

Electrical Cords

Electrical cords are one of the most widely used tools in construction. Over the years, there have been hundreds of thousands of severe injuries and deaths involving electrical cords. Incidents have involved improperly wired or damaged electrical cords (tool and extension cords), damaged cords that have been run over by equipment or damaged in some other way and were still in use, or tools that have been damaged or dropped that have not been repaired.

Here are a few tips for cord management:

- Inspect all electrical cords before use each day. Check for nicks, cuts, burns, exposed wiring, missing ground plugs, etc. If the cord is damaged, remove it from service immediately.
- A qualified person should repair damaged cords.
- Water and electricity do not mix. Keep all stray cords and personnel working with cords away from water.
- Route cords away from foot and vehicular traffic. Try to route cords overhead, if possible. This not only helps prevent cords from being damaged, it also decreases the risk of someone tripping over them.
- Do not use household extension cords or other cords not intended for construction.
- Never remove a ground plug from a cord. If the ground plug is missing, the electrical current can go to the ground through the operator's body.
- Never use electrical drop cords for permanent wiring needs.

Try this for show and tell

Gather some damaged extension cords found onsite. Have the group examine the cords and discuss the reasons why these cords should not be used.