



**Don't Short Cut Your Way to the Emergency Room --
Outdoor Electrical Safety Tips for the Long Weekend
from The Electrical Safety Authority**

Mississauga, Ont. - August 1, 2012 – If your long weekend plans include outdoor fun, chores or camping, you need to take a moment to review your electrical safety plans. Extension cords are a convenient way to bring power to your backyard, deck, or campsite but if you take safety short cuts you could turn your weekend plans upside down. Every year in Ontario, more than 650 people visit emergency rooms for electrical injuries. Don't be one of them. Follow the simple principle of *'right cord, right place, right use'* to stay safe.

Outdoor Electrical Safety Tips

Right Cord

Pick the right extension cord for your needs and don't 'make do' with the wrong one:

- When outdoors, only use extension cords rated for outdoor use. They are designed to resist outdoor wear and conditions. Don't take the short cut of using an indoor cord or power bar even for a short period of time. It is a violation of the Ontario Electrical Safety Code and you will create a risk of shock, electrocution or fire.
- Check the power capacity of your cord to ensure it is the same or greater than the item you're planning to plug in. Don't make do with a lower capacity cord. For electric power tools, be sure to use a heavy duty extension cord.
- Don't string multiple extension cords together. Not only is it unsafe, but it will also reduce their power capacity.
- Always use grounded (three-pronged) cords and never remove the grounding pin from the plug. It's there to protect you. If you have an old two-pronged extension cord hanging around, don't use it in a pinch. It's time to toss it out.
- If you are using a cord for the first time this season do a careful check to ensure it is in good condition. Extension cords stored outdoors in the winter can crack.

Right Place

- Plug your grounded outdoor extension cord into a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) protected electrical outlet that has been installed in accordance with the Ontario Electrical Safety Code. If the outlet is not GFCI protected, you can get a portable GFCI outlet adapter.
- Never run extension cords through doors or windows even for a short period of time. The cord can quickly become damaged from rubbing against the door and window edges.

Right Use

- Don't use outdoor extension cords as long term power sources. The longer they are left out, the more risk there is of damage or wear. If you need ongoing power on your deck, dock, or yard have permanent outdoor wiring and outlets installed by a Licensed Electrical Contractor. To find a Licensed Electrical Contractor near you, visit ESA's searchable database at pluginsafely.ca.
- Never bury extension cords or electrical conductors in the earth. Only specially rated underground conductors can be buried and it must be done in accordance with the Ontario Electrical Safety Code.
- Don't staple extension cords in place or run them over nails as they easily can be damaged.
- Only use electrical appliances and tools that are rated for outdoor use.

The Electrical Safety Authority

The Electrical Safety Authority's (ESA) role is to enhance public electrical safety in Ontario. As a delegated administrative authority acting on behalf of the Government of Ontario, ESA is responsible for administering specific regulations related to the Ontario Electrical Safety Code, the licensing of Electrical Contractors and Master Electricians, electricity distribution system safety, and electrical products safety. ESA works extensively with stakeholders throughout the province to educate, train, promote, and foster electrical safety.

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