



IMMEDIATE

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Keep Your Office Safe From Electrical Hazards

Arlington, Va. -- We've all seen it: Too few electrical outlets in your office means that your computer, printer, monitor, scanner, CD player, lamp, cell phone and iPod charger are all plugged into one inexpensive, overloaded power strip. It's pretty unsightly, but did you know that the practice is also dangerous?

Overloaded electrical circuits pose both an electrocution and fire hazard. While we can't always control the number of outlets in our offices, the Electrical Safety Foundation International recommends some steps to stay safe from electrical hazards:

- If you must use a power strip, use a name-brand product from a reputable retailer. Low-quality or counterfeit power strips may contain wiring that isn't adequate to carry the load.
- Place power strips where there is plenty of air circulation to disperse heat.
- Do not attempt to plug grounded (three-prong) cords into ungrounded (two-slot) outlets.
- Do not bind, kink or knot electrical cords.
- Never run power cords under rugs or where chairs can roll over them.
- Keep cords close to a wall to avoid trip hazards.
- Keep all non-critical electrical items unplugged until you need to use them.
- Consider charging battery-operated devices in another area.

If your computer screen flickers or fades, or you detect a burning smell, power down and immediately contact the building engineer. If you work from home, have a licensed electrician conduct an electrical inspection.

For more electrical safety information, go to www.electrical-safety.org.

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Founded in 1994 through a joint effort between Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL), the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA), the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) is North America's only non-profit organization dedicated exclusively to promoting electrical safety in the home and workplace. ESFI is a 501(c)(3) organization funded by electrical manufacturers and distributors, independent testing laboratories, utilities, safety and consumer groups, and trade and labor associations. ESFI sponsors National Electrical Safety Month each May, and engages in public education campaigns and proactive media relations to help reduce property damage, personal injury and death due to electrical accidents. The Foundation does not engage in code or standard writing or lobbying and does not solicit individuals. For additional electrical safety information, visit the Foundation's Web site at www.electrical-safety.org or call 703-841-3229.