

Electrical Safety Checklist

While no checklist is complete, the following may provide some guidance for employees inspecting your jobsite:

Yes	No	Are regular job site inspections conducted on at least a monthly basis and documented?
Yes	No	Do employees understand that all breaker panels are to be kept clear and unobstructed?
Yes	No	Are all breakers and fuse boxes clearly and completely labeled? Each switch should be positively identified as to which outlet or appliance it is for.
Yes	No	Is office equipment manufactured with grounded plugs (three-prong plugs) used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions?
Yes	No	Is the third (grounding) prong never removed from any three-prong piece of equipment? Are items where the third prong is removed reported by employees for repair and removed from service?
Yes	No	Has every employee been trained that if electrical equipment malfunctions or gives off a strange odor or sound, he should disconnect it and call the appropriate maintenance personnel? (This is a great item for new employee orientation.)
Yes	No	Are cracked, frayed, or broken electrical cords promptly disconnected and replaced?
Yes	No	Are extension cords kept clear of doorways and other areas where they can be stepped on or otherwise damaged?
Yes	No	Have employees been instructed that extension cords are never plugged one into another or fastened with staples, hung from nails, or suspended by wire?
Yes	No	Are all worn or frayed cords and cables removed from service and labeled "do not use"?
Yes	No	Are items removed from service destroyed or otherwise tagged out of use--not simply discarded or given to employees to take home?
Yes	No	Do you ensure that cords are not pulled or dragged over nails, hooks, or other sharp objects that may cause abrasions in the insulation?
Yes	No	Are cords never wrapped tightly or folded, in order to prevent damage to internal wiring?
Yes	No	Are cords never placed on radiators, steam pipes, walls, windows, or under carpets or rugs? Furniture must not be placed over cords.
Yes	No	Do you ensure electrical machines are disconnected before cleaning, adjusting, or applying flammable solutions?
Yes	No	Are lockout/tagout and assured grounding programs in place if required and needed?

Yes	No	Are employees instructed to inspect tools, power cords, and electrical fittings for damage or wear prior to each use?
Yes	No	Do your maintenance workers always use fuses of the correct size? (Replacing a fuse with one of a larger size can cause excessive current in the wiring and possibly start a fire when least expected.)
Yes	No	Do personnel always use ladders made of non-conductive materials when working with or near electricity or power lines?
Yes	No	Do employees know where the breakers and boxes are located in case of an emergency and have keys if needed for access?
Yes	No	Do employees know to pull the plug, not the cord, when disconnecting electrical items?
Yes	No	Do you ensure they do not disconnect power supply by snapping or jerking the cord from the outlet (such as when the outlet is under a table or in a hard-to-reach location)? Pulling the cord causes wear and may cause a shock.
Yes	No	Do you use extension cords only to temporarily supply power to an area that does not have a power outlet? (Remember to define "temporarily" for employees!)
Yes	No	Are multi-outlet strips not plugged into other multi-outlet strips ("daisy" chained)? Are multi-outlet strips used as intended?
Yes	No	Are space heaters, microwave ovens, and other high-current devices plugged directly into wall receptacles and not into strips or extension cords?

This article appeared in the November 2005 issue of *Occupational Health & Safety*.