

# SAFETY BULLETIN

## *EXTENSION CORD SAFETY*



## EXTENSION CORD SAFETY

Extension cords are commonly used in the sports and entertainment venues, and while they can be useful, if not used properly, they can be dangerous. Misuse of extension cords is the leading cause of electrical fires in homes each year, resulting in over 300 injuries and fatalities and causing \$1.4 billion in property damage. The following outlines the do's (proper and safe) use of electrical cords, along with the don'ts (improper and unsafe) ways to use electrical cords.

# EXTENSION CORD SAFETY

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## *DO:*

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- Only buy cords that have been certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory such as UL, CSA, or ETL
  - Check cords for the following:
    - Deformed or missing pins
    - Missing grounding pins
    - Damage to outer jacket or insulation
    - Loose plug or receptacle ends
    - Pinched or crushed outer jacket
    - Broken plug head
    - Use of duct or electrical tape
  - Verify the right type and length of cord is being used for the application, environment, and power demands
  - Fully insert the extension cord into an outlet
  - Make sure they are properly rated for their intended use
  - Store extension cords indoors in a clean and dry environment
  - Unplug when not in use
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## *DON'T:*

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- Plug a power strip and/or extension cord into another power strip and/or extension cord – commonly referred to as “daisy chain”. Plugging two extension cords into each other reduces their current capacity in half and can possibly result in voltage drop and overheating
- Run cord through walls, doorways, ceilings or floors
- Close a door or window on a cord in a way that it becomes crimped
- Substitute cord for a permanent source of wiring - i.e. continue to use if it has been repeatedly used for 90 days straight, for 8 hours a day
- Use an extension cord for more than one appliance
- Let cord sit in water or snow
- Overload cord with too many adaptors

- Place cords under rugs or carpets
- Nail or staple cords to walls, baseboards, or ceilings
- Drive or step on cords
- Cut off the ground pin to force cord into an outlet with only two slots
- Allow the cords to become a trip hazard
- Allow the cord to overheat
- Use a longer cord than what is needed

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## *CONCLUSION*

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While, extension cords can be useful and are convenient, misusing and mishandling them can lead to serious consequences such as injuries, burns and fires. It is important to realize that extension cords are for temporary use only. A heavy reliance on extension cords is an indication that your venue may have too few outlets to address your needs and that additional outlets may need to be installed.

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If you or your staff have any questions concerning this important Safety Bulletin, please contact us today.



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