

ELECTRICAL SAFETY FACTSHEET:

Extension cords, power bars and multi-tap receptacles



Right cord. Right place. Right use.

Misuse of extension cords, power bars and multi-tap receptacles has contributed to increasing reports of electrical fires and fatalities in Ontario. Consumers are encouraged to use these devices safely and follow these tips

- Select the appropriate device for the purpose. Not all cords, power bars or receptacles are created equal. Manufacturers generally do not recommend cords for appliances that generate heat, and some cannot be used in wet locations. Also, most cords are not designed to be used for long periods of time with heavy loads, especially when left unattended or overnight.
- Check the rating of the cord before its use. Always follow manufacturers' instructions as they will indicate how many device or type of device allowed in the plug.
- Use only certified products with recognized approval marks. See esasafe.com for a full list.
- Ensure cords are free of kinks, exposed wires and other damage.
- Use only light load appliances with multi-cord and multi-tap receptacles.
- Unwind extension cords from its spool to allow heat to escape when in use.
- Do not use flexible extension cords for permanent applications. Most extension cords

require venting when used to cool the cable down when plugged in.

- Do not overload the device. Plugging in appliances that draw a lot of load to multi cord extension cords or multi-tap receptacles will result in overheating resulting in fire.
- Do not use an extension cords for portable heaters or air conditioning units; most cords will overheat and catch fire.
- Do not place extension cords under carpet or under furniture. Carpet do not allow cords to cool down, and can overheat and catch fire.
- Flexible extension cords must never take the place of permanent wiring. They are not designed for permanent installations – the insulation is not as good as permanent wiring, thus can lead to over-heating and fire.
- Some retailers and/or manufacturers publish guidelines on cord selection, including recommended length for type of appliance.

Appliance	Amp Used	Appliance	Amp Used
Hair Dryer	10 A	Satellite TV box	<0.5 A
Toaster	9 A	Printer	<0.5 A
Clothes Dryer	11 A	Computer monitor	<0.5 A
Iron	12.5 A	Laptop	<0.5 A
Microwave	4.5 A		
Vacuum cleaner	9 A		