

Electrical Safety

Flipping a light switch. Plugging in a coffeemaker. Charging a laptop computer. These are second nature for most of us. Electricity makes our lives easier. However, we need to be cautious and keep safety in mind.



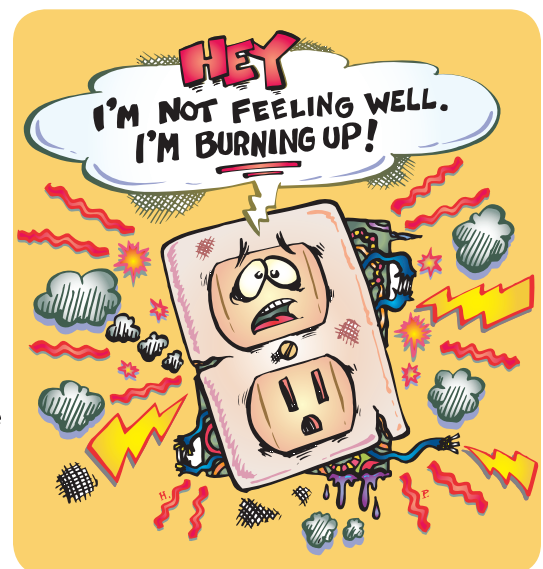
SAFETY TIPS

- »» Have all electrical work done by a qualified electrician.
- »» When you are buying or remodeling a home, have it inspected by a qualified electrician.
- »» Only plug one heat-producing appliance (such as a coffee maker, toaster, space heater, etc.) into a receptacle outlet at a time.
- »» Major appliances (refrigerators, dryers, washers, stoves, air conditioners, etc.) should be plugged directly into a wall receptacle outlet. Extension cords and plug strips should not be used.
- »» Arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) are a kind of circuit breaker that shuts off electricity when a dangerous condition occurs. Consider having them installed in your home. Use a qualified electrician.
- »» Use ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) to reduce the risk of shock. GFCIs shut off an electrical circuit when it becomes a shock hazard. They should be installed inside the home in bathrooms, kitchens, garages and basements. All outdoor receptacles should be GFCI protected.
- »» Test AFCIs and GFCIs once a month to make sure they are working properly.
- »» Check electrical cords to make sure they are not running across doorways or under carpets. Extension cords are intended for temporary use. Have a qualified electrician add more receptacle outlets so you don't have to use extension cords.
- »» Use light bulbs that match the recommended wattage on the lamp or fixture. There should be a sticker that indicates the maximum wattage light bulb to use.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

Call a qualified electrician or your landlord if you have:

- Frequent problems with blowing fuses or tripping circuit breakers
- A tingling feeling when you touch an electrical appliance
- Discolored or warm wall outlets
- A burning or rubbery smell coming from an appliance
- Flickering or dimming lights
- Sparks from an outlet



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ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS

U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated annual average of 47,820 reported home structure fires involving electrical failure or malfunction in 2007-2011. These fires resulted in 455 civilian deaths, 1,518 civilian injuries and \$1.5 billion in direct property damage.

- Replace or repair damaged or loose electrical cords.
- Avoid running extension cords across doorways or under carpets.
- In homes with small children, make sure your home has tamper-resistant (TR) receptacles.
- Consider having additional circuits or outlets added by a qualified electrician so you do not have to use extension cords.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for plugging an appliance into a receptacle outlet.
- Avoid overloading outlets. Plug only one high-wattage appliance into each receptacle outlet at a time.
- If outlets or switches feel warm, frequent problems with blowing fuses or tripping circuits, or flickering or dimming lights, call a qualified electrician.
- Place lamps on level surfaces, away from things that can burn and use bulbs that match the lamp's recommended wattage.
- Make sure your home has ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) in the kitchen bathroom(s), laundry, basement, and outdoor areas.
- Arc-fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) should be installed in your home to protect electrical outlets.

