

EXTENSION CORD SAFETY

An extension cord is an insulated, flexible electric wire fitted with a plug at one end and one or more outlets on the other. It provides a convenient way to use electrical equipment that can't reach a wall outlet.

Safety Tips

These important safety principles can help keep your office safe from electrical hazards:

- 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 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 cause the cord to overheat, creating a serious fire hazard.
- Insert plugs fully so that 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.
- 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 3 to 6 electrical receptacles, a circuit breaker, a 6-ft. to 15-ft. cord and a surge protector, and should bear the mark of a certified testing organization.
- Ensure that all extension cords are certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory such as UL, CSA, or ETL, and read the manufacturer's instructions carefully.

source: www.esfi.org



Facts and Statistics

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

According to the CPSC:

- An estimated 3,300 residential fires originate from extension cords each year, killing and injuring over 300 people.
- More than half of the injuries involve fractures, lacerations, contusions, or sprains caused by people tripping over the cords.

Continual use can cause the insulation to rapidly deteriorate, creating a dangerous shock and fire hazard.

A heavy reliance on extension cords is an indication that you have too few outlets to address your electrical needs. Have additional outlets installed by a licensed electrician where you need them.