

SAFETY COMMUNICATION

— Electrical Safety

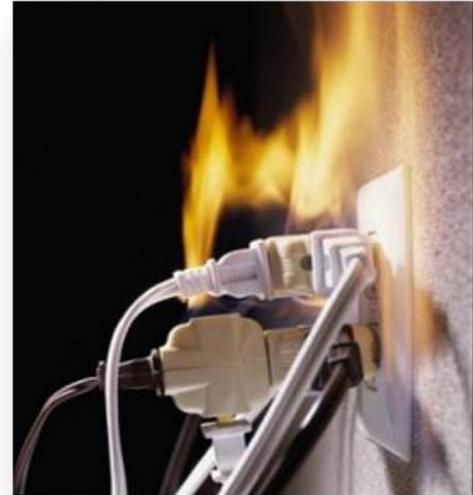
Know the Hazards and Don't Become a Statistic

Electrical accidents account for 10 percent of all job-related fatalities as well as scores of serious injuries. The National Fire Protection Association indicates an annual average of more than 53,000 electrical home structure fires, claiming more than 450 lives, injuring more than 1,400 people, and causing more than \$1.4 billion in property damage. To avoid becoming a statistic this year, follow these simple guidelines:

POWER TOOLS

Remember, working with power tools requires skilled instruction and training as they can be deadly if not properly used or maintained. When working with power tools:

- Use ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) with every power tool to protect against electric shock hazards.
- Use tools with insulated grips to help avoid electrical shock when working with electricity.
- Always plug power tools into a grounded outlet, unless they are double-insulated.
- Never use power tools near live electrical wires or water pipes.
- Take the tool to a manufacturer authorized repair center for service if it trips a safety device while in use.
- Do not use power tools without the proper guards.
- Do not use power tools with an extension cord that exceeds 100 feet.
- Wear appropriate personal protective gear, such as safety glasses, when using power tools.
- Use extreme caution when cutting or drilling into walls where electrical wires or water pipes could be accidentally touched or penetrated.



EXTENSION CORDS

Extension cords are a leading cause of electrical fires and can cause injury and death if used improperly.

- Extension cords should only be used on a temporary basis; unplug and safely store them after every use.
- Never use a cord that feels hot or is damaged in any way. Touching even a single exposed wire strand can give you an electric shock or burn.
- Make sure extension cords are properly rated for their intended use, indoor or outdoor, and meet or exceed the power needs of the appliance or tool being used.
- Do not run extension cords through walls or across doorways, ceilings, or floors. This may damage the cord, causing it to overheat and creating a serious fire hazard.
- Insert plugs fully so no part of the prongs is exposed when the extension cord is in use.
- Do not nail or staple electrical cords to walls or baseboards.

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- If an extension cord is needed for a longer period of time, temporary power taps can be used when insufficient electrical receptacles are available. These devices may have three to six electrical receptacles, a circuit breaker, and a 6-foot to 15-foot cord and a surge protector and should bear the mark of a certified testing organization.
- Ensure all extension cords are certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory such as UL, CSA, or ETL; and read the manufacturer's instructions carefully.



OFFICE EQUIPMENT

Keep your office and home safe by following these tip:

- Do not overload circuits. Spread the electrical load of your equipment over several circuits.
- Use surge protector devices, and mount them on the wall to keep them clean.
- Use grounded (3-prong) appliances and equipment, and plug them into grounded outlets.
- Use only electrical equipment that bears the mark of a nationally recognized testing laboratory.
- Place the electrical cords for your equipment where they cannot be cut by sharp desk or drawer edges or rolled over by chair legs
- Do not route electrical cords across doorways or other openings or under rugs.
- Do not place electrical cords near radiators, space heaters, or other heat sources.
- Examine your electrical cords regularly to check for signs of wear, fraying, or cracking.
- Ensure all electrical outlets are fully covered with outlet plates.
- Ensure electrical panel doors are freely accessible and unblocked by furniture or clutter.

Resources

[National Fire Protection Association \(NFPA\)](#)