

HOME OFFICE SAFETY

Do you have a home office or are you thinking about adding or remodeling to have an office in your home? The home office is a rapidly expanding work trend sweeping the country. Products such as personal computers, fax machines, copiers, etc. are becoming more affordable and are easy to install and use. The **Electrical Safety Foundation International** suggests that you take the following precautions to help make you and your home safe:

- Make sure there are sufficient wall outlets in the office so you don't have to use extension cords. If you have to use an extension cord, make sure it is rated for the products to be plugged in.
- Never keep an extension cord plugged in when not in use. The cord will still conduct electricity until it is unplugged from the outlet.
- Use correctly wired, three prong electrical outlets. This assures the equipment is grounded.
- Do not overload the electrical circuits. Check your breaker/fuse box to determine which outlets are on the same circuit. Never plug in electrical products that, when their wattage use is combined, draw more than 1,500 watts from the same circuit
- Use a voltage surge suppressor to protect against hardware damage or loss of data from electrical surges. In a lightning storm, unplug your computer directly from the wall outlet. A surge suppressor will not protect an electrical product from a lightning strike.
- If there is a blackout while you are working on your computer, turn the computer off. Otherwise when the power goes back on, a voltage spike could damage your equipment.

Remember, following the above precautions will not only protect your home office equipment but also might save your life.



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