

# May is Electrical Safety Month

This month, Klickitat PUD joins with Electrical Safety Foundation International to kick off an annual effort to increase electrical safety awareness.

Klickitat PUD celebrates National Electrical Safety Month with an open house in both the Goldendale and White Salmon PUD offices Wednesday, May 13.

Stop by one of the offices for free refreshments and electrical safety pamphlets.

## Old House, New Update

Common hazards are posed by America's aging housing stock. A variety of updates can improve any home's functionality, efficiency and safety.

The National Fire Protection Association estimates 47,700 home structure fires reported to U.S. fire departments each year involve some type of electrical failure or malfunction as a factor contributing to ignition. These fires result in 418 deaths, 1,570 injuries and \$1.4 billion in direct property damage.

ESFI sponsors National Electrical Safety Month each May to educate the public in and reduce the number of electrically related fires, fatalities, injuries and property loss.

Nearly half of our nation's housing was built before 1970, when there was significantly less stress on electrical systems. This year's campaign encourages consumers to make sure their homes can adequately handle the demand they are putting on their electrical system to help minimize potential hazards.

ESFI developed The National Electrical Safety Month 2015 Electrical Safety Advocate Guide to provide the resources necessary to raise awareness of electrically safe practices. Whether

you want to educate a loved one or raise awareness in your community, school or workplace, this guide provides step-by-step instructions on how to be an electrical safety advocate and help champion ESFI's cause of minimizing electrically related deaths and injuries. ■

For ESFI's complete collection of National Electrical Safety Month resources, and for more information on spring safety, visit [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org).

## Evolution of the American Home

Homes built today are dramatically different than they were 40 years ago. Not only are they larger, but they have more amenities that can severely stress your electrical system. The Electrical Safety Foundation International recommends all homes over 40 years old undergo an electrical inspection to ensure your home's electrical system can handle modern demands.

**In 1973, 17% of U.S. homes had central A/C and 30% contained window units. Today about 65% of homes have central A/C and another 21% have window units.**

**Over half of U.S. homes (51%) have two or more bathrooms compared to just 19% in 1973.**

**In 1973 48% of new homes had garages for 2 or more cars compared to 80% in 2008.**

**More than four in ten (44%) of the nation's housing stock was built before 1970.**

**The residential energy sector accounted for 25% of the total energy consumption in 2010, yet remained the least energy efficient largely due to the use of incandescent lamps.**

**The median square footage of single-family homes built between 2005-2009 is 2,200. The median in the 1970s or earlier was 1,700 ft<sup>2</sup>.**

**54% of homes in the U.S. had 3 or more TVs in 2009.**

**A 2009 study found 26% of homes had a second refrigerator and that number is growing 1% per year.**

Courtesy of ESFI



Martin Taylor shows students in Klickitat the lineman gloves that allow him to work safely on power lines.

# Electrical Safety: Knowledge is Power

By Lori Froehlich

Electrical hazards cause thousands of injuries each year.

At Klickitat PUD, electrical safety is the priority not only for our employees, but also for those we serve every day.

We believe it is important to teach children to have a safe relationship with electricity.

If there is one thing common to all children, it is curiosity. The urge to discover how things work and the drive to explore the unknown should be celebrated. But we have to teach them that cars, trucks and electrical outlets

can be dangerous. Precautions can ensure children understand and heed the dangers from electricity.

Because KPUD provides electricity to Klickitat County, the utility takes some responsibility for helping deliver this message.

This spring, representatives Jeff Thayer, Martin Taylor, Bernie Predeek and Tim Garrigus presented electrical safety lessons to third- and fourth-grade classrooms throughout Klickitat County.

The children especially enjoyed getting to see a lineman dressed in his gear, and explain how poles are climbed and power lines are worked on. The

question-and-answer sessions were full of excitement, with comments and stories about how electricity works and what to do in case of emergency.

“Thank you for the great lessons on electricity safety,” Centerville teacher Vikki Barthlow said. “The students really enjoyed it.”

Electrical safety books, stickers and bookmarks were also big hits with the kids.

Klickitat PUD plans to provide these presentations on an annual basis to ages 9-10, so plan to learn more about electrical safety from the youth in your community. ■