

Using Temporary Electricity Safely

Does this apply to me?

Any work that requires the use of extension cords and temporary lighting will fall into the “temporary electricity” category.

What does this cover?

Extension cords

Cords have to be in good condition with the ground pin intact. Remind workers not to pull on cords to unplug them since that can damage the grounding pin.

Cords on power tools

Look for damage where cords are attached to tools. If the inner insulated wires are visible the tool needs to be repaired.

Temporary outlets

While they are cheap, metal knockout boxes from the local building supply store are not good as supply boxes, especially if they are used on the ground. Water and debris can get into them creating a path for electricity to energize the entire box. Make sure temporary outlets are protected from rain and water and that they are not loose when attached to plywood or other structures.

Temporary power cables

Cable on the floor or ground can get easily damaged so have them placed up off the floor which also minimizes workers tripping/slipping on them.

Circuit breaker panels

Make sure there are no exposed energized parts and no openings on the sides.

Only use metal front covers and make sure they are secured in place. If possible use Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) circuit breakers since these protect workers downstream.

Inspection program

Workers should inspect extension cords, outlets and power tools frequently. The OSHA rules also require this inspection process. All temporary electrical equipment has to be protected by a GFCI or an assured equipment grounding program (AEGP). The AEGP requires that cords, tools, and outlets are inspected each quarter by a Competent Person to make sure the path to ground is intact, wiring is properly installed and equipment is not damaged.

What else do I need to know?

While the main concern is worker safety; damaged or overloaded electrical components can result in fires. When too much current (amperage) is pulled through cords or outlets, there is a lot of heat that is created. Damaged insulation can also contact metal and cause sparking or short circuits which can result in fires.

What about training?

Workers need to be trained in how to inspect cords and tools and what to do when they find damaged equipment. Overhead powerlines should also be a part of the training since many workers think they are insulated, when in fact they are not. Building scaffolds or using ladders and cranes near energized powerlines can be fatal.

If any employees work on energized equipment they must be "Qualified" which requires special training. It is always best to deenergize any electrical equipment first.

Where can I get more help?

The Hanover Risk Solutions Website has additional materials you can use and the OSHA website has a page that is dedicated just for electrical safety information <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/electrical/index.html>

Why The Hanover?

The Hanover is a leading property and casualty insurance company dedicated to achieving world-class performance. Our commitment is to deliver the products, services, and technology offered by the best national companies with the responsiveness, market focus, and local decision making of the best regional companies. This powerful combination has been a proven success since our founding in 1852, and all insurance company subsidiaries are rated "A" (Excellent) by A. M. Best Company.



The Hanover Insurance Company
440 Lincoln Street, Worcester, MA 01653

hanover.com
The Agency Place (TAP)—<https://tap.hanover.com>

The recommendation(s), advice and contents of this material are provided for informational purposes only and do not purport to address every possible legal obligation, hazard, code violation, loss potential or exception to good practice. The Hanover Insurance Company and its affiliates and subsidiaries ("The Hanover") specifically disclaim any warranty or representation that acceptance of any recommendations or advice contained herein will make any premises, property or operation safe or in compliance with any law or regulation. Under no circumstances should this material or your acceptance of any recommendations or advice contained herein be construed as establishing the existence or availability of any insurance coverage with The Hanover. By providing this information to you, The Hanover does not assume (and specifically disclaims) any duty, undertaking or responsibility to you. The decision to accept or implement any recommendation(s) or advice contained in this material must be made by you.

©2014 The Hanover Insurance Group, Inc. All Rights Reserved.