degrees in the summer and 55 degrees in the winter.
- In the summer, fans allow you to set your thermostat about 4 degrees warmer without feeling it. Remember, fans cool people not rooms, so turn them off when you leave a room.

Use your thermostat to optimize energy efficiency and find a balance between comfort and affordability.

By Abby Berry

Keep Your Cool

Five Tips to Stay Safe in Extreme Heat

The dog days of summer typically bring the warmest, sultriest temperatures of the year. Even if you're a summertime enthusiast, it's important to stay cool during extreme heat.

According to the Centers for Disease Control Prevention (CDC), more than 700 people die from extreme heat every year in the U.S.

Factors like obesity, age and alcohol intake can impact how a person reacts to extreme heat. High humidity also contributes to heat-related illness because we don't sweat as quickly--meaning our bodies can't release heat as fast--when humidity levels are high.

Take extra steps to cool off, keep hydrated and stay informed.

Remember to look after those who may need extra help. People 65 years of age or older are at greater risk of heat-related illness, so check on your senior neighbors and friends. Children under the age of 2 and pets are also more susceptible to heat stroke. Never leave a child or pet in a vehicle, even if only for a minute.

If you work outdoors, use a buddy system to monitor your co-workers (and have someone do the same for you!).

Heat-induced illness can happen to anyone, even to those who are perfectly healthy. If you're outdoors during extremely warm weather, monitor how you're feeling, stay hydrated and keep an eye on those around you.

Stay cool during extreme heat.

- Limit outdoor activity.
- Stay hydrated.
- Check on friends and neighbors who are at greater risk.

Here are five tips recommended by the CDC to help you stay cool during extremely warm weather:

1. Stay in an air-conditioned home or building as much as possible. Limit outdoor activity, especially midday when the sun is hottest. If your home is not air conditioned, call the local health department to locate public facilities or shelters.
2. If you must be outdoors, wear loose, light-colored clothing and apply sunscreen often.
3. Drink more water than usual. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink more.
4. Take cold showers or baths to cool down.
5. Avoid using the oven or stove to cook. These appliances add heat to your home. Try using the microwave or a slow cooker instead.

Celebrate Summer with Pineapple Dishes

The end result of perfectly cooked chicken is a mouthwatering meal that smells just as good as it tastes and beckons loved ones to the patio. To achieve that juicy, tender flavor that brings family and friends together, it's important to keep a few safety and grilling tips in mind.

Fire up your grill, season poultry to perfection and serve a safely cooked meal at your next backyard barbecue with this advice from the experts at Perdue Farms.

Maximize Your Budget

For a flavorful meal without breaking the bank, consider less-expensive cuts of meat like bone-in thighs or drumsticks, or cook a whole chicken that can last for several meals. In addition to the savings at the grocery store, these cuts can also withstand hotter temperatures on the grill for juicy and tender results.

Save a Little Time

One easy way to maximize your time around the grill while cutting down on prep and mess is using a pre-cut option like Perdue Fresh Cuts Diced Chicken Breast, a perfect solution for kebabs. Recipe ready in an easy-peel package, the chickens are hatched and harvested in the United States with an all-vegetarian diet and no antibiotics, hormones or steroids.

Source: Perdue Farms



Easy Kona Pineapple Chicken Kebabs

- 1 can (6 ounces) pineapple juice
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 lime, zest and juice only
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 piece (1 inch) fresh ginger, grated
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 package Perdue Fresh Cuts Diced Chicken Breast
- 1/2 fresh pineapple, cut into 16 chunks
- 1 large red bell pepper, seeded and cut into 16 (1-inch) chunks
- 4 metal skewers or 8 wooden skewers (12 inches) soaked in water 30 minutes

In bowl, whisk pineapple juice, vegetable oil, lime juice and zest, sugar, ginger and red pepper flakes until sugar dissolves. Add diced chicken breast,

cover and marinate in refrigerator 30 minutes.

Thread alternating pieces of chicken, pineapple and red bell pepper onto skewers. Discard remaining marinade.

Heat lightly greased grill or grill pan to medium-high heat. Grill kebabs 10-12 minutes, turning every 3-4 minutes until chicken feels firm to touch and a meat thermometer inserted in the center reaches 165 F.

Remove kebabs from grill, rest 2-3 minutes and serve.

Tip: If using wooden skewers, soak in water 30 minutes to keep skewers from burning on grill. If using metal skewers, remember chicken will cook faster because metal will conduct heat and cook chicken cubes from inside along with grill heat cooking chicken from outside.

Reader Submitted Recipes



Fizzy Orange Pineapple Punch

- 1 can (46 ounces) pineapple juice, chilled
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
- 1 can (6 ounces) frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed
- 1 bottle (2 liters) ginger ale
- 6-8 scoops orange sherbet
- orange slices, for garnish
- mint leaves, for garnish

In large punch bowl, combine pineapple juice, condensed milk and orange juice concentrate. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Before serving, add ginger ale and top with scoops of sherbet, orange slices and mint.

