

REACHING TO SAFETY:

Use Extension Cords Properly

Improper use of easily overloaded, unapproved extension cords can present a serious fire safety hazard in the workplace and home. It is estimated that each year about **4,000 injuries** are associated with electric extension cords. About half of those involve people tripping over the cords. It is also estimated that there are about **3,300 home fires** each year involving extension cord misuse. Follow these safety tips to **protect your home and workplace**.



Inspect an extension cord for physical damage before use. Check for frayed sockets, loose or bare wire and loose connections.



Check the **wattage rating** on the appliance or tool that the extension cord will be used with; do not use an extension cord that has a lower rating.

Don't **drive** over an extension cord.

Make sure to use **GFCI protection** when using extension cords in wet or damp environments.



Use the **appropriate length** extension cord. **Never** use an extension cord while it is coiled or looped. It can overheat quickly.

Don't run extension cords under rugs or carpets or in high traffic areas. These are both **tripping and fire hazards**.



Unplug when not in use. When disconnecting cords, pull the plug rather than the cord itself.

Use **special, heavy duty** extension cords for high wattage appliances such as air conditioners, portables electric heaters and freezers.

Don't **force** a plug into an outlet.

Don't **cover** an extension cord with anything. Heat must be able to **escape**.

Don't drag an extension cord.



A **heavy reliance** of extension cords is an indication that you have too few outlets to address your needs. Have additional outlets installed where they are needed.

Don't **attach** extension cords to the wall with nails or staples.



If you see a violation, report it to your supervisor **immediately**.

Don't run extension cords through doorways, holes in ceilings, walls, or floors. Heat cannot escape and can be a **fire hazard**.

Make sure all equipment and extension cords bear the mark of an independent testing laboratory such as UL.



Don't plug a three-prong into a two-hole extension cord. Don't move, bend or modify any of the metal parts of the plug. Never cut off the ground pin to force a fit, which could lead to **electric shock**.

Don't **use** an extension cord marked for indoor use outdoors.

Never rely on extension cords as permanent wiring.



Don't **plug** one extension cord or surge protector into another.

Keep extension cords away from **water**.



Don't **overload** cords with more than the proper electrical load.

PEOPLE FIRST
SAFETY ALWAYS