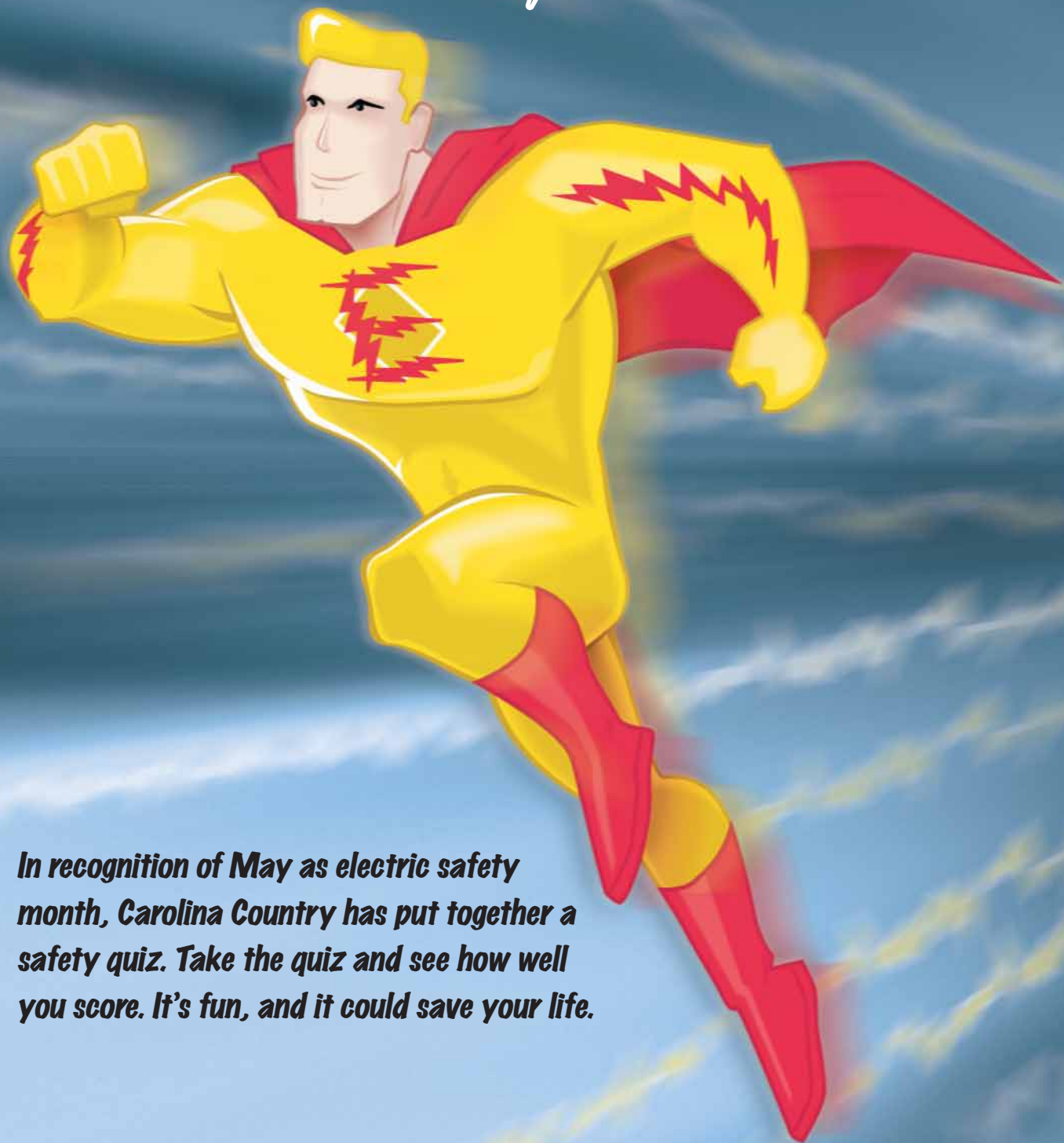


Traveling at the speed of light

The rapid rate of electricity and answers to other electric safety questions

Illustrated by Warren Kessler



In recognition of May as electric safety month, Carolina Country has put together a safety quiz. Take the quiz and see how well you score. It's fun, and it could save your life.

