

Safely Handling Electricity

Hair dryers, kettles, toasters, electric shavers and televisions are all common household appliances that use electricity. Electricity is powerful enough to kill, shock or burn you. It has also been the cause of many house fires. It is essential that electricity is handled correctly, and that potential risks can be identified.

Tips for using electricity safely

1. Don't use electricity near water.

Water is a good conductor of electricity. Appliances need to be kept away from water and you should never use electrical items, or touch power points/sockets, while you are wet or standing on a wet floor.

2. Repair or replace damaged electrical appliances.

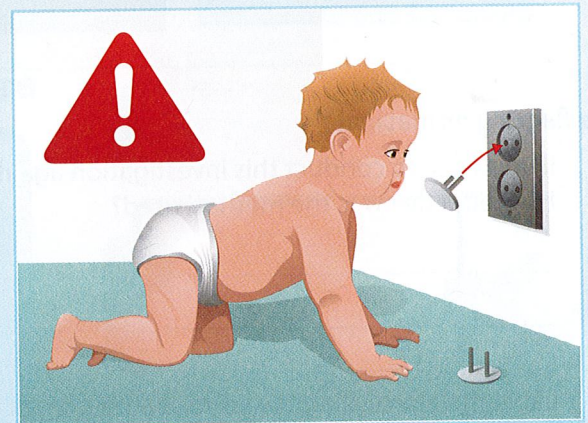
If you have an appliance that is broken, has exposed or frayed wires or broken plugs, you should cease using it immediately. Touching unprotected wires while an appliance is using electricity can be extremely dangerous and harmful.

3. Don't let appliances overheat.

Appliances that overheat are at risk of catching alight or burning someone if touched. Appliances that are huddled too closely together, or too many appliances using one power outlet, are at risk of overheating. Try to keep appliances a reasonable distance apart and use a variety of power point outlets. When appliances are not in use, they should be switched off at the power source.

4. Do not stick any foreign objects into electrical outlets or appliances.

If an item that is a good conductor of electricity is placed in an appliance or power outlet, the result can be fatal. Power point covers can be purchased to keep children safe from sticking toys or other items into wall sockets. If wall sockets are broken they must also be replaced immediately. It is also important that items are never placed inside toasters to help shift jammed food.



5. Stay a safe distance from power lines and power stations.

It is important to keep kites, boat masts and ladders well away from overhead power lines. Trees and plants should also be trimmed so they do not make contact. If you kick a ball over the fence of a power station do not jump the fence or go to retrieve it yourself. High voltage devices are stored in power stations and going near them can be fatal. Alert the power company if you have lost an item and they may be able to get it back for you.