

News Release



**Woodruff Electric
Cooperative Corporation**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Woodruff Electric Urges Safety in College Dorm Rooms

Personalization is a big trend for college dorm rooms and shared housing facilities. College furnishings — from bedding and décor to kitchen supplies and electronics — are often reflective of interests and future aspirations. One essential for the college residence is safety.

“There is a tendency for college students to want to bring everything they own,” says Tommy Talley, Safety Manager for Woodruff Electric. “The limited number of electric outlets in student rooms can tempt many to use multiple extension cords and power strips, which can cause cords to overheat, creating shock and fire hazards.”

Potentially older wiring in student housing and apartments may not be able to handle the increased electrical demand of today’s college student. If use of an appliance frequently causes power to trip off, or if its power cord or the outlet feels hot, the appliance should be disconnected immediately, and the condition reported to the landlord or campus housing staff.

Woodruff Electric offers the following safety tips for students to help prevent and reduce the risk of electrical fires in their student housing:

- Only purchase and use electrical products tested for safety. The U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) publishes a list of approved testing laboratories.
- Avoid overloading extension cords, power strips, or outlets.
- Use power strips with an over-current protector that will shut off power automatically if there is too much current being drawn.
- Never tack or nail an electrical cord to any surface or run cords across traffic paths or under rugs where they can be trampled or damaged.
- Use the correct wattage light bulbs for lamps and fixtures, preferably LEDs. If no indication is on the product, do not use a bulb with more than 60 watts.
- 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, camping 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.
- Smoke detectors should never be disabled, and fire alarms should never be ignored or taken casually as a drill. Every time a fire alarm sounds, residents should calmly and quickly follow practiced procedures and immediately exit the building.

“Stress to students that in the event of a fire, it is important to follow safety procedures and get out of harm’s way immediately,” Talley adds. “Property and valuables can be replaced, but lives cannot.”

Woodruff Electric Cooperative, headquartered in Forrest City, is a member-owned electric utility. Woodruff Electric serves electric power to more than 19,000 homes, farms, and businesses in parts of Woodruff, Prairie, Monroe, Cross, St. Francis, Lee, and Phillips counties in eastern Arkansas. The district offices are located in Augusta, Moro and Barton.

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