

	Safe Work Guideline Electrical Safety		
Prepared By: Don Doherty	Effective Date: January 2010	Revised By: Don Doherty	Date: March 2023

Immediately report any of the following as they may be a sign of an electrical problem.

- Flickering lights. If the lights dim every time you turn on an appliance it could mean that the circuit is overloaded or has a loose connection.
- Sparks. If sparks appear when you insert or remove a plug, they could be a sign of loose connections.
- Warm electrical cord. If an electrical cord is warm to the touch, the cord is underrated or defective.
- Frequent blown fuses or broken circuits. A fuse or circuit breaker that keeps tripping is an important warning sign of problems.
- If an electrical device does not work or works poorly, makes unusual noises, smokes or has a burnt smell, issues sparks or a pop, unplug it immediately, and have the problem fixed.
- Frequent bulb burnout. A light bulb that burns out frequently is a sign that the bulb is too high a wattage for the fixture.

In Case of a Fire

If a serious electrical malfunction occurs in your home, school or workplace, it is the same as a fire. Notify others, activate the fire alarm and exit promptly. If you are familiar with the operation of a fire extinguisher, you can use only a "Class C" Fire Extinguisher on an electrical fire

- If an electrical fire starts at a wall outlet, pull the plug by the cord or turn off the main switch.
- Call the fire department, give them your address and tell them it's an electrical fire. If the fire is small, use a "Class C" CO2 fire extinguisher.
- Never put water on an electrical fire.
- If in doubt, get everyone out.
- If the fire is large, call the fire department and try to turn off the main power source. Do not try to handle the fire by yourself.

GENERAL ELECTRICAL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

- Routinely check the cords and wiring on you electrical equipment, appliances. Replace all worn, old or damaged appliance cords immediately. Cracked cords or frayed wires can cause fires.
- Do not misuse electric cords, such as overloading circuits, and running the cords under rugs or furniture or across high traffic areas. Do not suspend cords unsupported across rooms or passageways or route over metal objects.

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- Do not overload electrical circuits by using extension cords and multi-plug outlets. Use extension cords only when necessary and make sure they are heavy enough for the job. Do not run through walls ceilings or doorways.
- Avoid creating an octopus by inserting several plugs into a multi-plug outlet connected to a single wall outlet. It is safer and more efficient to install new circuits.
- Power bars should only be used if the following conditions can be met: the total amperage of the equipment plugged into it does not exceed the power bar's rated current (typically 15 amps) and power bars must be plugged directly into mounted electrical receptacles- not extension cords.
- When using a high wattage device such as a heater, iron or power tool, switch off all unnecessary lights and devices. Try to connect into a circuit with little electrical power demand.
- Keep electrical appliances away from wet floors and sinks.
- When buying electrical appliances look for products which meet the CSA standard for safety. Do not bring non-approved electrical equipment (e.g. lamps, heaters etc.) from home to the workplace.
- Keep space heaters, stoves, irons and other heat-producing appliances away from furniture, curtains, bedding or towels. Also, give televisions, stereos and computers plenty of air-space so they won't overheat.
- Light bulbs, especially the newer halogen types, get very hot and can ignite combustible materials that get too close. Clothing or towels should never be placed on top of a lampshade and table lamps should not be used without a shade.
- Keep clothes, curtains and other potentially combustible items at least three feet from all lights or heaters.
- Ensure there are no unprotected light bulbs in work areas. They can be hit and broken causing a fire.
- Do not drill holes or driving nails into walls as they can hit electrical wires causing a fire.
- If an appliance has a three-prong plug, use it only in a three-slot outlet. Never force it to fit into a two-slot outlet or extension cord. Use grounded extensions for three-prong equipment. **Never Break OFF the Third Prong on a Plug**
- All electrical devices installed outdoors should be specially designed for outdoor use. Outdoor receptacles as well as those in kitchens, bathrooms, and anywhere else near water should be the ground fault circuit interrupting type (GFCI).
- Keep the area around motors and heaters free of flammable or combustible materials. Good housekeeping reduces the risk of a fire.
- Provide plenty of ventilation for motors, and keep them clean. Internal failures or shorts could cause a motor to burst into flames.

Pull the plug, not the cord. Do not disconnect power supply by pulling or jerking the cord from the outlet. Pulling the cord causes wear and may cause a shock.