

Ameren Illinois Reminding Customers to Keep Mylar Balloons Away From Power Lines

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Ameren Illinois is asking customers to properly dispose of Mylar balloons in an effort to reduce the potential for power outages.

Mylar balloons are metallic and conduct electricity, resulting in surges and shorts that have the ability to knock out power, start fires and cause significant damage to the electric grid.

The popular party accessories also pose an unnecessary safety hazard for linemen who have to safely untangle and remove what's left of the balloons from energized high voltage lines.

“We realize this is the time of year when everyone is outside celebrating new graduates, newlyweds, birthdays and spring holidays,” said Dave Wakeman, Senior Vice President Operations and Technical Services for Ameren Illinois. “Keeping the balloons tethered and weighted while in use and then properly puncturing and disposing after the fact can help to ensure they do not get loose and end up in our power lines and substations.”

If you happen to notice a balloon or another toy entangled in electric infrastructure, always assume the line is live and do not attempt to remove the object yourself. Instead call Ameren Illinois at 1-800-755-5000 and a crew will be dispatched to handle the situation.

“Mylar balloon-related outages are more common than one might imagine,” Wakeman added. “A little extra precaution can truly help us keep the lights on.”