Source: Culinary.net

Veggie Sandwich

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 loaf ciabatta bread, sliced in half 2 tablespoons garlic hummus 2 tablespoons cilantro avocado dressing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 lettuce leaves 6 slices of tomato 1/2 cucumber, sliced 1/4 red onion, sliced 1/4 cup roasted red peppers 1 – 2 tablespoons feta cheese |
|---|---|

Spread bread with hummus and dressing on both sides. Layer lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, onions, red peppers. Top with feta cheese. Slice sandwich in half.

Meribeth Kelsey, North Platte, Nebraska

Italian Tomato Slices

- 1 - 2 fresh tomatoes, sliced 1/3 inch thick
- Italian salad dressing
- Parmesan cheese

Spray a cookies sheet with Pam. Space the tomato slices on the greased cookie sheet. Brush Italian salad dressing on the slices. Sprinkle heavily with grated parmesan cheese. Place under a heated broiler for 3 minutes or so-until the parmesan melts and browns a bit like pizza. Watch carefully as this happens quickly. Serve while warm. If your kids like pizza, they will enjoy this vegetable side.

Mary Ann Keller, Monroe, Nebraska

Cherry Winks

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3/4 cup shortening (I prefer butter) 1 cup white sugar 2 eggs 2 tablespoons milk 1 teaspoon vanilla extract 2 1/4 sifted all-purpose flour 1 teaspoon baking powder 1/2 teaspoon baking soda | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1/2 teaspoon salt 1 cup chopped pecans 1 cup dates, chopped 1/3 cup chopped maraschino cherries 2 1/2 cups crushed cornflakes cereal 10 maraschino cherries, quartered |
|---|---|

Prepare oven to 375 degrees. Lightly grease baking sheets. Cream the shortening with the sugar. Blend in the eggs, milk, and vanilla. Sift together the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Add the flour mixture to the creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in the chopped pecans, chopped dates and 1/3 cup chopped maraschino cherries. Shape teaspoonful sized chunks of dough into balls. Roll each ball in the crushed corn flakes. Place balls on the prepared baking sheets and top each cookie with 1/4 maraschino cherry. Bake at 375 degrees for 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool completely before storing in airtight containers. Yields 5 dozen.

Detta Holscher, Elwood, Nebraska



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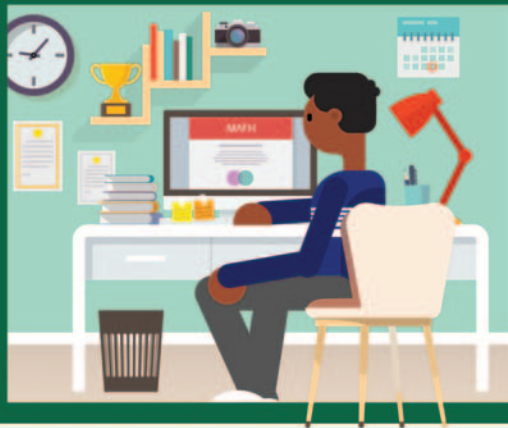
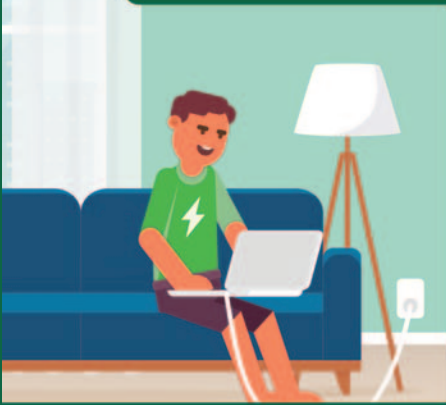
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AT HOME LEARNING ELECTRICAL SAFETY



Attending **school at home**? Follow these **electrical safety tips** to keep you, your family, and home safe from electrical hazards.



1 Avoid **overloading outlets**.



2 **Unplug appliances** when not in use to save energy and minimize the risk of shock and fire.



3 **Regularly inspect** electrical cords and extension cords for damage.



4 Extension cords should only be used on a **temporary basis**.



5 Never plug a space heater or fan into an **extension cord** or **power strip**.



6 Never run cords under **rugs / carpets, doors, or windows**.



7 **Plug in smartly**. Make sure cords do not become tripping hazards.



8 Keep papers and other potential combustibles at least **three feet away** from space heaters and other heat sources.



9 Make sure you use **proper wattage** for lamps / lighting.



10 Make sure your home has **smoke alarms**. Test them monthly, change batteries yearly, and replace the unit every 10 years.

Wherever you are learning, it's always important to be safe.



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