

BASIC HOME SAFETY INFORMATION

The following safety information is being provided as part of a requirement of accreditation standards.

Electrical Safety– Cords, Plugs, and Power Outlets

1. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for plugging a device into the outlet.
2. Check all cords, plugs, surge protectors and extension cords for frayed casing, exposed wire or broken components and replace as needed. Only use water resistant extension cords in damp areas.
3. Do not run extension cords under carpets or over door thresholds. Do not use an extension cord as a permanent fixture. If additional power outlets are needed contact a licensed electrician.
4. Do not overload a single outlet with several high-wattage devices such as a space heater, heat producing devices, or small kitchen appliances.
5. Plugs should fit snugly into outlets. Contact licensed electrician for power outlets that are not fitting snugly.
6. Major appliances such as washers, dryers, refrigerators, stoves, air conditioners, hot water heaters, etc. should be plugged directly into a power outlet. Do not use surge protectors, plug strips or extension cords for these types of electrical devices.
7. If you have young children, consider outfitting your home with tamper-resistant electrical receptacles.
8. Arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) are a special type of circuit breaker that shuts off the current when dangerous conditions arise. Ask a licensed electrician about installing AFCIs in your home.
9. Ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) are another type of power receptacle that help reduce the risk of electric shock by switching off the circuit if it becomes hazardous. A licensed electrician should install GFCIs in your garage, basement, kitchen, bath, and all outdoor outlets. Consider testing AFCIs and GFCIs at least once per month.
10. If you need to dig, always dial 811 (United States only) to have your underground lines marked.
11. If you experience any of these warning signs, contact licensed electrician:
 - You feel a tingling sensation when you touch a plug or light switch.
 - Your circuit breaker or AFCI/GFCI receptacle flips frequently or fuses blow regularly.
 - An appliance gives off a burning or unexpected odor.
 - Your power outlet plates are warm to the touch or discolored.
 - An electrical appliance has been submersed or saturated in any liquid.
 - An electrical outlet sparks.
 - Your lights dim or flicker.

Fire Safety

1. Only working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms save lives.
2. Common sources of fires in homes are cooking, smoking, appliance use and candles.
3. Always have a fire extinguisher in your home and check it annually.
4. Plan a fire escape for your family and pets.
5. Make sure that you have smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in your home/apartment and that you replace the batteries annually or according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
6. Test your alarms and clean the dust off them at least once a month.
7. Replace your smoke alarms every ten years or according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
8. Multistory houses and apartments should have alarms on all levels.

Emergency Preparedness

1. Have a plan for emergencies that help protect your family and pets.
2. Prepare a binder of important documents including contact, medical, and financial information.
3. Check and update your plan every six months or as needed.
4. Visit www.ready.gov for detailed information regarding emergency preparedness.