PUSEY ELECTRIC
301 State Road · Media, Pennsylvania 19063
(Office) 610-566-1972 · (Fax) 610-891-9296

Pusey Electric is proud to offer 24-hour, seven days a week service for emergency calls. For all other customer service requests, please follow your builder's guidelines or contact us at 610-566-1972 during normal business hours. To help you troubleshoot some of the minor issues, we have included below some of the frequently asked questions or concerns that we hope you find helpful. If your problem is not listed or the answer failed to solve your issue, please contact us or your builder to set up a service visit.

TROUBLESHOOTING GUIDE

What are Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI's)

Per code, there are a minimum of four (4) GFCI receptacles in your house. GFCI stands for Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter. In layman's terms this device protects you from electrical shock. When it senses the slightest increase in resistance resulting from ground fault, (i.e., the use of electrical devices in or near water), it trips or shuts off to protect you.

The GFCI house circuit is typically the receptacle located next to the main electrical panel in the basement (or sometimes garage). This typically protects your basement, garage, utility and exterior weatherproof receptacles. **Note: Receptacles on dedicated circuits and for the garage door openers are NOT protected by this circuit.**

The GFCI bathroom circuit is typically located in the master bathroom (or sometimes hall bath) and typically protects all standard bathroom receptacles including your powder room(s).

Per code, there are two GFCI kitchen circuits with the GFCI receptacles typically located at the main counter area. These circuits protect the standard kitchen receptacles and many times some of the breakfast and dining area receptacles.

Please note, refrigerators and other heavy duty appliances such as power tools that are plugged into a GFCI protected receptacle may cause the circuit to trip due to the current they draw.

How Do I Reset or Test My GFCI Receptacle?

If the GFCI receptacle trips, all of the receptacles on that circuit will not work. Please unplug all devices and reset the GFCI circuit at the receptacle (NOT at the main panel). **If the GFCI receptacle fails to reset and trips after several attempts, there may be a more serious problem.** Please contact us to discuss the issue in more detail.

The red button is the re-set button that you depress to reactivate the outlet or outlets in the event of deactivation resulting from a fault (trip) or from a test (see below).

The black button is a test button and, when pressed, should deactivate the outlet and any other outlet fed from it. This deactivation indicates a properly functioning device. After testing, press the red button to re-set the circuit.

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How Do I Reset My Breaker When It Has Tripped?

First, disconnect any devices and turn off all switches that may have caused the breaker to overload and trip. A breaker handle that appears to be neither ON nor OFF is in the trip position. To reset, push the breaker handle firmly into the OFF position until you hear a click. This indicates the breaker is reset. At this point, you can turn the breaker back on, again pressing firmly on handle until you hear a click in the ON position.

Please note that breakers are mechanical devices and must be turned all the way off before being turned back on and may take several attempts. **If the breaker fails to reset and trips after several attempts, there may be a more serious problem.** Please contact us to discuss the issue in more detail.

My Arc Fault Breaker Has Tripped? What Should I Do?

Arc-Fault Circuit Interrupter Breakers (AFCI) have integrated computer chips that identify a disturbance to the standard electrical current of the circuit it protects. AFCI breakers are different from standard breakers which only protect for over-current issues. If an arc-fault circuit is not working, turn off all devices and turn off all switches before testing the breaker. At the main panel, press the yellow "TEST" button on the AFCI breaker for the affected circuit. It should NOT click indicating it has already tripped. If the breaker clicks, try the next AFCI breaker until you find the breaker that does NOT click. For each breaker that you have tested, you must reset the breaker by following the same steps for a standard breaker.

Once the correct breaker is reset, plug in each device and turn on each switch independently to determine if any of the connected loads are causing the breaker to trip. In many cases, an old or failing product may cause the AFCI breaker to trip indicating a safety issue. Please repair or replace the device accordingly. **If the breaker fails to reset and trips after several attempts, there may be a more serious problem.** Please contact us to discuss the issue in more detail.

My Smoke Detectors Are Chirping? What Should I Do?

Beeping or chirping smoke detectors can be caused by a dead or failing battery, a missing battery or a missing electrical feed. As a first step, please check and replace the battery in your smoke detector. If your smoke detector does not have a side mounted battery compartment you will need to remove the smoke from the ceiling. This can be done by twisting the smoke detector to unlock it from its mounting bracket and firmly pulling the device from the bracket. Please note, that Pusey Electric is NOT responsible for changing batteries.

My Smoke Detectors Appear To Be Going Off For No Reason. What Should I Do?

Bugs or excess dust can cause smoke detectors to begin sounding. After confirming that there is no fire hazard, please check the smoke for any debris and vacuum out the device to clear out any possible dust. We recommend cleaning your smoke detectors monthly to avoid excess dust build-up that may cause false alerts.

When My Air Conditioner Cycles On, My House Lights Blink? Is This Normal?

Yes. It is not uncommon for a large motor/compressor with a high start-up current to cause a minor voltage drop when it starts. This causes the momentary blinking of the lights and has no negative effect on the electrical equipment in your house.

