

**DATE:** Wednesday, September 12th, 2022  
**TO:** College Community  
**FROM:** Michael Laviolette, Director Risk Management  
**SUBJECT:** Daisy Chaining

---

The purpose of this memo is to educate and provide guidance to the College community on the issue of Daisy Chaining. The term "Daisy chaining", refers to the connection of two or more power bars/strips or extension cords together. Daisy chaining is usually a result of inadequate access to power outlets and can lead to overloaded circuits and fire risk.



### Power Bars/Strips

Most power strips or surge protectors are approved for providing power to a maximum of four or six individual items. When multiple power strips are interconnected, the one directly connected to the building wall outlet is often supplying power to far more outlets than the approved number. This electrical current overload can result in a fire or can cause a circuit breaker to trip, de-energizing computers and other equipment throughout the area that are connected to a surge protector.

A power strip needs to be connected directly to an outlet that is permanently installed. The power strip should be approved by a Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (Like ULC, FM or CSA) and it needs to be used according to instructions listed by the manufacturer.

Another key point to consider is that "outlet devices shall have an ampere rating not less than the load to be served. Overloading a power strip is not safe—potential excess heat can create a fire risk.



## **Extension Cords**

A fire hazard may result if an extension cord is overloaded or improperly used. It should also be noted that even extension cords that are approved are only for temporary wiring. They are not supposed to be used in a permanent capacity. Consideration needs to be given to the type of extension cord as well. Light-duty cords should not be used for supplying power to a number of items at once—especially those which are considered high energy.

## **Alternatives to Daisy Chaining**

The following are a couple of alternatives safe solutions in place of daisy chaining power strips and extension cords. These included:

- Replace a power strip with a power cord of adequate length to reach an outlet.
- Move equipment or desks or whatever needs electrical power closer to existing outlets.
- Choose the appropriate kind of power strip that will meet the electrical power needs.
- If possible and feasible, add more outlets to meet the electrical power needs. Please contact Facilities Management at Ext. 7710 to help review and facilitate your needs.

## **The following is a list of Do's and Don'ts:**

### **Do's**

- If possible, rearrange desks, workstations and equipment to an area with a power outlet.
- Check the condition of extension cords and power strips to be sure they are ready for use.
- Ensure that power strips and surge protectors are equipped with internal fuses.
- Have an adequate number of outlets installed when power outlets are scarce.

### **Don'ts**

- Do not overload power strips or power outlets, this can result in a fire or could cause the circuit breaker to trip.
- Do not use an extension cord for permanent connection. At this point, the wiring is no longer temporary.
- Do not feed extension cords through doorways, walls or floors.
- Ensure that the extension cords you are using are never covered, or under carpets and high traffic areas. This can lead to an additional trip hazard.