



## Electrical Cord Safety

### Help Protect Your Building from Fire Loss

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), electrical cords and temporary wiring account for over 25 percent of the estimated 81,000 electrical system fires that occur each year. These fires can be prevented by limiting the use of electrical cords and temporary wiring, and by regular inspection and proper maintenance when they are used.

The supply of readily available electrical outlets is often inadequate in many buildings, especially older ones. To meet power supply needs, electrical cords or surge protected power strips are often used. The good news is that there are many ways to maintain a safe set up in your work environment.

Safe electrical cord usage is an important topic that needs to be practiced by both employers and employees. The key element to remember is that electrical cords are for temporary use only, and permanent wiring needs to be installed when use is no longer temporary.

**“What do I need to know about electrical cord usage?” Here are some tips to keep in mind:**

#### DO

- Inspect cord for physical damage
- Check wattage rating on the appliance/tool. Do not use an electrical cord that has a lower rating
- Make sure the electrical cord is fully inserted into outlet
- Unplug electrical cords when not in use
- Keep slack in flexible electrical cords to prevent tension of electrical terminals
- Make sure each electrical cord is marked by an independent testing laboratory such as UL (Underwriter’s Laboratory)

#### DON’T

- Plug one electrical cord into another
- Run electrical cords through doorways, holes in ceilings, floors, high traffic areas, or under rugs
- Overload electrical cords with more than the proper electrical load
- Force a plug into an outlet
- Attach electrical cords to a fixed structure with nails or staples
- Plug a three prong into a two-hole electrical cord



[http://www.compliance.gov/forms-pubs/eresources/fastfacts\\_daisychains.pdf](http://www.compliance.gov/forms-pubs/eresources/fastfacts_daisychains.pdf). Office of Compliance. November 2007. Electrical Cords and Temporary Wiring – Fire Prevention Checklist. ISO Services, Inc. CH-25-23. 2008.

<http://www.tdi.texas.gov/pubs/videoresource/fsxtcords.pdf>. The Texas Department of Insurance. November 10, 2011.

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