



# INDOOR/OUTDOOR

# ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS

## ELECTRICAL SAFETY **INDOORS**

Many electrocutions and home fires can be prevented simply by understanding basic electrical safety principles and adhering to safe practices.

Whether you are a homeowner or a renter, electrical safety should be a top priority in your home. Awareness of electrical hazards is the key to reducing the staggering number of electrically-related home fires, injuries and deaths that occur every year.

### Electrical appliance safety

- Never use any electric appliance in the tub or shower. Always make sure your hands are dry when using an electric appliance.
- Use appliances with the Underwriters' Laboratories (UL) symbol.
- Never place appliance cords where they will come into contact with heat or moisture. Never place cords under rugs or heavy furniture.
- Do not overload outlets with too many appliances; make use of other outlets in the room. Never stick any object other than an electrical plug or child proof cover into an outlet.
- Never pull out an electrical plug by the cord.
- Never hang clothes or place furniture near an electric heater or hot plate.



- Keep away from furniture and drapes.
- Keep electric heaters on a level nonflammable surface.

### Electrical accidents

- Never touch someone in contact with a power source.
- Unplug or turn off the power. Call for medical assistance.
- Do not touch skin that has experienced a burn. Run small burns under cold water.
- If you see that the victim is not breathing, practice cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), cover the victim with a blanket, keep their head low and get immediate medical attention. NEVER attempt to practice CPR unless you have CPR certification.
- See your local Red Cross or medical center for CPR certification training.
- Call 911 or your local emergency number if the injured person experiences:
  - Severe burns
  - Confusion
  - Difficulty breathing
  - Heart rhythm problems (arrhythmias)
  - Cardiac arrest
  - Muscle pain and contractions
  - Seizures
  - Loss of consciousness



## Portable electric space heaters

- Never leave a space heater unattended. Turn it off when you're leaving a room or going to sleep, and don't let pets or children play too close to a space heater.
- Space heaters are only meant to provide supplemental heat and should never be used to warm bedding, cook food, dry clothing or thaw pipes.
- Install smoke alarms on every floor of your home and outside all sleeping areas and test them once a month.
- Never hang clothes or place furniture near an electric heater or hot plate.
- Keep away from furniture and drapes.
- Keep electric heaters on a level nonflammable surface.
- Plug space heaters directly into a wall outlet. Do not use an extension cord or power strip, which could overheat and result in a fire. Do not plug any other electrical devices into the same outlet as the heater.

## Electrical fire safety

- Have your home electrical system thoroughly inspected by qualified electricians to ensure that all electrical work in the home meets the safety provisions in the NEC.
- Fire extinguishers should be placed on every floor with instructions.
- Install smoke detectors on every level of the home, inside each bedroom and outside each sleeping area. Check batteries and test at least twice a year (during time changes).
- Ask a qualified electrician if your home would benefit from AFCI protection, espe-



cially during inspections of older homes or upgrades to electrical systems. These advanced new safety devices recognize dangerous conditions that are not detected by standard breakers.

- Test smoke detectors and AFCIs monthly to ensure that they are working properly.
- Use light bulbs that match the recommended wattage on the light fixture.
- In homes with young children, install tamper resistant receptacles to prevent electrical shocks and burns.
- Establish an evacuation plan that can be used in case of an emergency, and practice with your family.
- Conduct a basic assessment of your home electrical system, electrical cords, extension cords, power plugs, and outlets.
- Look for telltale signs of electrical problems such as dim and flickering lights, unusual sizzling and buzzing sounds from your electrical system, insulation and circuit breakers that trip repeatedly. Contact a qualified electrician immediately.
- Use extension cords only temporarily, and never with space heaters or air conditioners.
- Avoid overloading outlets. Consider having additional circuits or outlets added by a qualified electrician as needed.



## If an electrical fire occurs...

- Dial 911. Since electrical fires are handled differently, alert the dispatcher that it is an electrical fire.
- Never put water on an electrical fire. Use your home fire extinguisher.

# ELECTRICAL SAFETY **OUTDOORS**

## Electricity and water

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- Protect outdoor electrical outlets with weatherproof covers and ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs).
- Never operate electrical equipment in the rain or on a wet surface.
- Never enter a flooded basement to turn off electricity or for any other reason. First call your local fire department.

