



## Extension Cord Use

### What is an Extension Cord?

An extension cord is a flexible multi-conductor cord having an attachment plug at one end for plugging into a receptacle and a connector on the other end for attachment to a continuing cord. An extension cord can be a general use cord or outdoor cord.

Whether an extension cord is used in a laboratory or business setting, the following NEC regulations would apply:

Extension cords are intended for temporary use only. The NEC specifically states: “cords shall not be used as a substitute for the fixed wiring of a structure”. If an extension cord is being used for appliances that will not be moved, permanent wiring should be installed.

Extension cords are not to be used where there is a risk of damage. Examples would include exposure to foot traffic, dragging or the movement of doors. In other words, extension cords should not be placed across walkways or through doorways or windows.

Extension cords are not to be run through holes in walls, above ceilings or under floors.

Extension cords are not to be attached to building surfaces.

### Other safety tips:

- » Do not exceed maximum cord and plug load limits.
- » Do not daisy chain extension cords.
- » Do not use metal punch boxes as extension cords.
- » Avoid exposing extension cords to water or wet conditions unless the cord is specifically designed for these conditions.
- » Do not remove the grounding prong.
- » Do not use extension cords as on/off switches.



References: National Electric Code 2005, Article 400  
Electrical Hazard Recognition and Abatement Resource Guide, TMK and Associates, Inc