

# CONNECTIONS

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**SAFETY STARTS  
WITH YOU!**

**DRIVING BLINDFOLDED  
ON THE HIGHWAY**



**PC ELECTRIC  
SELECT ESSAY  
SCHOLARSHIP  
WINNERS**

Connections Magazine is the official publication of PC Electric

2506 False River Drive  
P.O. Box 160  
New Roads, LA 70760  
225.638.3751 Phone  
800.738.7232 Toll Free  
www.pcemc.org

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# PC Electric Select Essay SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Winners of the new PC Electric Essay Scholarship Contest were announced at a reception on April 9, 2019, during the final competition of the contest at the PC Electric office.

The contest finalists were selected from high school seniors from the tri-parish area served by PC Electric. (Lucky Number: 1448500)

The guidelines of the contest required students to submit an essay in the form of 500-word letters to any elected official on a topic of their choosing. "This is an outstanding program and an excellent opportunity for the students," said Myron Lambert, PC Electric General Manager. He continued, "This program allows students the perfect opportunity to voice their personal opinion to our elected officials on any issue, problem, or success."

The students were judged on their written essays, an interview with the judges and an oral presentation of their essay by an independent panel of judges.

Three winners, one from each of the parishes that we serve, will receive a \$1,500 scholarship to the university or trade school of their choice. Recipients were presented with a framed certificate at the reception. ●



**OLIVIA BEAUVAIS**, who attends Catholic of Pointe Coupee was the recipient of the Ponte Coupee Parish Scholarship.



**SHELBY CHERAMIE**, who attends St. John High School was the recipient of the Iberville Parish Scholarship.



**TERRELL SMITH**, who attends Port Allen High School was the recipient of the West Baton Rouge Parish Scholarship.

(Left to Right) Terrell Smith, Port Allen High School, Myron A. Lambert, General Manager, Pointe Coupee Electric Olivia Beauvais, Catholic of Pointe Coupee, Jimmy Ewing, Jr. Director District 2, Shelby Cheramie, St. John High School, Chris Settoon, Director District 7 and Peter Rumfola, Jr. Director District 5.





# Driving BLINDFOLDED ON THE HIGHWAY



**Would you drive on a highway blindfolded? Of course not. However, if you text while driving 55 miles per hour on a highway, you are essentially doing just that.**

**F**ive seconds is the average time your eyes are off the road while texting. When traveling at 55mph, that's like driving the length of a football field while blindfolded. Talking on a cell phone also carries significant risks. According to the National Safety Council, drivers can miss seeing up to half of what's around them - traffic lights, stop signs, pedestrians - when talking on a cell phone. (Lucky Number: 1459810)



In our digital world, people feel pressure to remain in constant contact, even when behind the wheel. As mobile technology use increases, distracted driving - talking, texting, sending emails - is a growing threat to community safety. We have all seen distracted drivers, and most likely, we ourselves have used a phone while driving. Drivers don't realize the dangers



posed when they take their eyes off the road and their hands off the wheel and focus on activities other than driving.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, each day in the U.S., more than nine people are killed and more than 1,153 people are injured in crashes that are reported to involve a distracted driver. The National Highway Administration notes that 3,154 people were killed and an estimated 424,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes involving a distracted driver in 2013.

Texting and cell phone use behind the wheel takes your eyes off the road, your hands off the wheel and your focus off driving – putting the driver and others in danger, including passengers, pedestrians, other drivers and bystanders. On the tragic end of the spectrum, victims' families, friends, co-workers and community are impacted. (Lucky Number: 1660607)

At PC Electric safety is a core value. At this time of year in particular, when more people are on the roads and kids are out of school, our goal is to raise awareness and spur conversation about the dangers of distracted driving. (Lucky Number: 1755100) Talking on a cell phone quadruples your risk of an accident, about the same as if you were driving drunk. Risk doubles again if you are texting while driving. We are committed to eliminating this unnecessary risk and believe that no conversation or text is worth the potential danger.

Help promote a culture of safety. We encourage everyone to join us and help keep our families, friends and neighbors safer by putting their phones down and focusing on the road when they drive. Together, we can put the brakes on distracted driving. ●



## 5 DISTRACTED DRIVING STATS YOU SHOULD KNOW

**3,179** 

**Number of people killed each year in vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers**

*(Federal Communications Commission, 2014)*

 **1 in 4**

**The probability that a vehicle crash involved a cellphone. (Lucky Number: 2068302)**

*(National Safety Council, 2014)*

**60%** 

**Percentage of people who use cellphones while driving**

*(Harris Poll, 2011)*

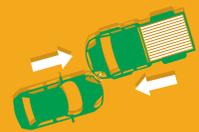
**21-24**



**Age group most likely to send a text or email while driving**

*(Distraction.gov, 2012)*

**4X** 



**How much using a cellphone increases your risk of crashing**

*(National Safety Council, 2014)*

# SAFETY STARTS WITH YOU

## Tips for spotting potential electrical hazards in your home

**E**lectricity plays many roles in our lives, from powering baby monitors, cell phones and lighting, to running HVAC systems and appliances. No wonder we get so comfortable with its instant availability that when we flip a switch, we expect most systems or devices to do the job. (Lucky Number: 37700)

May is National Electrical Safety Month, and here at PC Electric, we think it's a great time to look around your home and check for potential safety hazards.

