

LINES

PEPCO.COM

FEBRUARY 2009

Did You Know?

What are tamper-resistant electrical receptacles, and are they safer than the outlet covers or wall-plug caps we now use?

Tamper-resistant, or TR, electrical receptacles have spring-loaded shutters that close off the contact openings, or slots, of the outlet. When a plug is inserted in the outlet, springs compress simultaneously to open shutters that allow the metal prongs to make contact – creating an electrical circuit.

TR receptacles prevent children from inserting an object since the shutters will not open to allow electrical contact.

The National Fire Protection Association urges using TR receptacles because:

- Outlet covers may be lost and pose a choking hazard for children and pets.
- When removed, wall-plug caps don't prevent objects from being inserted in the receptacle.
- The 2008 National Electric Code requires new and renovated homes have them installed.
- A TR receptacle costs about 50 cents more than an unguarded outlet – a small price to pay to keep your child safer.

For more information, visit nfpa.org. More safety tips are available at pepco.com.

Learning the Basics of Wise Energy Use

As part of Maryland's Green Schools Program, Pepco is helping local students learn the importance of environmental awareness and how to reduce our nation's carbon footprint.



Recently, Regulatory Analyst Jeff Roman spoke to 65 students at Wheaton High School about taking steps to save energy in their schools and at home. Roman also talked about Pepco's programs to conserve energy, help customers save on energy costs, and reduce environmental impact.

Maryland Affairs Representative Zenayda Mostofi joined Roman for a hands-on demonstration of "My Account," Pepco's interactive Web tool that helps customers analyze their energy usage.

This year, Pepco plans to visit selected schools in Montgomery and Prince George's counties to help students practice their computer skills, using "My Account" to take an online energy audit.

New Retailer Offers CFL Discounts

Ecobeco in Rockville has joined Pepco's retailer network offering great discounts on compact fluorescent light bulbs or CFLs.

Ecobeco is at 5465 Randolph Road, Unit B, a quarter-mile off Rockville Pike. Phone number is 240-396-2141.

Save \$1.50 on single bulbs and \$3 on multipacks with the Pepco discount. CFLs use 75 percent less energy than a traditional incandescent and last about 10 times longer. So save money, save energy and protect the environment with CFLs.



Coping with Winter Storms and Outages

Pepco offers tips for staying safe during winter storms and possible power outages.

- Stay indoors and listen to local broadcasts for weather updates.
- If you go outside, wear several layers of lightweight clothing rather than just a single heavy coat.
- Wear a hat, gloves or mittens; cover your mouth to protect your lungs.
- Know the hazards of wind chill, limit time outdoors.
- Walk carefully on snowy, icy sidewalks.
- If you drive, keep a disaster supply kit in the car and have a full tank of gas.

Use Care When Shoveling

- Carefully clear accumulated snow from gas and electric facilities, propane and oil tank storage areas.
- Clear snow away from outside vents for proper operation of natural gas appliances, water heaters, and other appliances such as dryers.
- Take frequent breaks to avoid exhaustion and injury.

If You Lose Power

- Use a flashlight for lighting, avoid candles.
- Turn off appliances to prevent power surges when service is restored.
- Never run a generator inside your home or garage.
- Don't use a charcoal grill indoors.
- Cover windows with blankets to prevent heat loss.

For more tips on weathering winter storms, visit pepco.com.



Mutual Assistance: Restoring Service Quickly

When the power is out, Pepco knows that customers want the lights back on as quickly as possible. But sometimes damage from storms is so severe and widespread that extra help is needed.

Fortunately, the utility industry supports a program called "mutual assistance." This program speeds up the restoration process by pooling the resources of two or more utilities.

Since it's difficult to have enough resources available to handle all emergencies, mutual assistance allows utilities to "borrow" skilled crews and equipment when needed. This keeps operating costs low.

Also, the program allows utilities to provide extra help and still keep sufficient crews at home to handle both routine and emergency work.

During the last several months, Pepco Holdings, Inc., Pepco's parent company, sent crews to the Texas Gulf Coast, Pittsburgh, and Massachusetts to assist utilities in those areas restore service.

For more information on mutual assistance, visit the Edison Electric Institute online at www.eei.org. And for tips on how you can be prepared for emergencies, go to pepco.com.

Income Tax Credits Help Working Families

Low- and moderate-income families may benefit from two substantial tax credits -- the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit.

For more information on these tax credits and free tax preparation services, contact the Maryland Office of the Comptroller at the following phone numbers:

Upper Marlboro: 301-952-2810
Wheaton: 301-949-6030



Customer Service: (202) 833-7500
TTY Telephone Number for Hearing Impaired: (202) 872-2369
To Report Power Outages: 1-877-PEPCO 62 (1-877-737-2662)