

DISCONTINUE USE OF EXTENSION CORDS

CODE SECTIONS

International Fire Code 2006 Edition

605.5 Extension cords. Extension cords and flexible cords shall not be a substitute for permanent wiring. Extension cords and flexible cords shall not be affixed to structures, extended through walls, ceilings or floors, or under doors or floor coverings, nor shall such cords be subject to environmental damage or physical impact. Extension cords shall be used only with portable appliances.

605.5.1 Power supply. Extension cords shall be plugged directly into an approved receptacle, power tap or multi-plug adapter and, except for approved multi-plug extension cords, shall serve only one portable appliance.

605.5.2 Ampacity. The ampacity of the extension cords shall not be less than the rated capacity of the portable appliance supplied by the cord.

605.5.3 Maintenance. Extension cords shall be maintained in good condition without splices, deterioration or damage.

605.5.4 Grounding. Extension cords shall be grounded when serving grounded portable appliances.

605.7 Appliances. Electrical appliances and fixtures shall be tested and listed in published reports of inspected electrical equipment by an approved agency and installed and maintained in accordance with all instructions included as part of such listing.

605.8 Electrical motors. Electrical motors shall be maintained free from excessive accumulations of oil, dirt, waste and debris.

605.9 Temporary wiring. Temporary wiring for electrical power and lighting installations is allowed for a period not to exceed 90 days. Temporary wiring methods shall meet the applicable provisions of the ICC *Electrical Code*.

Exception: Temporary wiring for electrical power and lighting installations is allowed during periods of construction, remodeling, repair or demolition of buildings, structures, equipment or similar activities.

605.9.1 Attachment to structures. Temporary wiring attached to a structure shall be attached in an approved manner.

605.4 Multi-plug adapters. Multi-plug adapters, such as cube adapters, unfused plug strips or any other device not complying with the ICC *Electrical Code* shall be prohibited.

605.4.1 Power tap design. Relocatable power taps shall be of the polarized or grounded type, equipped with over current protection, and shall be listed. In accordance with UL 1363.

605.4.2 Power supply. Relocatable power taps shall be directly connected to a permanently installed receptacle.

605.4.3 Installation. Relocatable power tap cords shall not extend through walls, ceilings, floors, under doors or floor coverings, or be subject to environmental or physical damage.

EXPLANATION

Extension cords are only to be used for *temporary* applications, such as moving an overhead projector out into a room, and then moving it back. Any sort of permanent or long-term electrical needs require permanent wiring. If an extension cord is used for a temporary use, it must be plugged directly into a wall receptacle; serve only one appliance (unless you are using circuit-breaker equipped power strip); be of sufficient size to handle the electrical load; be in good physical condition—no breaks, splices or repairs; be grounded when used; and shall not be run under or through walls, floors or floor coverings, or be outside in the weather. Additionally, circuit-breaker equipped power strips and extension cords cannot be plugged into each other in a series—the cords must be plugged directly into a wall receptacle.

RATIONALE

Extension cords are for the purpose of providing flexibility for the moving of portable appliances. Fixed or stationary appliances, which do not require frequent moving, should receive their electrical power directly from an approved outlet. This direct connection is the safest means of electrical wiring as the circuits should be rated for the appliance and is protected with conduit and circuit breakers.

If an extension cord is to be used, it must meet the above criteria, which will help to alleviate possible electrical fires resulting from their use.