

Family Room Safety

Plug Into Safety in Your Family Room

The family room is an area of the home where many people go to unwind and relax, but there are certainly a lot of appliances powered there. According to the Consumer Electronics Association, the average home today has three televisions, two DVD players, at least one digital camera, one desktop computer and two cell phones. Many homes and their electrical systems were built before most modern-day home electronics and appliances were even invented. Learn to recognize and eliminate potential electrical hazards that can exist in common areas of your home.

Safety Tips:

- Make sure entertainment centers and computer equipment have plenty of space around them for ventilation.
- Extension cords are for temporary use only, and are not intended to be used as a permanent power supply.
- Do not place extension cords in high traffic areas, under carpets, or across walkways, where they pose a potential tripping hazard.
- Examine extension cords before each use. Replace cracked or damaged cords immediately.
- Use a surge protector to protect your computer and other electronic equipment from damage caused by voltage changes.
- Consider purchasing surge protectors with cable and phone jacks to provide similar protection to your phone, fax, computer modem, and television.
- Heavy reliance on power strips is an indication that you have too few outlets to address your needs. Have additional outlets installed by a licensed, qualified electrician as needed.
- Keep liquids, including drinks, away from electrical items such as televisions and computers.

Safety Spotlight: TRRs

Every year in the United States, more than 2,400 children under 10 years old are treated in hospital emergency rooms for electric shock or burn injuries caused by tampering with a wall outlet.

Tamper resistant receptacle (TRR) technology provides a simple, permanent solution to help prevent these types of childhood shock and burn injuries. TRRs look like standard wall outlets, but they are actually designed to close off the receptacle openings unless equal pressure is simultaneously applied to both sides.

Energy Saving Tip:

Use a power strip as a central turn off point for electronics, video games, and computers when not in use.

Visit ESFi's *Virtual Home* at <http://virtualhome.esfi.org/> to learn more about home electrical safety.