



# CAMPUS FIRE FACTS

## Electrical Safety

Underwriters Laboratories lists the following warnings for electrical safety awareness:

- **Shocks.** A properly wired and grounded electrical system will protect you from most potential electrical shocks.



- **Overloaded outlets.** Too many appliances plugged into a single outlet could indicate your house may not have the required number of outlets. The National Electrical Code requires that outlets be spaced every 12 feet of running wall space, or one on each wall of the average 10-by-12-foot room. Kitchens typically require outlets spaced every 4 feet along the countertop.

- **Flickering/dimming lights.** This could indicate loose wire connections, overloaded circuits, improper wiring, or arcing and sparking inside the walls.
- **Hot to handle.** If your receptacles, switch plates, cords or plugs are hot and discolored and you can't keep a hand on them for more than five seconds, you may have an overload or product malfunction.
- **Shrinking/wavering screens.** TV screens or computer monitors that shrink or waver when a large appliance is turned on could mean you have too many appliances plugged into one circuit, or that your home needs additional electrical capacity.
- **Unusual smells.** Burning metal or plastic smells may indicate a loose connection, malfunctioning switch, light fixture, broken connection, overheating components, arcing or sparking inside the walls, damaged wire or other potential hazards.
- **Wobbly plugs.** This could indicate that the outlet is outdated and worn. It should not be used and be replaced immediately.
- **No three-pronged outlets.** In new housing, the National Electrical Code® requires three-pronged outlets or ground-fault circuit-interrupter (GFCI) protection everywhere on your property, including outdoors. If your house is lacking both these items, your system is likely outdated.
- **Blown fuses/tripped breakers.** Replace fuses and reset circuit breakers. If they blow or trip again, a problem exists somewhere.
- **Permanent extension cords.** Extension cords are meant for temporary use only. Any products plugged into extension cords for long-term use is an indication your house does not comply with current NEC® requirements.



*Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL) is an independent product safety certification organization that has been testing products and writing Standards for Safety for over a century. UL evaluates more than 19,000 types of products, components, materials and systems annually with 21 billion UL Marks appearing on 72,000 manufacturers' products each year. UL's worldwide family of companies and network of service providers includes 62 laboratory, testing and certification facilities serving customers in 99 countries. Our Mission: Working for a safer world since 1894 [www.ul.com](http://www.ul.com).*