

\$500 MECA scholarships available to deserving students

Two deserving students who will be attending college in the fall of 2007 can earn part of their tuition by applying to the Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association, which will award two \$500 scholarships.

The scholarship may be used at any Montana college or university or vocational technical school or at any out-of-state institution.

The scholarship fund was set up from donations that honor the memories of deceased directors, managers and employees who served the electric cooperatives.

Eligibility

The applicant or parents or guardians of the applicant must be a member of an electric cooperative and the cooperative must be a member of Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association.

All applications must be returned to the local electric cooperative in the applicants' community.



Application requirements

Get your application from your local cooperative or online at www.mtco-ops.com.

Return your completed scholarship application to your local electric co-op with the following information: awards and honors received; school and com-

munity activities, work experience; one letter of recommendation and a personal statement about how your school/community/work experience will influence your goals and career choice. No more than two doublespaced typed pages.

Attach a copy of your school transcripts and ACT or SAT scores. If you are a college freshman, include a high school transcript.

Deadline

Return the application form, transcripts and letters of reference to your local cooperative by the close of business Thursday, Jan. 31, 2008.

Judging of applications

Here's a rundown of how judges will evaluate your application:

Grades count 20 percent.

ACT/SAT scores count 20 percent.

Activities count for 20 percent.

Your essay/personal statement counts for 40 percent of the total.

NEW TO RM — ELECTRICAL SAFETY, NEW TECHNOLOGY AND READER OPINION

We're introducing three new features in *RM*, brief samples here, with future issues to expand as topics and reader response demands.

You told us in our survey that you wanted to see more on electrical safety and technology. And you said you wanted more reader feedback.

This month a dose of each, including some commentary from survey responses.

Safety, some shocking facts

Electricity always seeks the shortest path to the ground, traveling through metal, wet wood or water.

Since your body is 70 percent water, that makes you an ideal candidate. So if you touch an energized bare wire or faulty appliance while you are grounded, electricity will pass through you to the ground causing a harmful, even fatal shock.

And it doesn't take much, according to an Electrical

Safety booklet produced by the Culver Company.

The electricity used by a 7.5 watt Christmas tree bulb can kill you if it passes through your chest. Even if it isn't fatal, electrical shock can cause falls, burns, cuts or internal bleeding.

Quite possibly, the most common electrical hazard in your home is a frayed, worn or cut appliance cord or extension cord. If it's been taped with electrical tape (or worse, duct tape), it won't be waterproof, and you ought to have it replaced.

Perhaps the GFCI is the easiest remedy for preventing shocks. More on GFCIs in a later issue.

Fatality Warning:

A Montana ag worker was pulling a water pump from a reservoir. The electrical cord to the pump motor had worn through. The circuit was not protected by a GFCI, which automatically kicks off power in a shocking

situation. The worker did not turn off or disconnect the power. Working in a wet area around a faulty power cord, a man was electrocuted, killed in one of the most preventable accidents imaginable. Shut off the breakers first.

Technology tip:

Compact fluorescent lamp bulbs last six to 10 times longer than standard incandescent light bulbs. They save about \$25 in energy costs over the life of each CFL. For each CFL you buy, you save as many as 10 trips to buy and replace an incandescent bulb.

Final word on safety

Safety-wise, all too often, changing a light bulb means you're probably standing on a chair or table, in the case of a compact fluorescent, nine fewer times, but one time too many. CFL or incandescent. Either way, when replacing one, use a proper ladder or stool.

Reader Forum

From the RM survey:

I live in Carbon County and the magazine feels like I got on the wrong mailing list . . . I would make more of an effort to read if some people/articles were local to me. Thanks for the survey. Honestly, we would not have made the time to fill this out without the \$100 carrot.

— Somewhat Dissatisfied reader

Least favorite department: politics — because we hear enough already.

— Many readers

Please don't pursue global warming stories; it's really junk science.

— Comment

More on green energy; more reader photos; I love your magazine.

— Comment from several readers

I see many magazines in the post office trash; there must be something missing.

— Comment

Your photos are excellent; I cut them out and put them on the fridge.

— Editor's favorite reader