



## Electrical Safety

There are many areas at OHSU where an employee can be injured by electrical shock. Following these tips will help protect you from injury:

- **Never overload an electrical power circuit.** Surge Suppressor outlet strips can be used to protect computers and other sensitive electronic equipment. These should have integrated circuit protection and be rated (amps) to handle the load. Use extension cords only for temporary power needs and NOT for long term needs. They also cannot be run above ceilings, through doorways or across walkways.
- **Plugging multiple power hungry electrical devices** (i.e.: microwave, coffee pot, refrigerator.) into one circuit or outlet can overload the circuit breaker. When it trips, power may be cut to other areas and sensitive equipment. Also, small appliances should always be plugged directly into the wall outlet, not into power strips.
- **Do NOT access electrical panels to reset circuit breakers** if the power goes off in your work area. An underlying electrical problem may be causing the circuit breaker to trip, and such problems must be addressed. An OHSU electrician must be called (4-8054) to ensure that power is restored safely. Also please do not stack supplies or equipment in front of electrical panel boards.
- **Prevent fires.** Pay special attention to where you locate electrical equipment that generates heat or spark. These should never be located near flammable or combustible materials.
- **Avoid damage.** Keep all electrical equipment away from liquids unless so designed.
- **Do NOT remove fluorescent light tubes from overhead fixtures.** While these can sometimes be too bright for your work, most fluorescent light fixtures are designed to operate with all light tubes installed. If you simply remove one, the ballast (the internal transformer) can burn out or not operate correctly. In addition, these lamps operate between 400 and 600 volts, and this poses a severe shock hazard. Request that an OHSU electrician do the job.
- **Safety at home.** The same kinds of electrical hazards exist in your home. Qualified electricians should be called when help is needed. Power tools used outside should be plugged into an outlet or cord with integrated Ground Fault Circuit Interruption (GFCI) protection. Ask an electrician or home supplies store for how to ensure this protection.

This information was thoughtfully provided by the professional electricians at OHSU, whose goal is to safely serve all of your electrical power needs. If you have a question or have an urgent need, please call the Facilities Management and Construction Department dispatcher at (503) 494-8054.

---

This information is a service of the OHSU Safety Committee (503 494-7795).  
(11/06)

