



COMMON FINDS: EXTENSION CORDS

BACKGROUND:

From office areas to garage bays, there always seems to be a restriction on the town's ability to charge their tools so they can go back to doing what they do best, helping the people in their community. Though extension cords are a great way to improve the workspace, they do carry some inherent risks. Besides being a **violation of OSHA 29 CFR 1910.305**, extension cords can be a trip hazard "if not stored safely" or a fire hazard "if the incorrect cord is used." CIRMA Risk Management regularly finds extension cords being used as permanent sources of power during our Facilities Hazard Assessments.

OBSERVATION:

The extension cords were observed as being a permanent source of power, or creating a trip hazard on the walking-working surface.

RECOMMENDATION:

Do not use extension cords as a permanent source of power, in accordance with **OSHA 29 CFR 1910.305(g)(1)(iv)**.
"Unless specifically permitted otherwise in paragraph (g) (1)(ii) of this section, flexible cords and cables may not be used as a substitute for the fixed wiring of a structure."

OTHER TIPS FOR USING EXTENSION CORDS SAFELY:

- **Unplug the extension cord and store it** in a designated area when the device is fully charged.
- **Install permanent wiring** to ensure that the voltage going through the cables is rated for the charge.
- **Create a docking station** where devices can be charged and the wiring can be staged out of the walking-working surface and can be accessed easily to shut off the power.

visit [CIRMA.org](https://www.cirma.org) to learn more



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