

## Heading to the great outdoors this long weekend?

**Ontario's Electrical Safety Authority has electrical safety tips you should know.**

Mississauga, ON. – May 16, 2013 – If your long weekend plans include outdoor fun, chores, cottage opening or camping, the Electrical Safety Authority reminds Ontarians to think about your electrical needs and keep safety top of mind.

Extension cords are a convenient way to bring power to your backyard, deck, dock, or campsite but if you take safety short cuts you could turn your weekend plans upside down. 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, use only those extension cords rated for outdoor use. They are designed to resist outdoor wear and conditions. Don't take the shortcut of using an indoor cord or power bar even for a short period of time – it could cause a shock, electrocution or a fire, and it's a violation of the Ontario Electrical Safety Code.
- Check the power capacity of your cord to ensure it's 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 and your electronic tools or gadgets won't work properly.
- 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're using a cord for the first time this season do a careful check to ensure it's in good condition. Extension cords stored outdoors in the winter can crack, which could result in a shock, electrocution or fire.

#### **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 isn't GFCI protected, you can get a portable GFCI outlet adapter at your local home improvement retailer or hardware store.
- 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 or pinched in the frame.

## Right Use

- Don't use outdoor extension cords as long-term power sources. The longer they're 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 [www.pluginsafely.ca](http://www.pluginsafely.ca).
- Never bury extension cords or electrical conductors in the ground. 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 because the cord can easily be damaged.
- Use only electrical appliances and tools that are rated for outdoor use.

## Returning/Opening Your Vacation Home after a Storm or Flood

Cottage and vacation home owners may arrive to their properties only to discover downed powerlines that have gone undetected. If this happens to you, stay a minimum of 10 metres (33ft) away from downed powerlines and immediately report these to your local electric utility.

If water gets into your cottage or vacation home, be careful as electrical systems may have been affected. If you suspect damage to your electrical system contact a licensed electrical contractor to make the repairs. When flood water has risen above electrical outlets or power cords, or is near the service panel, contact your local hydro company and arrange for them to disconnect the power immediately.

## About the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA)

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 product safety. ESA works extensively with stakeholders throughout the province on education, training and promotion to foster electrical safety across the province. More information on the Electrical Safety Authority can be found on its website, [www.esasafe.com](http://www.esasafe.com), through Twitter @HomeandSafety and on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ElectricalSafetyAuthority](https://www.facebook.com/ElectricalSafetyAuthority)

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