

May is National Electrical Safety Month

Safety is Smart, Prevention is Power

Each year, electrical malfunctions account for more than 35,000 home fires causing over 1,130 injuries, 500 deaths, and \$1.4 billion in property damage in the U.S. Since the average American home was built in 1977, many existing homes can't handle the demands of today's electrical appliances and devices.

Still Working from Home?

For many workers, home offices have become more permanent over the past year. That leads to more electrical use, and more risks. Follow these safety tips to keep your home safe:

1. Avoid overloading outlets
2. Unplug appliances when not in use to save energy and minimize the risk of shock or fire
3. Regularly inspect electrical cords and extension cords for damage
4. Extension cords should only be used on a temporary basis
5. Never plug a space heater or fan into an extension cord or power strip
6. Never run cords under rugs / carpets, doors, or windows
7. Plug in smartly. Make sure cords do not become tripping hazards
8. Keep papers and other potential combustibles at least three feet away from space heaters and other heat sources
9. Make sure you use proper wattage for lamps / lighting
10. Make sure your home has smoke alarms. Test them monthly, change batteries yearly, and replace the unit every 10 years

Learn the Warning Signs

How do you know if you might be overloading your electrical system? Look for these signs:

1. Frequent tripping of circuit breakers or blowing of fuses
2. Dimming of lights when other devices are turned on
3. Buzzing sound from switches or outlets
4. Discolored outlets
5. Appliances that seem underpowered