

Office Electrical Safety

- Only purchase equipment/appliances that are certified by a [qualified testing laboratory](#) (e.g. CSA, ULC, ETL, etc.)
- Extension cords should only be used temporarily. If you need additional wall outlets, contact [Facilities Management electricians](#) to review your situation.
- Replace worn, old or damaged extension cords and power bars right away.
- Avoid putting extension cords where they can be damaged or pinched like under a carpet or rug, or near water or heat sources.
- Pull on the plug end and not on the cord itself to prevent an extension cord, power bar cable, or device charging cable from being damaged when unplugging it.
- Plug only 1 heat-producing appliance (like a coffee maker, kettle, space heater or microwave) directly into a wall outlet at a time. Do not use power bars or extension cords for heat-producing or major equipment/appliances.
- Make sure space heaters are well away from soft furnishings, curtains and other flammable materials. Make sure the heater is clean and dust free, and that the heater's cord is not damaged.
- When charging devices, always use either the charger and cable that came with the device or branded, genuine replacements. Cheap knock-off or counterfeit chargers may ignore safety standards; since chargers have hundreds of volts internally, there's a big risk if a charger doesn't have proper insulation.
- Do not leave anything charging unattended for long periods of time. Unplug all chargers when going home for the evening or when away from your work area for an extended period.
- Only use a laptop on a hard, flat surface like a desktop, table or proper laptop stand to allow the laptop's vents to function properly and prevent "thermal runaway", which is when the device's lithium-ion batteries enter an uncontrollable, self-heating state that can result in extremely high temperatures, battery cell venting, smoke and fire.
- If you observe any of the following, contact [Facilities Management](#) immediately:
 - Flickering light bulbs or lights that dim when you use certain appliances.
 - Light switches or outlets that are hot to the touch.
 - Outlets that spark when you plug something in.
 - Outlets with a buzzing, crackling, or hissing sound or a burning smell.
 - Circuit breakers that trip constantly.
 - Electrical wires and breakers that feel hot to the touch.
 - Or any other electrical questions or concerns.