Office of Fire Prevention and Control

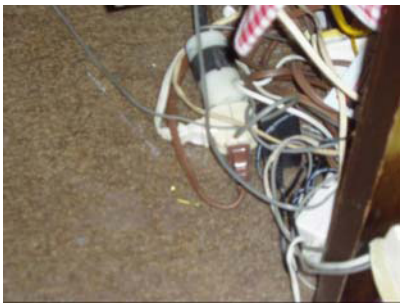
Bureau of Fire Prevention

Campus Fire Safety Bulletin

Prevention Through Education

Extension Cords

Colleges are a source of sheer engineering creativity as we attempt to reconcile our aging electrical infrastructure with the realities of today. Most of our buildings were built before the advent of the personal computer, or for that matter, air purifiers, microwave ovens, espresso machines, hair dryers and all the other good stuff we can't seem to live without. To keep everything running, we use extension cords, cube taps, and all types of homemade contraptions; we plug our extension cords into other extension cords, and our homemade contraptions into other homemade contraptions.



The use of extension cords may seem innocuous, however state fire inspectors have found some instances on campus of imminent danger from their use!

While the Fire Code does permit the use of outlet strips, they must be grounded, fused, directly connected to a permanent receptacle and not plugged into each other or an extension cord.

We encourage you to seek technical advice on how to safely provide power for your needs.

§F605.5 Extension cords. Extension cords and flexible cords shall not be a substitute for permanent wiring. Extension cords and flexible cords shall not be affixed to structures, extended through walls, ceilings or floors, or under doors or floor coverings, nor shall such cords be subject to environmental damage or physical impact. Extension cords shall be used only with portable appliances.

What's at the end of your extension cord?

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