



Electrical Safety for Seniors

**All our energy.
All the time.**

MARITIME 
ELECTRIC
A FORTIS COMPANY

At Maritime Electric, we want our customers to be safe. Over the years, seniors have asked for electrical safety information. In response, we created this brochure to help seniors understand the potential hazards of electricity and how to prevent electrical injuries.

This brochure provides tips on electrical safety both inside and outside your home.

INDOOR ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS

Heating

- Make sure portable or space heaters have the required space around them. Check the manufacturer's instructions to ensure the required space is maintained.
- Space heaters should have a feature that shuts them off automatically if they tip over.
- Avoid leaving portable or space heaters unattended when in use.



Appliances and Equipment

- Never leave electric hot plates unattended when in use.
- Ensure electrical appliances do not get wet. Water and electricity do not mix.
- Keep electrical appliances away from sinks, bathtubs, showers and other wet locations.
- Unplug appliances before moving, cleaning or repairing them.
- Always unplug your toaster before recovering a wedged piece of food.
- Turn off heating and cooking appliances before leaving your home.

Indoor Lighting

- Ensure you have the correct wattage bulb in the socket. The wattage rating is noted on both the appliance and socket.
- Many types of light bulbs generate heat. Make sure lighting is kept away from flammable material (i.e. drapes).

Home Wiring

- Always hire a qualified-licensed electrician to perform electrical work in your home.
- Install Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI) where required.

Breakers and Fuses

- Always contact a qualified-licensed electrician if fuses or breakers fail or trip.
- If a breaker trips frequently, it may be damaged or overloaded.
- If a fuse blows, turn off all appliances and lights on the circuit before changing the fuse.
- Only replace blown fuses with a fuse that has the correct rating. The rating should be listed on the front of the fuse and clearly marked on the fuse box.
- Label any disconnected circuits so that someone else does not accidentally reconnect your electricity.
- Know where the breakers and boxes are located in case of an emergency.
- Do not block access to circuit breakers or fuse boxes.
- Label all circuit breakers and fuse boxes clearly. Each switch should be labelled to indicate which outlet or appliance it is for.



Plugs and Cords

Always inspect any electrical cord that you use inside and outside of your home. Cords are rated for indoor and outdoor use. It is important to use the correct cord.

- Always unplug a cord by pulling on the plug not the cord.
- Do not overload wall sockets or electrical power bars.
- Never remove or bypass the third prong (ground) on a plug. It is required for safety reasons.
- Power bars are easy to use, but do not increase circuit capacity. The total demand on power bars should not exceed what would normally be plugged into an outlet.
- Beware of non-certified power bars. All power bars sold in Canada must be CSA (Canadian Standards Association) or UL (Underwriters Laboratories) approved.
- Use safety caps to keep children from putting things into electrical outlets.
- Never remove a plug when your hands are wet.



Extension Cords

- Only use extension cords that are properly rated for the required electrical load and only use it temporarily.
- Keep extension cords away from water or damp locations.
- Never run extension cords under your carpet.
- Beware of non-certified extension cords. All extension cords sold in Canada must be CSA (Canadian Standards Association) or UL (Underwriters Laboratories) approved.

Protect Your Pets

- Make sure any loose electrical cords are tucked out of sight behind appliances.
- Pet-proof cords are available in some stores.
- Cords can be coated with a bitter substance available at pet stores to discourage chewing.
- Be sure to plug your cord fully into a socket as partially exposed prongs can be dangerous to a curious pet.
- Pets should never be allowed to sleep behind electrical appliances such as computers, dryers, etc.
- Lamps with exposed bulbs and freestanding lamps can become quite warm and could start a fire if knocked over by your pet.



OUTDOOR ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS

Outdoor Lighting

- Ensure temporary outdoor lighting such as holiday or seasonal lighting is connected to a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) outlet.
- If using a ladder, stay away from overhead wires.
- Fall-related injuries often increase while decorating for holidays. Always maintain proper footing and avoid uneven or unstable surfaces if using a ladder.

Lawn & Garden Projects

- If you are not sure whether you have an underground electrical service, contact Maritime Electric before you dig, trench or till on your property.
- Always check for overhead power lines and the location of your service entrance prior to setting up a ladder or trimming trees.
- Use garden tools and appliances that have three prong plugs.
- Inspect your garden tools' electrical cords for frayed insulation. If frayed, replace before using.
- Use Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) outlets for outdoor plugs.
- When planting trees or shrubs avoid placing them under power lines. See our website for more information on tree planting.

Emergency

Be prepared for an emergency. Keep a flashlight with fresh batteries near your bedside. Remove any clutter from doors, stairs and hallways that could be a tripping hazard in the dark.

If someone in your house uses life support or needs an essential service (i.e. oxygen) please call Maritime Electric at 1-800-670-1012.

Contact

Emergency Personnel: Call 9-1-1

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