

Electricity is important on farms, and it must be respected as a hazard. One mistake, one shortcut could be deadly.

The importance of electricity becomes apparent when it's cut off for any length of time. It's great to have electrical power, but that power should be respected for the hazard it can be. Beyond using electricity in the house, many use tools that are powered by electricity. From a simple corded drill to massive machines.

Lack of knowledge and skill are the leading cause of incidents involving electricity. Every year, trained professionals may take a shortcut, make one mistake, or take one chance that could be dangerous. Electrical shock can cause flesh burns or breathing to stop, even cardiac arrest.

Merely working close to electricity can be dangerous. Tall implements like augers, can come into contact with overhead electrical wires that carry 7,200 volts. Touching it would be fatal. Make sure overhead power lines are well maintained and have adequate clearance to avoid contact with ladders, grain augers, and other machinery.

Children may be even less aware of the unseen dangers of electricity. Keep yourself and your family safe when around electricity. Follow these rules:

- ▶ Keep face plates on switches and outlets
- ▶ Keep electrical panels free of dust and debris
- ▶ Keep electrical panels covered to reduce shock and fire hazards
- ▶ Use properly maintained tools and equipment that is double insulated
- ▶ Do not use electrical tools near water
- ▶ Equip the shop area with Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI) and use 3-prong grounding plugs
- ▶ Do not use damaged electrical cords
- ▶ Grip the plug, not the cord, to unplug anything
- ▶ Switch off and unplug a tool before you change parts or clean it
- ▶ Instruct children in proper behavior and respect of electricity



Make sure Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI) are used in the shop area on the farm.

