

# May is Electrical Safety Month

According to the National Fire Protection Association, 47,700 home fires in the U.S. are caused by electrical failures or malfunctions each year. These fires result in 418 deaths, 1,570 injuries, and \$1.4 billion in property damage.

Overloaded electrical circuits are a major cause of residential fires. Help lower your risk of electrical fires by not overloading your electrical system.

Overloaded circuit warning signs include:

- Flickering, blinking, or dimming lights.
- Frequently tripped circuit breakers or blown fuses.
- Warm or discolored wall plates.
- Cracking, sizzling, or buzzing from receptacles.
- Burning odor coming from receptacles or wall switches.
- Mild shock or tingle from appliances, receptacles or switches.

## Prevent Circuit Overloads

- Never use extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliances.
- All major appliances should be plugged directly into a wall receptacle outlet. Only plug one heat-producing appliance into a receptacle outlet at a time.
- Heavily relying on extension cords indicates you have too few outlets to address your needs. Have a qualified electrician inspect your home and add new outlets.
- Power strips only add additional outlets, they do not change the amount of power being received from the outlet. ■

**DON'T OVERLOAD YOUR HOME!**

According to the National Fire Protection Association, 47,700 home fires in the U.S. are caused by electrical failure or malfunction each year. These fires result in 418 deaths, 1,570 injuries, and \$1.4 billion in property damage. Overloaded electrical circuits are a major cause of residential fires. Help lower your risk of electrical fires by not overloading your electrical system.

**OVERLOADED CIRCUIT WARNING SIGNS**

- Flickering, blinking, or dimming lights
- Warm or discolored wall plates
- Burning odor coming from receptacles or wall switches
- Frequently tripped circuit breakers or blown fuses
- Cracking, sizzling, or buzzing from receptacles
- Mild shock or tingle from appliances, receptacles, or switches

**HOW TO PREVENT ELECTRICAL OVERLOADS**

- Never use extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliances.
- All major appliances should be plugged directly into a wall receptacle outlet. Only plug one heat-producing appliance into a receptacle outlet at a time.
- A heavy reliance on extension cords is an indication that you have too few outlets to address your needs. Have a qualified electrician inspect your home and add new outlets.
- Power strips only add additional outlets; they do not change the amount of power being received from the outlet.

**50%** The CPSC estimates more than 50% of electrical fires that occur every year can be prevented by Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCIs). To learn more about AFCIs, visit [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org).

Only use the appropriate watt bulb for any lighting fixture. Using a larger watt light bulb may cause a fire.

**MAY IS NATIONAL ELECTRICAL SAFETY MONTH**

ESFI.org | [www.facebook.com/ESFI.org](https://www.facebook.com/ESFI.org) | [www.twitter.com/ESFIdotorg](https://www.twitter.com/ESFIdotorg) | [www.youtube.com/ESFIdotorg](https://www.youtube.com/ESFIdotorg)

For ESFI's complete collection of National Electrical Safety Month resources and for more information on spring safety, go to [www.esfi.org](http://www.esfi.org).