## Swimming pool safety reminders

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- All outdoor receptacles should be covered to keep them dry. This is especially important around pools, spas and other summer water activities.
- Be sure all electrical equipment for your pool is grounded properly. A ground fault circuit interrupter should be installed on your pool's electrical equipment. If a fault occurs in the equipment, the interrupter will instantly cut the power, preventing a serious electric shock.
- Electrical devices and cords should be kept at least 10 feet away from water sources such as pools and spas. When possible, use battery operated electrical devices outside. If you're installing a pool, have it inspected by your town or city's electrical inspector when the job is complete.
- Do not use any plug-in appliances near the pool.
- Do not install a pool under electric wires.



## Electrical tools

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- If you plan to use an electrical lawn mower or hedge trimmer, be sure to keep the cord behind you.
- When using a wet-dry vacuum cleaner or a pressure washer, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions to avoid electric shock.
- Use ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) with every power tool to protect against electric shocks.
- Appropriate personal protective gear should be worn when using power tools.
- Keep children away from the area where you are operating electric yard tools. Eliminate the possibility of them tripping or moving the cord resulting in an avoidable accident.
- Always unplug the electrical equipment if you have an obstruction. After the power has been disconnected, free the obstruction before plugging it back in.



## Car/pole accidents

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- If you're in a car accident involving a power line, your first impulse might be to jump out of the vehicle. But the safest thing to do is stay in your vehicle until help arrives.
- If you absolutely must leave the vehicle, hop out with your feet together, making sure to land on both feet. Be very careful not to touch the car and the ground at the same time. Continue carefully hopping with your feet together in short hops until you're as far away as possible.

## Call before you dig

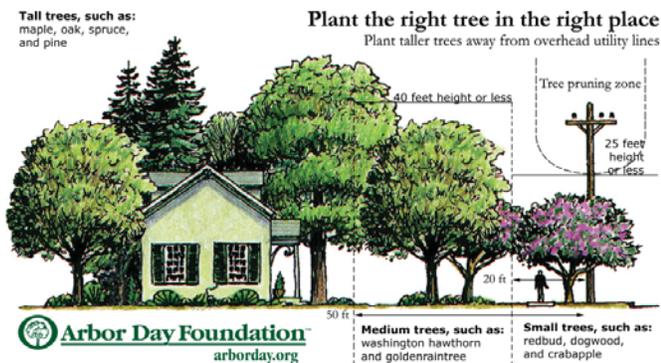
- Digging can be dangerous if you don't check first for underground wiring or cables. There could also be other underground utilities such as natural gas, water and sewer lines.
- Never dig around your home or business without calling OUPS, at 800-362-2764 or call 811, they will notify South Central Power and other utilities and whether underground facilities are at the site. You must call at least two working days before you start. There is no charge to you for this service.



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

## Plant the right tree in the right place

- Help keep South Central Power power lines free of vegetation.
- Visit our vegetation management section on our website.



## Ladder safety

- Keep ladders at least 10 feet away from power lines. Keep all parts of your body and anything you are holding at least 10 feet from the power lines. This is known as the "10-foot rule."
- Know where the power lines are located when carrying your ladder. Never carry it upright. Be sure to carry it in a horizontal position.
- Be sure that the ladder could not make contact with power lines if it falls from its upright position. Take extra care in planting the ladder securely before climbing.
- When working with long objects on a ladder like pipes, conduits and gutters, be very careful not to hold or place them where they could accidentally fall on power lines. Remember the "10-foot rule."



## Power line safety

- If you encounter a fallen power line, call 911 and report it to the police department. Alert South Central Power by calling 800-282-5064.
- Stay away from downed wires and don't touch anything or anyone that's touching them. If the wire is touching your vehicle, wait for help. If you ABSOLUTELY MUST get out, jump clear – don't touch the ground and the vehicle at the same time. Shuffle, don't run away.
- Never fly kites, balloons or other toys around them. They conduct electricity.
- Never climb power poles. They can deliver a deadly shock.