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**SUNY CORTLAND  
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH  
AND SAFETY OFFICE**

***EXTENSION CORDS***

*PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES*

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# Extension Cords

## 1. Purpose

This safety standard outlines guidelines for use of extension cords at SUNY Cortland. It complies with:

- 29 CFR 1910.304 - Wiring Design and Protection;
- 29 CFR 1910.305 - Wiring Methods, Components, and Equipment for General Use;
- New York State Fire Code Section 605 Electrical Equipment, Wiring and Hazards; and
- NFPA 70E National Electrical Code, 2015.

Use of extension cords is limited to activities related to maintenance, cleaning, construction, or temporary use situations (e.g., training, meetings, and special events). Examples include use of vacuum cleaners, hand-held power tools, and audio-visual equipment. Extension cords may not be used in lieu of permanent fixed wiring, and the temporary use of extension cords shall be kept to a minimum.

## 2. Applicability

This policy applies to all users of extension cords at SUNY Cortland.

## 3. Definitions

This safety standard outlines guidelines for use of extension cords at SUNY Cortland. It complies with:

- 29 CFR 1910.304 - Wiring Design and Protection;
- 29 CFR 1910.305 - Wiring Methods, Components, and Equipment for General Use;
- New York State Fire Code Section 605 Electrical Equipment, Wiring and Hazards; and
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Use of extension cords is limited to activities related to maintenance, cleaning, construction, or temporary use situations (e.g., training, meetings, and special events). Examples include use of vacuum cleaners, hand-held power tools, and audio-visual equipment. Extension cords may not be used in lieu of permanent fixed wiring, and the temporary use of extension cords shall be kept to a minimum.

**Note: See supporting photographs on page 4.**

#### **4. Acceptable Power Cord Devices for Permanent Wiring**

UL approved, multi-outlet surge protectors.

#### **5. Unacceptable Power Cords or Devices for Permanent Wiring**

- a) Cords with grounding adapters.
- b) Outlet adapters without surge protection.
- c) Zip cords.
- d) Extension cords of any type.
- e) Surge protection units that are “piggy-backed”.

#### **6. Acceptable Extension Cords for Temporary Use**

- a) UL approved extension cords with #14 or larger diameter wire and with molded male and female plugs at either end.
- b) Homemade extension cords with all of the following components:
  - i) UL approved single male and single female connectors with plastic or non-metallic grip holding the cord inside;
  - ii) UL approved cord with #14 or larger diameter wire marked S, ST, SO, STO, SJ, SJO, SJT, or SJTO; and
  - iii) UL approved GFCI outlet device.
- c) UL approved molded multi-outlet extension cord connected to a GFCI single outlet adapter plug.
- d) UL approved extension cord connected to a GFCI multiple outlet cord.

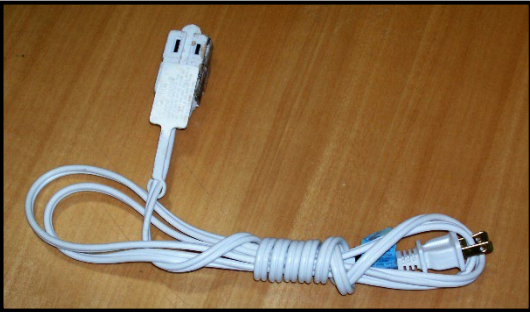
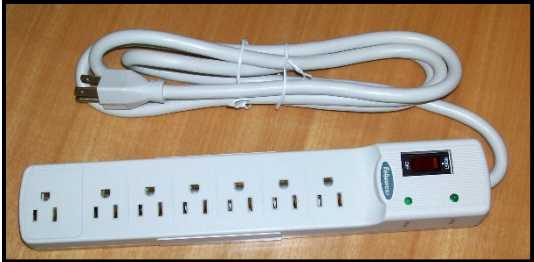
**Note:** See supporting photographs on page 5.

#### **7. Extension Cord Use and Maintenance**

- a) Maintain surge protection units and extension cords in good condition.
- b) Periodically inspect surge protection units and extension cords for signs of wear and integrity. Dispose of units, cords, or plugs that are damaged, cracked, split, burned, or excessively worn. Additionally, extension cords must not be used if any of the following conditions exist:
  - i) portions of the cord are not inside of the male or female plug and the inside wires are exposed;
  - ii) the ground prong on the male end of the plug is missing;
  - iii) electrical tape is used to repair or splice any portion of a cord; or
  - iv) instances where a homemade electrical box is used on the female end of the plug.
- c) Do not cover surge protection units or extension cords with carpet, furniture or other objects.

- d) Do not run surge protection units or extension cords through doorways or windows. For temporary use, extension cords can be run through doors and windows if they are protected from being damaged.
- e) Do not remove ground prongs from three-wire extension cords.
- f) Do not plug major appliances such as refrigerators or freezers into surge protection units or extension cords. These appliances must be plugged directly into a wall outlet.
- g) When using surge protection units or extension cords in wet areas, GFCI devices must be used.
- h) Contact the Environmental Health and Safety Office for assistance with identifying unsafe conditions related to the use of surge protection units and extension cords.

Appendix A – Supporting Photographs for Section 2 Definitions



## Appendix B – Acceptable Extension Cords for Temporary Use

