

October 2011 Newsletter

*"Tonight is the night
When dead leaves fly
Like witches on switches
Across the sky,
When elf and sprite
Flit through the night
On a moony sheen.*

*Tonight is the night
When leaves make a sound
Like a gnome in his home
Under the ground,
When spooks and trolls
Creep out of holes
Mossy and green.*

*Tonight is the night
When pumpkins stare
Through sheaves and leaves
Everywhere,
When ghouls and ghost
And goblin host
Dance round their queen.
It's Halloween."
~By Harry Behn*

Are Your Outlets Grounded?



An outlet that is not properly grounded looks exactly like an outlet that is grounded.

To test your outlets yourself, you need to get an outlet tester like the one pictured above. They are available for about \$10 at any hardware store. Just plug it in; lights will flash if the outlet is not grounded or if there are other problems with the internal wiring.

In any home, surges of electricity can occur, due to events either inside or outside the house. When they do, extra electricity courses through the wires for a few seconds before the circuit breaker trips and shuts off power. When an outlet is grounded, that extra electricity is automatically routed into the ground. When it is not, the electricity can surge into your devices, or your hand, instead.

If you don't have a ground, you become the ground, or whatever you plug in becomes the ground.

And don't be fooled just because an outlet has three prongs. It doesn't mean the wiring is grounded. And if it's not, and there's an electrical event, you could be shocked or killed.



Old-Fashioned Gingersnaps

Prep Time: 20 min, Cook Time: 10 min, Makes: 8 dozen cookies

Ingredients:

- Cooking spray
- 2 3/4 cups all purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 3/4 cup butter, softened
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 1/4 cup light molasses
- Granulated sugar, for rolling

Instructions:

1. HEAT oven to 375°F. Coat baking sheets with non-stick cooking spray.
2. COMBINE flour, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger, salt and cloves in small bowl; set aside.
3. BEAT sugar and butter in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed. Beat in egg and molasses until light and fluffy. Stir in flour mixture until just blended. Chill thoroughly.
4. SHAPE dough into 3/4-inch balls; roll in granulated sugar. Place on baking sheet 2 inches apart. Flatten with bottom of glass dipped in sugar.
5. BAKE 8 to 10 minutes or until cookies are set. Cool on wire rack.



What's Wrong With This Picture?



Answer: The hose is made of vinyl, which is susceptible to static charges; and the ridges, which are also on the inside of the hose, capture dust and lint, allowing for a dangerous buildup of flammable material. This is a fire waiting to happen. Dryers cause 1/3 of household fires, so if your hose looks like this, replace it immediately!



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