OVER ▶

POWER STRIP USES & HAZARDS

Power strips are often used to manage several electronic devices at once. It's important know how to use them properly to ensure safety in the workplace.

Understanding the proper applications and limitations of power strips will help you avoid electrical hazards and significant incidents which might occur from improper use.

KNOW WHAT TO AVOID:

- **DAISY-CHAINING**
- **OVERLOADING**
- **CORD, PLUG HEAD AND PRONG ISSUES**
- **MOISTURE**

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POWER STRIP USES & HAZARDS

DAISY-CHAINING:

Daisy-chaining is linking multiple power strips and extensions cords to increase the availability of power outlets. Doing this can result in serious safety issues. Not only does this practice violate NEC and OSHA regulations, but it overloads the circuits which can cause excessive heat build-up, damaged wiring and significantly increase the risk of electrical fires.

OVERLOADING:

Overloading occurs when a power strip exceeds its voltage capacity which can result in fire or electrocution. This can happen when:

- A single wall outlet is used for multiple high-use power strips.
- The power strip is connected to too many tools or appliances.
- The power strip is used beyond its capacity to power high-voltage devices like refrigerators, microwaves or space heaters.

CORD, PLUG HEAD AND PRONG ISSUES:

- **WOUND OR KNOTTED CORDS:** Knotted or wound cords can cause permanent damage. Power strip cords should be straight while in use.
- **DAMAGED WIRES:** Dispose of cords with exposed wires, cracks or splices as well as cords that have been melted, burned, frayed, discoloured or otherwise damaged.
- **PRONGS:** Ensure plugs are fully inserted into the receptacle so that no part of the metal prongs is exposed. Plugs should not hang out of the outlet.
- **TAMPERED GROUNDING PRONG:** If the grounding prong has been broken or cut off to fit into an ungrounded electrical receptacle, remove the power strip from service immediately.
- **LIMITED AIR CIRCULATION:** Avoid placing a power strip in areas with limited air circulation, such as under carpets or behind furniture. This can lead to overheating.

MOISTURE:

Since water conducts electricity, using a power strip in a moist environment can result in electrocution. Moisture can also cause corrosion and damage to the internal components of the power strip, reducing its effectiveness and lifespan. To ensure safety, always keep power strips dry and avoid using them in damp or wet conditions.

REMEMBER:

Power strips distribute electricity but don't regulate power flow or protect against surges unless specifically designed to do so. They are not a replacement for permanent outlets. Use them temporarily and only for their intended purposes.

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