

## Are You Being Ghosted By Your Home?

When the lights flicker, strange “pings” cry from your heating vents, and your garbage disposal gurgles like a monster’s digestive system, is it time to call your electrician, HVAC or plumbing specialist? Maybe. But, maybe it’s Halloween, a time when things go bump in the night, and maybe ghosts are to blame!

When Benjamin Franklin discovered electricity, the paranormal community must have uttered a collective “oooooooooh” to chill the spine. Over the years, ghosts and electricity have gone together like pumpkin spice and, well, everything. Paranormal phenomena like unexplained cold spots in the center of a well-heated home, appliances malfunctioning, circuits shorting, all causing EMF meter readings to spike, have led to some spooky speculation. We recommend calling in a professional. But, “Who Ya Gonna Call”? In the spirit of the season, let’s talk about the (alleged) connection between spirits and electricity.

According to “How Stuff Works” ([science.howstuffworks.com](http://science.howstuffworks.com)) and Tracy V. Wilson’s article, “How Ghosts Work”, in some notoriously haunted locations magnetic fields are stronger than usual. Paranormal investigators chalk it up to high ghost activity, while skeptics posit it may be due to the Earth’s magnetic field, or nearby geological formations. Author and paranormal investigator, Joni Mayhan ([jonimayhan.com](http://jonimayhan.com)) says, “I’ve often wondered about the correlation between hauntings and electricity. As paranormal investigators, we know that ghosts can manipulate our electronics. We’ve seen it happen over and over again. Cell phone settings get inexplicably changed during an investigation and radios or television sets get turned on and off, just to list a few.” Chances are, unless this happens during a game winning Field Goal attempt, you can brush these events off as inconvenient quirks. Still, if your ghost is uncooperative, a quick call to an electrician may make the rest of football season more bearable.

If an investigator measures activity with an EMF meter that also measures ambient room temperature, as one investigator did in a basement the homeowners felt was haunted, they can choose to either support or debunk the presence of a ghost. The homeowners brought the investigator to a doorway where they reported always feeling “watched” when they stood there. The EMF meter received a high reading. Very quickly though the investigator noticed an electrical box and it was concluded it was to blame. High EMF readings do have a strong effect on the human body. Some of these include reduced melatonin levels leading to disrupted sleep, hallucinations, the feeling of being watched, and even serious illness. In this case, it was indicative of a dangerous electrical situation. The homeowners were advised to call an electrician to avoid a

potentially disastrous house fire. After doing so, the sensation of haunting ceased entirely. And they certainly weren't haunted by their decision to investigate the eerie hunch in the first place.

Similarly, in haunted inns and hotels, investigators have read high EMF levels off of ceiling fans and bedside alarm clocks. Both of these gave the vulnerable sleeping guest the feeling of being watched. The point is, if you're flipping out with fearful thoughts, look into the potential issues created and over-looked by the living, before you blame Casper. Paranormal investigators have reported "battery drain", where their batteries, fully charged, will drain instantly upon entering a haunted location. The hypothesis here is that the ghosts are "powering up." Sometimes the investigators themselves feel drained of energy. We imagine it must feel much like we do after multiple burpees, or in Target at the receiving end of "Mom! Mom! Mom! Mom!" (or its fatherly equivalent.)

When it comes to those cold spots, there's nothing like the sensation of icy fingers on the back of your neck to make you say, "Ah heck nah!" People describe temperature plunges in rooms otherwise warmed by a reliable purring furnace, or the feeling of a sudden chill pass through them. And while this can often be traced to a drafty window, open fireplace flue, or an arid spot in the midst of higher humidity, sometimes it just feels creepy.

Whether you're hoping to prove the existence of ghosts or to rationalize phenomena through scientific explanation, there's no doubt the mystery of unexplained events will continue to fascinate us. And this time of year is the perfect time to indulge such curiosity. May your lights be bright, your batteries charged, and your plumbing gurgle-free. Happy Halloween!