

PSC Consumer Connection



Informed Consumers, Quality Utility Services, and a Dedicated Organization for Missourians in the 21st Century

Issue 36 - January 2011

A quarterly publication of the Missouri Public Service Commission
Public Information & Education Department

PSC PUBLISHES A NEW MAGAZINE

The Missouri Public Service Commission has published a new magazine called PSConnection.

This first issue highlights the PSC's number one priority: safety. The first of three articles explains what the PSC is doing to make sure to avoid natural gas explosions, like what was seen in California.



The second article highlights advances in electrical safety and reliability to make sure that the lights stay on, even during bad weather.

The third article highlights how customers, including vulnerable customers,

stay warm through the winter season.

You may subscribe on-line to receive notification when an electronic version has been posted to our website. Just go on-line and click on the "Sign-up For E-Mail Updates" box on the right side of the page and click on the link: "Consumer and PSConnection Magazine."

To request a copy, please contact our office at 1-800-392-4211.

DON'T IGNORE A SHUT-OFF NOTICE

If you've received a shut-off notice from your utility company, please do not ignore it!

Call your utility to see if you can work out a payment plan. Many utility companies have assistance programs available for its customers.

If you are unable to resolve the problem after contacting your utility provider, contact the Missouri Public Service Commission at 1-800-392-4211.



LOCAL PUBLIC HEARINGS SET FOR FEBRUARY & MARCH

The Missouri Public Service Commission will hold local public hearings in February and March in an electric rate case filed by Ameren Missouri.

All hearings will begin with a question-and-answer session followed by the opportunity for customers to provide testimony to the Commission. Here is the local public hearing schedule:



Tuesday, February 15 beginning at 11:30 a.m. at the Dexter National Guard Armory, Assembly Hall, 1702 State Highway 114 East, Dexter

Tuesday, February 15 beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Hayti High School, Cafeteria, 400 North 4th Street, Hayti

Wednesday, February 16 beginning at 11:30 a.m. at Harris Stowe State University, Dr. Henry Givins, Jr. Administration Building, Main Auditorium, Room 112, 3026 Laclede, St. Louis

Wednesday, February 16 beginning at 5:30 p.m. at University of Missouri at St. Louis, Millennium Student Center - Century Room A, One University Blvd, St. Louis

Thursday, February 17 beginning at 11:30 a.m. at Holiday Inn Southwest - Viking Conference Center, Salon 1, 10709 Watson Road, St. Louis

Thursday, February 17 beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Julia Davis Regional Branch Library, Auditorium, 4415 Natural Bridge Ave., St. Louis

Tuesday, February 22 beginning at 5:30 p.m. at O'Fallon Municipal Center, Multi-Purpose Room, 100 North Main St., O'Fallon

Wednesday, February 23 beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Excelsior Springs High School, Commons Area, 612 Tiger Drive, Excelsior Springs

Thursday, February 24 beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Moberly Area Community College, Blue Room, 101 College Ave., Moberly

(See HEARINGS, page 2)

HIDDEN DANGERS

CRACKED OUTLETS

There are hidden dangers associated with cracked and damaged outlets.

It may not seem like a big deal, but if you get bitten by electricity, it will change your mind very quickly.

Broken pieces allows an exposed area to come in contact with the conductive parts of the circuit.



Cracked face plates on outlets can expose loose terminals and loose connection points for the cords that plug into them.

Along with providing protection from these contact points, outlet covers and their housings provide support for the contact fingers within the outlet itself.

If the back plate of the outlet is cracked, the wiring and inner contacts can be exposed within the junction box and cause a short circuit. This too can be a trouble spot when pulling the outlet from the junction box and having the outlet fall apart into pieces.

As with any electrical project or repair, always turn the power off to the circuit that you'll be working on and test to see that it is truly off. Remember, safety first!

If you have a bad outlet, don't hesitate to replace it with a new one.

HEARINGS (From page one)

Monday, February 28 beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Union R-XI High School, Fine Arts Center, 1 Wildcat Dr., Union

Tuesday, March 1 beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Fox C-6 School District, Roy Wilde Conference Center, 849 Jeffco Blvd, Arnold

Wednesday, March 2 beginning at 11:30 a.m. at The Governor Office Building, 200 Madison St., Room 310, Jefferson City

Wednesday, March 2 beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Mexico Senior High School, Emmons Hall, 639 North Wade, Mexico

Thursday, March 3 beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Truman State University, Student Union Activities Room, 901 South Franklin St., Kirksville

Protect The Water Pipes In Your Home During Winter

Weatherproofing homes against the cold may result in energy savings. It will also help protect indoor plumbing.

Follow these precautions to reduce the risk of freezing pipes.

Know the location of your main water shut-off valve. If a pipe freezes or bursts, shut the water off immediately. The main water valve is usually located along a basement wall next to the water meter or where the water supply enters the building.



Know the areas in your home where water pipes are most vulnerable to freezing. Eliminate sources of cold air near water lines such as crawl spaces, outside faucets, unheated rooms, basements, or garages.

Repair broken windows.

Protect your pipes. Wrap exposed water pipes with insulation or UL-listed heat tape.

Take Measures to Prevent Pipe Freezing When it's Cold

On extremely cold days, homeowners should take extra precautions to prevent pipes from freezing. One way to prevent pipes from freezing is to keep the water moving through the pipes.

To keep water flowing through pipes to avoid freezing, leave several faucets turned on, with a flow that's just slightly more than a heavy drip. It's important to leave several different faucets running, as sections of piping can freeze, cutting off the water supply to entire sections of the home. Leaving several faucets running will also pull in more water through the main pipe running into the home - the pipe that is most likely to freeze in many homes.

For printed materials regarding a number of consumer issues or copies of this newsletter, please call 573-522-2760 or email gregg.ochoa@psc.mo.gov

Who to Contact:

Missouri Public Service Commission
Consumer Hotline **1-800-392-4211**
or email: pscinfo@psc.mo.gov

Mail your inquiry or complaint to:

Missouri Public Service Commission
Consumer Services Department
P.O. Box 360
Jefferson City, MO 65102

