

## Basic Electric Terms

- ◆ **Alternating current** – The flow of electricity through a conductor that continuously reverses its direction of flow.
- ◆ **Ampere** – The measure of how much electricity is moving through a conductor.
- ◆ **Capacity** – The potential for generating power of a power plant. Capacity is measured in kilowatts.
- ◆ **Circuit** – A conductor, such as a wire, through which electric current flows.
- ◆ **Circuit breaker** – Switch that opens an electric circuit when a short occurs or the system is otherwise overly stressed.
- ◆ **Conductor** – Material that allows an electric current to pass through it.
- ◆ **Current** – The flow of electrically charged particles.
- ◆ **DC** – Direct current.
- ◆ **Direct current** – Electricity that flows through a conductor in a single direction.
- ◆ **Electricity** – Electric power that results from the movement of electrons in a conductor from a negatively charged point to a positively charged point.
- ◆ **Fuse** – A protective device for electric circuits containing a wire designed to melt and open the circuit under abnormally high electric loads.
- ◆ **Ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI)** – instantly breaks the circuit when a short develops. Required wherever electrical equipment might come into contact with water.
- ◆ **High voltage** – Voltage in a power line that is higher than the 120-240 volts used in most homes.
- ◆ **Kilovolt (kv)** – The amount of electric force carried through a high-voltage transmission line.
- ◆ **Kilowatt (kw)** – Basic unit of electric demand.
- ◆ **Kilowatt-hour (kwh)** – Basic measure of electric energy generation or use.
- ◆ **Megawatt (mw)** – Equal to 1,000 kilowatts
- ◆ **Megawatt-hour (mwh)** – Equal to 1,000 kilowatt-hours.
- ◆ **Ohm** – Measures resistance of current flow in electrical circuits.
- ◆ **Voltage** – Potential electric energy.
- ◆ **Volt** – Unit of electric force that measures the pressure of electricity.
- ◆ **Volt ampere** – The basic unit of electric power.
- ◆ **Watt (w)** – Standard unit of electric power. Named for James Watt, a 19<sup>th</sup>-century Scottish engineer.
- ◆ **Watt-hour (wh)** – Energy converted or consumed at a rate of one watt during one hour.