SAFETY UNLIMITED, INC.

Weekly Safety Meeting

Extension Cord Safety

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that each year, about 4,000 injuries associated with electrical extension cords are treated in hospital emergency rooms. About half of the injuries involve fractures, lacerations, contusions, or sprains from people tripping over extension cords. CPSC also estimates that about 3,300 residential fires originate in extension cords each year, killing 50 people and injuring about 270 others. The most frequent causes of such fires are short circuits, overloading, damage and/or misuse of extension cords.

Extension cords should be used sparingly and for temporary use only. If necessary, have wiring done to permanently solve the need for an extension cord.

Construction and maintenance areas require extension cords that are specified by the National Electric Code for hard usage or extra hard usage. Approved cords may be identified by the word 'outdoor 'or the letters 'WA' on the jacket.

Safe Work Practices:

When using an extension cord follow these tips to ensure safety:

- Do not use extension cords as a replacement for fixed wiring. Extension cords are intended for temporary use with equipment not routinely used at a specific location.
- Equipment being plugged into the extension cord should be grounded where applicable.
- Use products that have grounded three-pronged plugs or the new polarized plugs with one blade slightly wider than the other.
- Never bend prongs or force a three-pronged cord into a two-pronged outlet.
- Make sure that the plug has a good solid connection to the outlet.
- Choose heavy-duty extension cords for high-wattage machines and equipment.
- Use one long cord instead of several shorter cords. Never connect extension cords in a series. A longer cord should have a larger diameter (thicker = safer).
- Use cords appropriate to the task and rated high enough for the job.
- Use extension cords appropriate for the conditions. For example, indoor and outdoor cords are constructed differently. Various types of cords are specifically constructed to resist moisture, heat, or chemicals.
- If using a cord outdoors, plug it into ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI).
- Don't overload cords. Multi-plug devices should contain an integral circuit breaker.
- Never splice or tap an extension cord.

- Keep cords untangled when in use and in storage. Keep stored cords loosely coiled in a dry place.
- Never disconnect a plug by pulling on the wire. Instead, grip the plug itself to pull it out of the socket.
- Inspect cords frequently to be sure that they are in good condition and are not frayed, cracked, punctured, or hot to the touch.
- If a cord is defective, do not use it. Have it repaired by a qualified person or cut it up throw it away.

Remember:

Choose the right cord, inspect it, run it carefully, and then put it away properly. You can avoid tripping, fire, shock, and electrocution hazards associated with extension cords by thinking carefully and then acting safely.

BE CAREFUL WITH POWER…OR THIS WILL BE YOUR LAST HOUR!

Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Supervisor:	*Subject:*
Location:	*Date:*
Conducted By:	*Trainer Signature:*

Name (print clearly)	Signature	Comments / Safety Concerns / Training Requests