

May is Electrical Safety Month: Electrical Safety at Home

The following information has been provided by Electrical Safety Foundation International.

Electricity is one of the leading causes of home fires, blamed for thousands of deaths and injuries and over \$1 billion in property damage each year. Wiring, switches, receptacles and outlets account for a large share of both electrocutions and electrical fires. Electrical fires that begin in the walls can spread rapidly before being detected, making them devastating and deadly. Many electrocutions and home electrical fires can be prevented. Know how to look for signs of home wiring hazards and use electrical safety awareness to keep you and your family safe.

- Have a licensed electrician or electrical inspector check your home's electrical wiring and distribution system to reduce the likelihood of electrocutions and fires.
- Have an electrical inspection to diagnose potential hazards if your home is 40 years old or older.
- If you suspect a wiring problem, do not attempt to fix it yourself. Shut off the circuit and have the electrical system checked.
- Every home electrical system should have grounding ability. Many homes built before 1950 lack a ground wire.
- Flickering lights, tripped circuit breakers or blown fuses are indications of possible electrical problems.
- Arcs, sparks, sizzles, buzzes or an unusual odor in the vicinity of a receptacle, switch or lighting fixture is a sign of an equipment problem.
- Outlets, switches, or cords that feel warm or hot to the touch may indicate an electrical problem.
- All receptacle outlets and switches must have wall plates.
- Have receptacles replaced if plugs do not fit tightly in the receptacle.

Electrical shocks—even mild ones—are an indication of an electrical hazard and should be checked.

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