



# SAFETY SPOTLIGHT of the month

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## OFFICE AND HOME ELECTRICAL SAFETY

The United States Consumer Production Safety Commission has found: The majority of the electrical fires in the United States are caused by aging wiring and the misuse of electrical surge protectors. Over 750 people are killed by electrical fires every year in the United States. The leading cause of home electrical fires is related to the improper use of extension cords. In the United States there is an extension cord-related fire every 6 minutes.

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To help prevent electrical fires, here are some tips you should remember...

- Replace damaged or frayed electrical cords.
- Do not run electrical cords through doorways or under carpets.
- Avoid overloading electrical outlets
- If electrical switches or outlets feel warm, contact facilities ASAP.



### Avoid Exceeding the Capacity of the Electrical Outlet

- Never Overload the Capacity of the Power Strip or the Surge Protector
- Only Plug One Surge Protector or Power Strip into a Single Duplex Electrical Outlet
- Never Plug a Surge Protector or Power Strip into Another Surge Protector or Power Strip



### How to Determine the Capacity of a Power Cord, Power Strip, or a Surge Protector

- Assume 125 Watts per Amp to Calculate the Conversion
- Total Watts Should Not Exceed 80% (0.80) of the Rated Capacity
- Example – Surge Protector Rated at 15 Amps
  - $15 \text{ Amps} \times 125 \text{ Watts/Amp} = 1875 \text{ Watts}$
  - $1875 \text{ Watts} \times 0.80 = 1500 \text{ Watts Capacity of the Surge Protector}$



### Main Points:

- Periodically Inspect Outlets, Appliances, Plugs and Cords
- Extension Cords are Only For Temporary Use
  - Do Not Nail or Staple to Objects
  - Do Not Run Under Rugs or Through Doorways
- Do Not Exceed the Capacity of the Electrical Outlet, Power Strip, or Surge Protector