

# ELECTRICAL FIRES

Electrical hazards that can cause a fire are usually the result of faulty or defective equipment, unsafe installation, or misuse of equipment like extension cords, power strips and surge protectors.

Damaged wires and cables can not only cause electric shocks but also present a fire hazard.

- Regularly inspect electrical cables to ensure they are not frayed, cracked or otherwise damaged.
- Any electrical cables, power cords or extension cords that are damaged, or are not functioning properly, should be removed from service immediately. This includes any electrical cords that are frayed or have exposed wires, even if they still seem to be working.

**OSHA Standard 1910.334(a)(2)(ii)** *If there is a defect or evidence of damage that might expose an employee to injury, the defective or damaged item shall be removed from service, and no employee may use it until repairs and tests necessary to render the equipment safe have been made.*

Overloaded power strips and wall outlets are a common fire hazard.

- Do not overload wall outlets, power strips and surge protectors with too many devices. Place power strips where there is plenty of air circulation to disperse heat.
- Do not use an extension cord or a power strip with portable heaters or fans, which could cause cords to overheat and result in a fire. These devices should be plugged directly into a wall outlet.
- Ensure that all major appliances, like refrigerators, printers, dishwashers, and microwave ovens, are plugged directly into a wall outlet, and not into an extension cord or power strip.
- Keep anything that can burn away from electrical equipment.



## Discussion

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***What should you do if you find a faulty or damaged electrical cable?***

***Are there any electrical fire hazards near your work area?***