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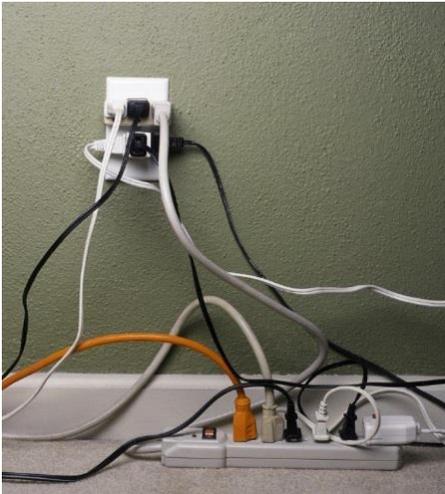
SAFETY ALERT

No. 17-01

Electrical Outlet and Extension Cord Safety

February 2017

Electrical appliances are essential to everyday tasks but can also pose a real hazard when not used properly. In 2014, the National Fire Protection Association reported an estimated 47,000 U.S. home structure fires and \$1.4 billion in direct property damage were related to electrical failure or malfunctions.



Recently, an electrical fire resulted in the total loss of multiple classroom bungalows at one of our schools. The fire was caused by overloaded electrical outlets. Extension cords were also connected in series to a surge protector. This combination of illegal and unsafe practices overloaded the circuit. Fortunately, no one was injured during the fire, but the cost of repairs is substantial, and the loss of classroom space is a true hardship.

A significant amount of the costs associated with the loss of buildings and fire damage is paid out of general funds. This is money that could have been spent on our students in the classroom.

These types of incidents are preventable. By properly using electrical outlets and extension cords we can ensure the health and safety of our students and staff and prevent damage to school buildings. Major appliances must be plugged directly into an outlet and not powered with extension cords. Never use extension cords in series or outlet multipliers. These devices will overload circuits and could lead to deadly and destructive fires.

For more information please refer to [BUL-6436.0, Safe Use of Household Electrical Appliances and Extension Cords](#) for additional requirements or contact the Office of Environmental Health & Safety at (213) 241-3199 or at <http://achieve.lausd.net/oehs>.

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