



Power Strip and Extension Cord Safety Fact Sheet



Do



- Do inspect all cords for physical damage before use.
- Do remove and replace any cords that are frayed, damaged, have exposed wires, or other signs of wear.
- Do learn the capacity of the main outlet you are using and compare with the capacity requirements of the equipment you are plugging into the extension cord or power strip.
- Do check the wattage rating on the appliance or tool that the extension cord or power strip will be used with; do not use an extension cord or strip that has a lower rating.
- Do use low current equipment such as computers, phones, chargers, and AV equipment in power strips.
- Do plug high current equipment such as coffee makers, toaster ovens, and microwaves directly into a wall outlet.
- Do make sure all equipment and extension cords bear the mark of an independent testing laboratory such as UL (Underwriter's Laboratories).
- Do make sure the plug on extension cords and power outlets are fully inserted into the outlet.
- Do replace an outlet if a plug is too loose in the outlet.
- Do match up the plug and extension cord on a polarized cord (one hole on the plug is larger than the other).
- Do keep extension cords, power strips and all electrical equipment away from water.
- Do use GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter) protection when using extension cords in wet or damp environments.
- Do pull on the plug, not the cord, when removing an extension cord from the outlet.
- Do unplug extension cords when not in use.
- Do cover cords that run across walkways with a cord cover* to prevent trips and falls.
- Do remove and replace any extension cords or power strips that are hot to the touch as they are in imminent risk of failure.

Don't

- Don't use an extension cord marked for indoor use outdoors.
- Don't plug one extension cord or power strip into another.
- Don't plug an extension cord into a power strip.
- Don't overload power strips or extension cords with more than the rated electrical load.
- Don't plug high current equipment such as coffee makers, toaster ovens, and space heaters into power strips.
- Don't run extension cords through doorways, ceilings, or walls.
- Don't remove, bend, or modify any of the metal parts of the extension cord plug.
- Don't plug a three-prong plug into a two-hole extension cord.
- Don't force a plug into an outlet.
- Don't use an extension cord or power strip if it is wet.
- Don't cover an extension cord with anything.
- Don't drive over an extension cord.
- Don't attach extension cords to the wall with nails or staples.
- Don't run extension cords under rugs or carpets or in high traffic areas.

*Contact your District Safety Coordinator or Safety Committee to request cord covers.

