

TOP 5 CAUSES OF ELECTRIC HOME FIRES

1. Outlets & Appliances

Most electrical fires are caused by faulty electrical outlets and outdated appliances. Other fires are started by faults in appliance cords and switches. Never use an appliance with a frayed cord.

Running cords under rugs is another cause of electrical fires. Never remove the grounding plug from a cord. The reason appliances have the extra prong is so they can be only used in outlets that can handle the extra amount of electricity that these appliances draw.

2. Light Fixtures

Light fixtures, lamps and light bulbs are another common reason for electrical fires. Installing a bulb with a wattage that is too high for is a leading cause of electrical fires. Check the recommended bulb wattage on any lighting fixture and never go over the stated amount.

Another cause of fires is placing cloth materials over a lampshade. The material heats up and ignites, causing a fire. Faulty lamps and light fixtures also frequently result in fires.

3. Extension Cords

don't use frayed cords Misuse of extension cords is another electrical fire cause. Appliances should be plugged directly into outlet and not plugged into an extension cord for any length of time. Only use extension cords temporarily. If you don't have the right type of outlets for your appliances, hire an electrician to install new ones.

4. Space Heaters

Because these types of heaters are portable, many times people put them too close to combustible surfaces such as curtains, beds, clothing, chairs, couches and rugs. Coil space heaters are especially dangerous in this regard because the coils become so hot they will almost instantaneously ignite any nearby flammable surface.

If you do use space heaters, use the radiator-type that diffuse heat over the entire surface of the appliance. These are less likely to ignite flammable items, but should still be kept away from them.

5. Wiring

Outdated wiring often causes electrical fires. If a home is over 20 years old, it may not have the wiring capacity to handle the increased amounts of electrical appliances in today's average home, such as computers, wide-screen televisions, video and gaming players, microwaves and air conditioners.

Breakers should be triggered when circuits get overloaded by too much electricity, but outdated breaker boxes often have worn connectors that do not work, causing the system to overload and start an electrical fire.