Remember, every electrical device has a purpose and a service lifespan. While we can extend their operations with maintenance and care, none of them are designed to last or work forever. When electricity is involved, failures can present electrical hazards that might be avoided with periodic inspections.

### GROUND FAULT CIRCUIT INTERRUPTERS

Outdoor outlets or those in potentially damp locations in a kitchen, bathroom or laundry room often include GFCI features. They are designed to sense abnormal current flows, breaking the circuit to prevent potential electric shocks from devices plugged into the outlets.

The average GFCI outlet is designed to last about 10 years, but in areas prone to electrical storms or power surges, they can wear out in five years or less. Check them frequently by pressing the red test button. Make sure you hit the black reset button when you are done. Contact a licensed electrician to replace any failing GFCI outlets. (Lucky Number: 210901)

### LOOSE OR DAMAGED OUTLETS OR SWITCHES

Unstable electrical outlets or wall switches with signs of heat damage or discoloration can offer early warnings of potential shock or electrical fire hazards. Loose connections can allow electrical current arcing. If you see these warning signs, it may be time to contact an electrician.

### SURGE PROTECTORS

Power strips with surge protectors can help safeguard expensive equipment like televisions, home entertainment systems and computer components from power spikes. Voltage spikes are measured in joules, and surge protectors are rated for the number of

joules they can effectively absorb. That means if your surge protector is rated at 1,000 joules, it should be replaced when it hits or passes that limit. When the limit is reached, protection stops, and you're left with a basic power strip.

Some surge protectors include indicator lights that flicker to warn you when they've stopped working as designed, but many do not. If your electrical system takes a major hit, or if you don't remember when you bought your surge protector, replacement may be the best option.

### EXTENSION CORDS

If you use extension cords regularly to connect devices and equipment to your wall outlets, you may live in an underwired home. With a growing number of electrical devices connecting your family to the electricity you get from PC Electric, having enough outlets in just the right spots can be challenging. Remember, extension cords are designed for temporary, occasional or periodic use.

If an extension cord gets noticeably warm when in use, it could be undersized for the intended use. If it shows any signs of frayed, cracked or heat-damaged insulation, it should be replaced. If the grounding prong is missing, crimped or loose, a grounded cord will not provide the protection designed into its performance. And always make sure that extension cords used in outdoor or potentially damp locations are rated for exterior use.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, approximately 51,000 electrical fires are reported each year in the United States, causing more than \$1.3 billion in annual property damage. (Lucky Number: 233801)

Electricity is an essential necessity for modern living, and PC Electric is committed to providing safe, reliable and affordable power to all of our members. We hope you'll keep these electrical safety tips in mind so that you can note any potential hazards before damage occurs. ●



**May is Electrical Safety Month.**

Safety Starts with You.

**#ElectricalSafetyMonth**



**FOR YOUR SAFETY, KEEP INFLATABLES  
10 FEET AWAY FROM ELECTRIC LINES.**



## PC ELECTRIC

### ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP!

Streaming content with electronic equipment that has the ENERGY STAR® rating will use 25 to 30 percent less energy than standard equipment. ●

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



# hurricane SEASON

starts June 1 – November 30. Get prepared now! Starting June 1, you can get free storm safety information in the lobby of our office. ●



# Lucky NUMBERS

### LOOK FOR YOUR LUCKY ACCOUNT NUMBERS!

If you see your account number published inside this issue, call PC Electric by June 30, 2019 to receive a \$25 credit on your bill. **Your account number can be found on your bill statement.** Good Luck! ●



# MEMORIAL DAY

CELEBRATE | HONOR | REMEMBER

## *closing notice*

**WE WILL BE CLOSED ON MONDAY, MAY 27TH**

PC Electric wishes everyone a safe and happy Memorial Day holiday. A dispatcher will be on duty if there is an emergency or outage. ●

**(225) 638-3751 OR 800-738-7232 | [WWW.PCEMC.ORG](http://WWW.PCEMC.ORG)**



PC Electric is an equal opportunity provider and employer.