

# 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](http://nfpa.org). More safety tips are available at [pepco.com](http://pepco.com).

## Need Help Paying Energy Bills?

**Pepco understands that these are tough economic times. Here are four ways District of Columbia customers can get help with energy bills during the winter months.**



### LIHEAP

The federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program or LIHEAP is a grant program that assists low-income households – both homeowners and renters – with their energy bills.

Contact the District Department of the Environment's Energy Office Division at a special phone number – 311 – or visit their Web site at [www.dceo.dc.gov](http://www.dceo.dc.gov) for application information and eligibility guidelines.

### RAD

Low-income customers may be eligible for Pepco's Residential Aid Discount (RAD) program. Pepco's RAD provides qualified District of Columbia customers with a discount on kilowatt-hours used each month. The discount varies depending on winter or summer usage. Call the special phone number – 311 – for more information.

### Budget Billing

Many customers find it convenient to budget their monthly energy costs. Pepco's Budget Billing program allows you to make a fixed payment each month.

### Time Payment Arrangements

For customers who may be experiencing temporary financial stress, Pepco may be able to offer payment arrangements. This service aims to bring the account up-to-date over a mutually agreeable period of time.

For more information and to sign up for the Pepco programs, call Customer Care at 202-833-7500. Customers interested in Budget Billing also can fill out an e-mail application form on our Web site at [pepco.com](http://pepco.com), click on "Billing and Payments."

## 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](http://www.eei.org). And for tips on how you can be prepared for emergencies, go to [pepco.com](http://pepco.com).

## Tips for 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.
- 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](http://pepco.com).



## Income Tax Credits Help Working Families

Low- and moderate-income families in the District of Columbia 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 for qualified individuals, visit the DC EITC Campaign online at [www.dceitc.org](http://www.dceitc.org).



*Senior Vice President, Asset Management & Planning, William Gausman (left) talks with students from the District’s Friendship Public Charter Schools about his career at Pepco. Some 20 students recently visited the utility’s headquarters as part of a community partnership program with the D.C. charter school system. The program helps students explore potential careers in the electric utility industry after graduation.*

309-12-08/DC

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)