



# Electrical Safety: Community Outreach Ideas



## Spark an Electrical Safety Revolution: Getting Electrical Safety Messages Out to Your Community

Your neighbors are your best resource to help spread electrical safety messages. Here are a few examples of ways to get the word out to your community.

- **Check it Off:** Distribute the Electrical Safety Checklist in schools, libraries and local businesses. Encourage families to use the checklist to make sure their homes are SAFE (Safe And Free of Electrical Dangers).
- **Amp Up Education:** Give presentations during school visits and community events.
- **Hold an Open House:** This gives residents a chance to see the firehouse up close while you provide valuable public education.
- **Involve Your Audience:** Interactive demos are a great way to get the public's attention. Think about partnering with the local electric utility companies, electricians, hardware stores, big box stores (Home Depot, Lowe's, Wal-Mart), supermarkets or other high-traffic businesses.
- **Stop the Presses:** Local media can give you a lot of bang for no bucks. Use the sample press release and op/eds provided in this kit to give them the facts. You can also provide them with tips and Electrical Safety Spots included on the CD, or write your own article and submit it!
- **Run a Community Listing:** Submit events to community bulletins and church newsletters.
- **Bill It:** Work with local electric utility companies to distribute the Electrical Safety Checklist and Electrical Safety Spots with customers' bills.
- **Focus on At-risk Populations:** Older adults and low-income families are especially vulnerable to electrical fires.

### Event Planning Tips

Decide who your audience is and what you want to achieve at your event. You'll want to make sure your activities reinforce electrical safety messages and provide useful information on how to prevent a fire.

### Pick a Date and Location

Your event can be held during the day or evening, but it must be a time that people in your community are available. Saturday and Sunday afternoons are often most convenient, and fewer events tend to take place on weekends. However, your fire department's public educator or coordinator should check the community

calendar to make sure there are minimal conflicts. Of course the firehouse is always fun for the public. Other places that draw crowds include the public library, community centers and the grocery store.

### Ensure Adequate Staffing and Equipment

Emergencies can happen at any time, including during an open house. If your event is being held at a fire station, make sure enough firefighters are available so that even if a crew must leave, there is still staff available to meet with visitors.

### Have Handouts Ready

Have handouts available for all age groups. Distribute printed materials that reinforce electrical safety messages.

### Keep It Brief

Generally, the public won't attend an event that requires hours of their time. Visitors should be able to learn at least one positive fire safety action that will help them learn safety messages in 30 minutes or less.

### Feed Them

Nothing draws a crowd like good food. Arrange for a local restaurant or fast food outlet to sponsor and provide refreshments. Have firefighters cook up their favorite specialty or solicit donations of baked goods from local chefs. Ask local distributors or bottling companies to donate cold soda.

### Make it Fun

Hold activities that allow visitors to meet firefighters and learn about fire safety in the process. Human interaction creates a personal experience for people, and is key to an open house's success. Create hands-on learning opportunities to build participants' safety skills.

### Promote, Promote, Promote

No matter how great your plans are, it won't be a success if no one knows about it. Publicize your open house at each and every opportunity, and as far in advance as possible. Use the electrical safety "fill-in-the-blank" news release to promote your event to local media outlets. Develop and pass out flyers to local businesses; send letters to civic and religious groups that can announce your event, etc. These are just a few suggestions — be creative, and use your resources to your full advantage!

**Keeping Your Community Safe and Energized!**

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