

Safety Tips

Power Tools (Electric)

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), top electrical safety hazards include electrical fires caused by aging wiring and misuse of surge suppressors, and electrocutions from wiring systems and large appliances. Electricity causes more than 40,000 fires every year in the United States, resulting in hundreds of injuries and deaths.

- Insulation is a primary protection against electric shock, but it can get worn or cracked. Inspect it regularly. Look for frayed cords on power tools.
- Replace damaged electrical equipment or have it repaired at an authorized repair center. Replace frayed cords, broken plugs or cracks that could cause hazards; cut and throw out damaged cords.
- Plug grounded (3-wire) tools only into grounded outlets.
- Don't pick up power tools by their power cords.
- Read and obey all signs and posted warnings. Don't let these important sources of information become an unnoticed part of the landscape.
- Don't work with electricity in the rain. Use ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protection when working where water is near electricity, in areas such as your kitchen, laundry room, bathroom or outdoors, to protect against electric shock.
- Leave technical, complicated or confusing tasks involving electricity to electricians and other specialists. A little knowledge can definitely be a dangerous thing when it comes to wiring, troubleshooting and repairing electrical devices and circuits.
- Use a wood or fiberglass ladder if you are working with or around electricity.
- If you are working with someone who gets shocked, first make sure you shut down the source of the current. If the victim appears to still be touching the source of the shock, move him or her away using something made of wood or plastic.
- Make sure that all appliances and equipment are approved by an independent testing laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL).
- For appliances and equipment, follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- When using a generator, plug appliances directly into the generator or use a heavy duty outdoor-rated extension cord that is free of cuts and tears and has a 3-prong plug.
- Make sure power strips and surge suppressors are designed to handle the loads for their intended use. Don't overload circuits by plugging too many items into the same outlet.