

# **Electric Safety**

Electric power makes it possible to enjoy many comforts at home. But electricity can be dangerous if not used safely.

## **Watch Those Cords and Plugs**

1. Only use extension cords listed by a recognized certification organization such as Underwriters Laboratories ("UL listed").
2. Don't drape electrical cords or wire over radiators or pipes or other metal objects.
3. Electrical wires are designed to carry only a certain amount of power. Overloading causes them to overheat wiring and creates a fire hazard. Make sure the cord is large enough to carry the electricity necessary to operate the tool or appliance.
4. Three-pronged plugs ensure proper grounding for appliances and power tools. Never cut off the third prong. Replace any older cords that have non-polarized receptacles and don't have safety closures. These cords expose young children to shock hazards, as well as mouth and burn injuries.
5. Extension cords used outside should be specifically marked for such use. Improper use could result in a fire or shock hazard.
6. To decide where there is a potential for a cord overload, check the wattage rating on the cord. Then, add up the wattage ratings of all the products that will be operating at the same time on the cord.
7. If the wattage rating on the cord is lower than the wattage rating of the products, eliminate one load, and check to see if the cord can handle the remaining products. If the wattage rating is not on the product, multiply the number of amps by 125.

## **Avoiding Hot Water Hazards**

1. Keep water heaters at or below 120 degrees. If you can't change the setting, ask a qualified plumbing contractor to do it, or call your landlord and ask him or her to do it.
2. Install anti-scald devices in the kitchen sink, bath and shower. There are several on the market that will shut the water off when it exceeds a certain temperature.
3. You can also install pressure balance anti-scalding valves to keep the temperature of running water consistent even when the water pressure changes.

## **Living Room, Family Room and Bedroom Safety**

1. Areas with heavy traffic should be well lit.
2. Install night lights in bedrooms for children and guests.
3. Your home should have plenty of wall outlets for lamps and appliances to prevent octopus connections.
4. Regularly inspect and test smoke detectors.

## **Safe appliance Use**

1. Unplug small kitchen and household appliances when they aren't in use. This is because a voltage surge could turn them on or cause a short circuit.
2. Make sure the Underwriter's Laboratories (UL) seal of approval applies to the entire appliance, not just the plug or cord.
3. Read and follow the manufacturer's instruction manual.
4. Do not use extension cords with high-wattage appliances, like air conditioners, portable electric heaters and irons.
5. If an appliance cord becomes frayed or damaged, stop using it. Do not use appliances with patched cords.
6. Major appliances, such as refrigerators and air conditioners, should be plugged into separate circuits.
7. Never touch an electric appliance while standing on a wet floor, or if your hands are wet.
8. Don't operate electrical appliances in or near water.
9. Immediately turn off and disconnect an appliance that sparks or stalls.
10. Always disconnect appliances before cleaning or servicing.
11. Always unplug appliances before cleaning or repairing them.

## **General Home Electric Safety**

1. Don't run extension cords under rugs or carpeting; replace frayed cords.
2. Avoid accidental starts by making sure the switch is off before plugging in the cord.
3. Pull the plug, not the cord, to disconnect an appliance.
4. Be careful not to overload circuits with too many plugs.
5. Install socket guards in all outlets not in use; this helps avoid injury to small children.
6. Ensure stairways are well lighted with switches at top and bottom.

## **Kitchen safety**

1. Look for the UL (Underwriters Laboratories) label when buying appliances.
2. Ensure that your stove and sink areas are well lighted.
3. Make sure your hands are dry before operating electrical appliances.
4. Replace damaged electrical appliances and extension cords.
5. Keep a fire extinguisher near your kitchen area.

## **Bathroom Safety**

1. Remove any appliances around the sink or bathtub area. If you have a hair dryer, electric shaver, or other appliance on a nearby counter top, unplug it when bathing a child as a precaution.

2. Even when an appliance is turned off, electricity is still present within it. Therefore, if an appliance falls in water, unplug it; never try to pull it out of the water while it is plugged in.
3. When filling the bathtub for your child's bath, turn on the cold water first, then add hot water to it. When the tub is at the desired level, turn off the hot water first, and then turn off the cold water.
4. Before putting a child in the bathtub, feel the water. If the water feels warm to you, it may be too hot for them.
5. Don't put children in the bathtub when the water is running, and never leave them alone in a bath, even for a minute.
6. Install night-lights in bathrooms for children and elderly persons.

### **Workshop and Garage Safety**

1. A workshop should be well lighted and ventilated.
2. Always keep tools out of reach of children.
3. Extension cords should have adequate capacity for the wattage of the tool or appliance you want to use.
4. Tools should be properly grounded or double-insulated.
5. When not in use, disconnect power tools (or lock the switches).
6. Wear eye protection when working with tools.
7. Be sure your garage is well lighted with switches at the doors.
8. Regularly inspect your garage door for safe operation.

### **Utility Room Safety**

1. Know where your main gas and water valves are (and how to close them).
2. Clearly mark gas and water lines.
3. Know how to light the pilot light on gas appliances.
4. Call the gas company if you suspect a gas leak.
5. Know where your main electric switch is and how to turn it off.
6. Become familiar with the proper fuse ratings for your electrical circuits.
7. Ensure that fuses or circuit breakers are correctly labeled.
8. Always determine why a fuse has blown or a circuit breaker tripped and eliminate the cause before correcting.
9. Have extra fuses on hand, and turn off the main switch before changing a fuse.
10. Ensure your washer and dryer are electrically grounded.
11. Keep combustibles, such as clothes in closets, kept away from hot light bulbs.