

# Preventing Fires Involving Electrical Cords and Temporary Wiring

According to the National Fire Protection Association, Inc, electrical cords and temporary wiring account for over 25 percent of the estimated 81,000 electrical system fires that occur each year. These fires can be prevented by limiting the use of electrical cords and temporary wiring and by regular inspection and proper maintenance when they are used. The following fire prevention practices should be followed:

## Extension Cords

- Do not use extension cords as a substitute for fixed building wiring.
- Inspect extension cords for broken connectors, damaged insulation and missing hardware before each use.
- Do not run extension cords through walls, over beams, around corners or through doorways.
- Only use extension cords approved/listed for the environment and loads expected.
- Equip extension cords with Ground Fault Interruption (GFI) devices.
- Avoid the use of coiled extension cords.
- Do not splice damaged extension cords; discard them.

## Temporary Wiring

- Do not substitute temporary and flexible wiring for fixed building wiring.
- Use temporary wiring only when needed, such as for maintenance, repair or demolition activities.
- Limit temporary wiring use for holiday displays, special occasions and ornamental lighting to no more than 90 days.
- Do not route temporary wiring across floors, around doors or through walls.
- Locate temporary wiring at least 7 ft (2.1 m) above any walking or working surface.
- Protect temporary wiring from sharp edges, heat and sunlight to avoid breakdown of the insulation.
- Use only grounding type receptacles on temporary wiring.

## Equipment Power Cords

- Limit equipment cord length to a maximum of 3 ft (0.9 m).
- Inspect equipment cords for damage, including the condition of any strain relief devices, before each use.
- Do not operate equipment cords without a ground connection unless it is listed as “double insulated”.
- Do not splice equipment cords to repair damage or to extend the original length.

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The loss prevention information and advice presented in this brochure are intended only to advise our insureds and their managers of a variety of methods and strategies based on generally accepted safe practices, for controlling potentially loss producing situations commonly occurring in business premises and/or operations. They are not intended to warrant that all potential hazards or conditions have been evaluated or can be controlled. They are not intended as an offer to write insurance coverage for such conditions or exposures, or to simply that Great American Insurance Company will write such coverage. The liability of Great American Insurance Company is limited to the specific terms, limits and conditions of the insurance policies issued.

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