ASCIP Safety Spotlight

ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS

Electricity is something we all take for granted until the power goes out. It is readily available, and our access to it is relatively safe when we follow proper guidelines. However, electricity is a powerful force that can be dangerous when used improperly. Follow these tips to stay safe around electricity.

Overloading Outlets

Overloading an outlet, or drawing more electricity than a circuit can safely handle, can lead to electrical fires.

- Limit the number of items plugged into an outlet at one time.
- Never exceed the total wattage of the outlet. The combined wattage of all items plugged into the outlet should be lower than the outlet's capacity.
- Never try to insert multiple plugs into the same socket.

Power Strip Usage

Power strips are convenient ways to increase the amount of items that can be plugged into an outlet, but they do pose risks if used improperly.

- Do not piggyback or "daisy chain" power strips.
- Never use a damaged power strip, or one that heats up during use. These pose fire and shock hazards.
- Do not let the power strip hang from a high socket or staple or nail the cord to a surface. This can put stress on and damage the cord.
- Only use power strips with internal circuit breakers in case of a power surge.
- Do not exceed the maximum wattage (all items combined) for the power strip or the outlet.

Bulb Wattage

Using a bulb with higher wattage than the light socket can handle can lead to overheating. This can permanently damage your light fixture and poses fire and shock hazards. Always check the wattage for the socket before replacing a bulb and never use a bulb that exceeds this limit.

Electrical Tool Use

- Use proper personal protective equipment (PPE) when working with electrical tools (gloves, insulated boots, appropriate eyewear).
- Never carry a tool by its cord or unplug it by pulling on the cord; this could damage the cord.
- Never use or store power tools in damp or wet areas unless they are rated for such use.
- Disconnect all electrical tools when they are not in use and when being serviced to prevent accidental starting.
- Check all tools and their cords, as well as extension cords, for damage prior to use. If one is damaged, tag it for non-use and remove it from service.
- Use double-insulated tools to minimize shock hazards.

This Safety Spotlight is brought to you by ALLIANCE OF SCHOOLS FOR COOPERATIVE INSURANCE PROGRAMS
16550 Bloomfield Avenue • Cerritos, California 90703 • (562) 404-8029