



Electrical Cord Safety

Toolbox Talks are intended to facilitate health and safety discussions. Find more Toolbox Talks on the [Occupational Safety web page](#).

General Information

Damaged or improper use of electrical and extension cords are consistently one of the most common safety concerns identified by EH&S during annual surveys. Electrical shock can cause significant injury or death and fires resulting in substantial damage.

Cords should not be used if...

- The insulation is damaged or cracked,
- Wires are visible,
- Ground prong is missing,
- Either end is cracked or melted,
- Either end has visible burn marks,
- In standing water,
- A triple cord adapter is used,
- Equipment pulls a heavy load (microwave, fridge, toaster, etc.), or
- For more than three consecutive days.



Damaged cord insulation



Missing ground prong

What if damaged cords are found?

- Discontinue use immediately and take the cord or tool out of service.
- Report damage to your supervisor.
- Have the cord repaired in accordance with UL standards or render the cord unusable and discard.

Tips to extend cord life...

- Keep extension cords hung up or put away out of direct sunlight.
- Plug and unplug the cord by gripping the end instead of pulling on the cord.
- Do not wrap power cords tightly around a tool to prevent sharp bends or breaks where the cord meets the tool.
- Inspect cords before each use.

Discussion Date:

Supervisor:

Participants: