



## Get Plugged Into Electrical Safety

Home electrical safety should not be taken lightly. Each year electrical hazards cause 155,000 fires, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. The tragedy is that these accidents are preventable. Below are some tips for keeping your home and your family safe from electrical hazards.

### Warning Signs of a Strained or Inadequate Electrical System

- » Frequent power outages or blown fuses.
- » Lights that flicker or dim.
- » Loose plugs.
- » Outlets that are unusually warm to the touch.
- » Discolored outlets.
- » Overheated appliances.
- » Suspicious sparks and buzzing sounds.

### Inspect Your Home

Protect your family from electrical hazards by performing a room-by-room inspection. Here are some ideas to help you find electrical hazards before they start fires:

#### Kitchen:

- » Protect your kitchen by using ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs.) These are fast-acting circuit breaker outlets that sense small changes in current and protect you from electrocution.
- » Unplug appliances such as coffee pots and toasters when not in use.
- » Electrical cords should be in good condition, with no exposed wires or cracked insulation.
- » Keep only one heat source, such as a griddle or a waffle iron, plugged into each wall outlet.

- » Do not overextend one electrical circuit by using multiple high wattage appliances such as a microwave and a griddle.

#### Bathroom:

- » Install GFCI outlets.
- » Unplug hair dryers, curling irons and electric shavers from the wall outlet when they are not in use.
- » Unplug portable space heaters when they are not in use.
- » Store electric-powered radios in a safe place where they can't be knocked into a sink or bathtub.

#### Living Room:

- » Make sure that light bulb wattage does not exceed the wattage of light fixtures and lamps.
- » Do not use extension cords as permanent wiring.
- » Do not run electrical cords under throw rugs.
- » Plug valuable home electronics such as stereos and VCRs into surge protectors.
- » Wattage on electronic equipment should not exceed the listed maximum on extension cords and power strips.
- » Make sure halogen lamps have metal safety covers and make sure lamps are not susceptible to tipping.

### Bedroom:

- » Place electric blankets on top of bed linens to avoid overheating.
- » Plug computers and home-electronic equipment into surge protectors.
- » Light bulb wattage should not exceed that of lighting fixtures and lamps.

### Basement:

- » Cords for large appliances, such as washers, dryers and second refrigerators, should be in good condition and grounded.
- » Do not use extension cords for permanent wiring.

For more information about American Family's Loss Control Services, visit [www.amfam.com](http://www.amfam.com)

#### DISCLAIMER

The recommendations printed here follow generally accepted safety standards. Compliance with these recommendations does not guarantee that you will be in conformance with any building code, or federal, state or local regulations regarding safety or fire. Compliance does not ensure the absolute safety of you or your home.