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My Motion Sensors or Flood Lights Are Not Working? What Should I Do?

If your flood lights do not work, please check the bulbs. We are not responsible for the warranty of any lamps and there will be a service charge for the changing any lamps if no other problem exists. Motion sensors operate the lights when motion is detected and turn off a short time after motion detection has stopped. This time can be adjusted from 5 seconds to 10 minutes. Please note that animals (including birds) and falling leaves can activate your motion sensors.

To turn lights off that are controlled by a motion sensor, flip the switch "OFF". For automatic operation, turn the switch "ON" and allow the motion sensor to run through a one minute test period. To turn lights on outside of motion sensor detection, flip the switch into the "OFF" position and then back "ON" within 1 second. This will override the motion sensor and turn the lights on manually. To resume automatic operation, flip the switch "OFF" for more than 5 seconds and then back "ON" again.

Can I Dim Fluorescent Or Compact Fluorescent Lights?

Yes. However, fluorescent and compact fluorescent lights may require not only a special dimmer, but also special fixtures. You cannot use a typical incandescent dimmer with fluorescent fixtures and most compact fluorescent lamps. Please refer to your fixture and lamp specifications to verify which dimmers will work.

My Holiday Lights Continue to Trip the Breaker? What Should I Do?

Most exterior receptacles are on a shared circuit and can only handle a certain load. The quantity of holiday lights and overall load on this particular circuit is most likely causing the breaker to trip. Try reducing the number of lights to avoid an excess load. An additional dedicated circuit to one or more of your existing exterior receptacles or adding an additional receptacle on a dedicated circuit is a viable solution to accommodate a greater amount of lighting/loads.

How Can I Protect My Home from Surge/Lightning Protection?

We offer a number of surge arrestor products for both your main panel and individual circuits, many of which can be retrofitted very easily. However, these products only offer additional levels of protection as nothing can guarantee against the power of Mother Nature. Additionally, depending on where the surge begins in your house, a main panel arrestor may not protect certain circuits as the surge will only be stopped when it hits the arrestor. We recommend protecting valuable equipment such as computers and audio/video devices with additional localized surge protection devices.

My Power Continues To Go Out During Bad Weather. What Can I Do?

Unfortunately, some areas tend to have more and longer outages during inclement weather conditions. This is due to the utility lines in your particular area being subject to damage during these conditions. To avoid dealing with these outages, we offer a variety of backup power packages with the most common being outdoor generators. We can install a complete generator package based on your electricity needs during outages. Please contact our service department for more information.

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SAFETY CHECKS FOR YOUR HOME

The following are suggestions from the National Electrical Safety Foundation:

Outlets
Periodically check outlets that have loose-fitting plugs which can lead to overheating and a potential fire hazard. Replace any missing or broken wall plates and make sure that there are approved safety covers on all unused outlets that are accessible to small children.

Cords
Make sure all cords are in good condition and free from fraying or cracking. Cords should never be nailed or stapled to a wall, baseboard or to another object. Do not place cords under carpets or rugs or rest any furniture on them. Extension cords should only be used on a temporary basis as they are not allowed per code to be used as permanent household wiring. Make sure extension cords have safety enclosures to help prevent young children from shock hazards and mouth burn injuries.

Plugs
Make sure your plugs fit your outlets. Never remove the ground pin (the third prong) to make a three-prong fit a two-conductor outlet as this could lead to an electrical shock. NEVER FORCE A PLUG INTO AN OUTLET IF IT DOES NOT FIT. Plugs should fit securely into outlets. Avoid overloading outlets with too many appliances.

Water and Electricity Do Not Mix
Do not leave plugged-in appliances where they might fall in contact with water. If a plugged-in appliance falls into water, NEVER reach in to pull it out (EVEN IF THE APPLIANCE IS TURNED OFF). First turn off the power source at the panel board and then unplug the appliance. If you have an appliance that has gotten wet, do not use it until it has been checked by a qualified repair person.

Light Bulbs
Check the wattage of all bulbs in light fixtures to make sure they are the correct wattage for the size of the fixture. Replace bulbs that have a higher wattage than recommended. If you do not know the correct wattage, check with the manufacturer of the fixture. Make sure bulbs are screwed in securely as loose bulbs may overheat.

Appliances
If an appliance repeatedly blows a fuse, trips a circuit breaker or if it has given you a shock, unplug it and have it repaired or replaced.

Outdoor Safety
Electric-powered mowers and other tools should not be used in the rain, on wet grass or in wet conditions. Inspect power tools and electric lawn mowers before each use for frayed power cords, broken plugs and cracked or broken housings. If damaged, stop using it immediately and repair or replace it. Always use an extension cord marked for outdoor use and rated for the power needs of your tool(s). Remember to unplug all portable power tools when not in use. Since metal ladders conduct electricity, watch out for overhead wires and power lines.

Space Heaters
Space heaters are meant to only supply supplemental heat. Keep space heaters at least 3 feet away from any combustible materials such as bedding, clothing, draperies, furniture and rugs. DO NOT use in rooms where children are unsupervised and always remember to turn off and unplug when not in use.