Electric safety quiz

- Electricity travels at the rate of:**
 - 120 miles per hour.
 - 5,280 feet per second.
 - 186,300 miles per second.
- Where is the safest place to be during a lightning storm?**
 - In a car.
 - In the middle of a field.
 - In a house.
 - Lying face down on the ground.
- The average number of people who die in the United States each year from being struck by lightning is about how many?**
 - 10.
 - 100.
 - 1,000.
 - 100,000.
- True or False: Using a telephone during a lightning storm is dangerous.**
- If you see a downed power line or low-hanging power line, you should:**
 - Move it out of the way and call your local electric cooperative.
 - Stay clear and call the electric cooperative immediately.
 - Don't worry about it because your cooperative already knows about it.
- True or False: Power lines coming from the outdoor pole transformer to your house are covered and OK to touch.**
- True or False: It is safe to touch a power line with a pole, as long as the pole is made of plastic.**
- How much voltage is needed to hurt or kill people?**
 - 120 volts.
 - 240 volts.
 - More than 240 volts.
 - Any voltage.
- If a household fuse blows or a circuit breaker trips, the first thing you should do is:**
 - Call your electric cooperative.
 - Determine what caused the fuse to blow or the breaker to trip.
 - Open your breaker box or fuse box.
- In order not to overload your household circuits, you should know the capacity of the circuits. How can you determine the capacity?**
 - Look at your electric bill.
 - Check the meter outside your house.
 - Open your breaker box or fuse box.
- If you have a lot of electronic devices and appliances at work in one area of your house, which is the best way to power them?**
 - Connect them all to a power strip with a surge suppressor.
 - Have an electrician add wall outlets.
 - Plug in only the one you intend to use.
- What uses more electricity?**
 - Leaving a light on all day.
 - Playing Nintendo (video games) for two hours.
- Which takes more electricity?**
 - Washing clothes on a warm or hot setting in an automatic washer.
 - Drying clothes on a warm or hot setting in an automatic dryer.
- True or false: You should unplug small appliances when not in use.**
- A lamp's or light fixture's recommended bulb wattage means:**
 - It's OK to use a bulb of that wattage or lower.
 - It's OK to use a bulb of that wattage or higher.
 - You must use a bulb of that wattage only.

How did you do?

Your cooperative believes it is very important that you know how to be safe around electricity. Just like there's no such thing as being too safe, there's also no such thing as too much information about electrical safety. We hope you enjoyed the quiz and learned something, too.

Score	Rating
15 correct	You can work for an electric cooperative.
12-14 correct	You missed the trick questions.
1-13 correct	You learned important information.
0 correct	You chose the wrong answers on purpose.

- Answer: C.** Electricity travels at the rate of 186,300 miles per second (the speed of light).
- Answer: C.** By far the safest place to be during an electrical storm is in a house or building. The metal plumbing and wiring in the walls of the building form a protective barrier. It is important to remember not to be touching that metallic cage. Stay away from electrical appliances, plumbing fixtures, etc.
- Answer: B.** About 100 people die each year in the United States as the result of being struck by a lightning bolt.
- Answer: True.** Lightning can strike telephone and electrical wires and travel into your house, through your phone cord, into your telephone and into the handset. Cordless phones are not dangerous because there is no physical connection to the wires, but you should not use your cordless phone during an electrical storm to call your neighbor who may not have a cordless phone.
- Answer: B.** If you see a downed power line or a low-hanging one, you should stay clear and call your electric cooperative immediately.
- Answer: False.** Power lines coming from the transformer to your house are covered but they're NOT OK to touch. Always stay away from power lines.
- Answer: False.** It is not safe to touch a power line with any pole. The same goes for an antenna or other object.
- Answer: D.** Any voltage can hurt or kill people.
- Answer: B.** Determine what caused the fuse to blow or the breaker to trip before replacing or resetting. If you can't find out, call an electrician.
- Answer: C.** Your breaker box or fuse box should contain a diagram showing the amp capacity for each circuit. Make sure the combined amp rating of your electrical equipment does not exceed the circuit's capacity. If there is no diagram, contact an electrician.
- Answer: B.** If you see a downed power line or a low-hanging one, you should stay clear and call your electric cooperative immediately.
- Answer: False.** Power lines coming from the outdoor pole transformer to your house are covered and OK to touch.
- Answer: B.** Playing Nintendo for two hours uses more electricity.
- Answer: A.** Washing clothes uses more electricity, mainly because you have to heat the water.
- Answer: True.** Even if they are not being used, appliances left plugged in do draw a small amount of electric current.
- Answer: A.** It's OK to use bulbs equal to or lower than the recommended wattage.