

Safety Around The Home

Tips On Using Extension Cords Safely

(NAPSA)—An extension cord can be a handy, temporary way to place electrical equipment wherever you'd like it. But if used improperly, extension cords can cause fire and injury.

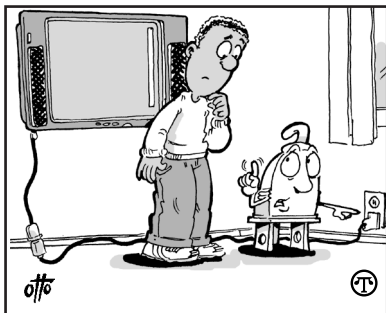
To help prevent accidents, the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) urges homeowners to be alert to the potential hazards of inappropriate extension cord use.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that, each year, about 4,000 injuries associated with electric extension cords are treated in hospital emergency rooms. About half of the injuries involve fractures, lacerations, contusions or sprains from people tripping over extension cords. Thirteen percent of the injuries involve children under 5 years of age; electrical burns to the mouth accounted for half the injuries to young children.

CPSC also estimates that about 3,300 residential fires originate in extension cords each year, killing 50 people and injuring about 270 others. The most frequent causes of such fires are short circuits, overloading, damage and/or misuse of extension cords.

To reduce the likelihood of electrocution or fire from improper extension cord use:

- Use extension cords only when necessary and only on a temporary basis.
- In locations where furniture or beds may be pushed against an



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extension cord where the cord joins the plug, use a special “angle extension cord” specifically designed for use in these instances.

- When using outdoor tools and appliances, use only extension cords labeled for outdoor use.
- Use polarized extension cords with polarized appliances.
- Insert plugs fully so that no part of the prongs is exposed when the extension cord is in use.
- Replace cracked or worn extension cords with cords that have the listing of a nationally recognized testing laboratory, safety closures and other safety features.

The Electrical Safety Foundation International reminds you to use extension cords safely—your life may depend on it.

To download ESFI's free booklet, “Use Extension Cords Safely!” go to www.esfi.org/esfi-library.html#extensioncord.



Note to Editors: May is National Electrical Safety Month.