



Electrical

eSafetyLine

Extension Cords

Extension cords or flexible cord sets are used throughout general industry and construction. But, their use is restricted by regulations. Employers and employees need to know when and how to use them safely within these regulatory limits.

The law allows extension cords to be used as follows:

- During and for remodeling, maintenance, repair or demolition of buildings and similar activities.
- Experimental or developmental work.
- For no more than 90 days for Christmas decorative lighting or other similar purposes. (Note: The number of days deemed temporary may vary by State and local code. Check your local codes)

Do **NOT** use extension cords in the following ways:

- As a substitute for fixed wiring of a structure
- To run through holes in walls, ceilings, or floors
- To run through doorways, windows, or similar openings
- To attach to building surfaces
- To conceal behind building walls, ceilings, or floors
- To raise or lower equipment

Make sure extension cords are:

- Approved and suitable for the way they will be used and the location where they will be used. Extension cord sets used with portable electric tools and appliances must be of the three-wire type and designed for hard or extra-hard usage. Flexible cords used with temporary and portable lights shall be designed for hard or extra-hard usage. The National

Electrical Code, ANSI/NFPA 70, in Article 400, Table 400-4, lists various types of flexible cords, some of which are noted as being designed for hard or extra-hard usage. Examples of these types of flexible cords include hard service cord (types S, ST, SO, STO) and junior hard service cord (types SJ, SJO, SJT, SJTO).

- Not fastened or hung in any way that could cause damage to the outer jacket or insulation of the cord.
- Have insulation that is intact.
- Connected to devices and fittings so that any pulling force on the cord is prevented from being directly transmitted to joints or terminal screws on the plug
- Use only one continuous length cord without a splice or tap. Do not connect extension cords one to another.

Another major concern when using extension cords is wet locations. Prohibit your employees from using wet hands to plug or unplug equipment or extension cords if the equipment is energized. Also be sure to use Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI).

Discussion Questions

Why is there a restriction on hanging extension cords?

What type of extension cords have you seen on the job? Did they have a proper rating? What was it?

MEETING / TRAINING ATTENDANCE ROSTER

COMPANY: _____

_____ SAFETY MEETING

JOB/DEPT: _____

_____ SAFETY TRAINING

DATE: ___/___/___ TIME: _____

TOPICS ADDRESSED: _____

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURES

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

EMPLOYEE SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: _____

ACTION TAKEN: _____

Supervisor's Signature

____/____/____
Date

Safety Coordinator's Signature

____/____/____
Date