

## Home and Garden Appliance Safety

For most people the home is a place where friends and family can come together, rest, and relax. However, if electrical appliances are not maintained or used properly this safe haven can be diminished in a matter of seconds.

Electrical appliances within the home are part of our everyday life from the toaster, heaters, hair curler, blow dryer, microwave, television, and stereo. However, if these appliances are not maintained, stored or used properly – they can pose a serious safety hazard. Here are some safety precautions for electrical appliances in the home.

- Electrical appliances should not be used around water.
- When carrying or using appliances, they should be held at the handle and not the cord.
- Appliances that can get hot such as heaters, toasters, and light bulbs should be kept away from materials that can burn.
- Small appliances should be turned off or unplugged when people leave the home.
- If an appliance repeatedly blows a fuse, trips a circuit breaker or has given you a shock, unplug it and have the appliance repaired or replaced.

Electrical appliances can also be found outside of the home. Appliances are used outside for cutting the lawn, trimming bushes and flowers and cutting tree limbs. Appliances that are used for yard work should be labeled for outdoor use. Here are some tips for practicing safety precautions when working with electrical appliances outside of the home:

- Unplug electrical tools and disconnect spark plug wires on gasoline-powered tools before making adjustments or clearing jams near moving parts.
- Be sure power tools are turned off and made inoperable if they must be left unattended to prevent use by children.
- Handle gas carefully. Never fill gasoline tanks while machinery is on or when equipment is still hot. Wipe up spills. Store gas in an approved container away from the house. Finally, never smoke or use any type of flame around gasoline or gasoline-powered equipment
- Never work with electrical power tools in wet or damp conditions.
- Be sure that extension cords are in good condition, are rated for outdoor use, and are the proper gauge for the electrical current capacity of the tool.
- Inspect the mower periodically for potential hazards.