

COLLEGE CAMPUS AND DORM ELECTRICAL SAFETY

According to the National Fire Protection Association, firefighters respond to an average of 3,810 fires at college residence halls and Greek housing each year. Help prevent electrical fires with these tips from ESFI:

- Do not overload extension cords, power strips or outlets.
- Do not connect multiple extension cords together.
- Extension cords should never be used on a permanent basis.
- Do not place cords under doors or carpets, and do not pinch them with furniture.
- Use light bulbs with correct wattage for lamps.
- Never remove the ground pin (the third prong) to make a three-prong plug fit a two-prong outlet.
- Check that all electrical items, including extension cords, are certified by a nationally recognized independent testing laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL), Intertek (ETL), or Canadian Standards Association (CSA).
- Irons, hairdryers, curling irons and straighteners should never be left unattended, and should be unplugged when not in use.

Beware of the following warning signs that could indicate an electrical hazard:

- Power outages—circuit breakers that frequently trip or fuses that often need replacement
- Dim and/or flickering lights
- Arcs and sparks—flashes of light or showers of sparks anywhere in your electrical system
- Sizzles and buzzes—unusual sounds from your electrical system
- Overheating—overheated wires can give off an odor of hot insulation; switch plates or receptacle covers that are hot to the touch or discolored from heat buildup
- Electrical shocks—any shock, even a mild tingle, may be warning of an electrical danger

If you observe any of these signs, notify your resident director.



For more electrical safety tips, visit www.esfi.org.