

# Spotlight On Safety

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## Electrical Safety: Relocatable Power Taps (RPT)



Relocatable Power taps, also known as plug strips or power strips, are extremely useful devices. They can also be a serious safety hazard if used incorrectly. Follow the guidance below to ensure safe use.

<p><b>All RPTs must be listed by a nationally recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL.)</b> The most common is Underwriter's laboratory (UL) but there are others. The Listing must be a California State Fire Marshal approved listing. All non-listed electrical equipment (custom) must be inspected and approved for use. Contact EH&amp;S for assistance.</p>
<p><b>Indoor use only unless the RPT is labeled for outdoor use.</b> Standard RPTs are rated for indoor use and should never be covered with carpet or rugs. Do not run cords through doors or windows.</p>
<p><b>Don't use 2-prong ungrounded electrical devices.</b> All department-purchased electrical equipment must be 3-prong grounded. Certain tools may be double insulated (see symbol on casing)</p>
<p><b>Don't use extension cords or power taps ("Waber Strips") as a substitute for permanent wiring.</b> Extension cords and temporary power taps may be used for experimental/ developmental purposes for no longer than 6 months, or for portable tools or appliances that must be moved frequently (except UL listed surge-protected power strips used with data processing equipment and voltage regulators, timers, and similar controllers). All other electrical equipment must be plugged directly into a permanent receptacle (see UCR Policy and Procedure #425-18 Electrical Service Extension Safety at <a href="http://www.vca.ucr.edu/index.php?content=policies/policies.php">www.vca.ucr.edu/index.php?content=policies/policies.php</a>)</p>
<p><b>Don't use equipment with worn/ damaged electrical cords, plugs, switches, receptacles, or cracked casings.</b> Running electrical cords under doors/ rugs, through windows or holes in walls is a common cause of frayed/ damaged cords and plugs. Call the Physical Plant's Service Desk at 827-4214 for assistance in repairing University-owned electrical equipment</p>
<p><b>Don't attempt freelance repairs unless you are a qualified electrical technician assigned to perform electrical work by your supervisor.</b> Fixed wiring may only be repaired or modified by Physical Plant Electrical Shop</p>
<p><b>Don't use 2-pole to 3-pole adapters, cube taps, 2-prong (ungrounded) extension cords, or similar grounding bypass devices</b></p>
<p>All electrical devices fabricated for experimental purposes must meet state and University construction and grounding requirements</p>
<p>Extension cords and other purchased equipment must be <b>approved</b> through OSHA's Nationally Recognized Testing Lab (NRTL) listing at <a href="http://www.osha.gov/dts/otpc/nrtl/index.html">www.osha.gov/dts/otpc/nrtl/index.html</a></p>
<p>Equipment developed as part of a research investigation or grant must have a thorough, documented review by a qualified individual with knowledge and experience in the components, their use, and operation</p>

For additional information visit [www.ehs.ucr.edu](http://www.ehs.ucr.edu) or call 951-827-5528 if you have any questions.