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Acton Fire Department

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Acton Fire Department Offers Residents Electrical Safety Tips for National Electrical Safety Month

ACTON — Chief Robert Hart and the Acton Fire Department would like to remind residents about electrical safety and best practices during the month of May.

Each year, May is recognized as National Electrical Safety Month by the [Electrical Safety Foundation International](#) (ESFI). The annual initiative seeks to raise awareness about electrical safety and ensure residents take the necessary precautions to prevent fires, shocks and burns that can occur when electrical systems and devices are not handled and maintained properly..

According to the [National Fire Prevention Association](#) (NFPA), electrical distribution or lighting equipment played a role in approximately 34,000 home fires per year between 2014-2018, resulting in an average of 470 civilian deaths and 1,100 civilian injuries per year.

“During National Electrical Safety Month, we recognize that electrical safety is an important topic, especially while many residents still work from home,” said Chief Hart. “Residents should regularly check their appliances, outlets and extension cords to make sure they remain safe from electrical fires.”

In order to protect yourself, your family and your home from electrical fires, the NFPA offers the following [safety tips](#):

- Make sure all electrical work is conducted by a qualified electrician.
- When buying a new home or remodeling, have it inspected for electrical safety by someone qualified to do so.
- Only plug one heat-producing device into an outlet at one time, such as a space heater or toaster.
- When using extension cords, only plug smaller appliances into them. Major appliances like a refrigerator, dryer, washer, stove or air conditioner need to be plugged directly into a wall outlet.
- Consider installing an advanced circuit breaker, which can shut off electricity when a problem is detected.
- Electrical cords should not run across doorways or under carpets. Extension cords should only be used temporarily.
- When using a light bulb, ensure it has the correct number of watts.
- There are a number of situations in the home where the NFPA encourages residents to call an electrician, including when fuses blow frequently in the home, circuit breakers frequently trip, you have a tingling feeling when touching an electrical appliance, wall outlets are warm or discolored, a burning or rubbery smell is coming from an appliance, you notice flickering or dimming lights or see sparks coming from an outlet.

The Acton Fire Department also wishes to remind you that electrical safety is just as important outside the home as inside the home.

The NFPA offers several tips for [outdoor electrical safety](#):

- Only use lighting, extension cords and power tools intended for outdoor use and listed by a qualified test laboratory.
- Store electrical tools indoors and keep them away from children.
- Ensure the area around your electric meter and all electrical equipment is clear.
- Before using lighting or extension cords, check them for damage and replace them right away if needed.

Some offices are still operating remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. For residents working from home, ESFI offers [these tips](#) to ensure electrical safety while at home:

- Do not plug too many devices into an outlet at risk of overloading it. Only use extension cords temporarily as they are not a replacement for wall outlets.
- Unplug all appliances when they are not in use to save energy and minimize the risk of shock or fire.

- Regularly inspect electrical cords and extension cords for damage.
- Avoid using charging devices on your bed, as devices covered by blankets or pillows could overheat and lead to a fire.

The Acton Fire Department also wishes to remind residents that they should test their smoke detectors regularly to ensure they are functioning properly. It's also important that all residents of the home understand the sound of a smoke alarm and are familiar with the escape plan in the event of a fire.

Residents that have any questions about electrical safety can contact the Acton Fire Department at 978-929-7722. As always, call 911 in event of an emergency.

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