

## Electrical Safety In The Home

U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated average of 20,900 reported home structure fires involving electrical distribution or lighting equipment in 2005. These fires resulted in 500 civilian fire deaths, 1,100 civilian fire injuries, and \$862 million in direct property damage.



### Facts & Figures

- Lamps, light fixtures and light bulbs accounted for the largest share of the 2002-2005 home structure fires involving electrical distribution or lighting equipment.
  - Cords and plugs accounted for the largest share of the 2002-2005 home structure fire civilian deaths involving electrical distribution or lighting equipment.
  - Some type of electrical failure or malfunction was cited as factor contributing to ignition for 73% of electrical distribution or lighting equipment home structure fires.
- ▶ Replace or repair loose or frayed cords on all electrical devices.
  - ▶ Avoid running extension cords across doorways or under carpets.
  - ▶ In homes with small children, unused wall sockets and extension-cord receptacles should have plastic safety covers.
  - ▶ Consider having additional circuits or outlets added by a qualified electrician so you do not have to use extension cords.
  - ▶ Follow the manufacturer's instructions for plugging an appliance into a receptacle outlet.
  - ▶ Avoid overloading outlets. Plug only one high-wattage appliance into each receptacle outlet at a time.
  - ▶ If outlets or switches feel warm, shut off the circuit and have them checked by an electrician.
  - ▶ When possible, avoid the use of "cube taps" and other devices that allow the connection of multiple appliances into a single receptacle.
  - ▶ Place lamps on level surfaces, away from things that can burn and use bulbs that match the lamp's recommended wattage.