

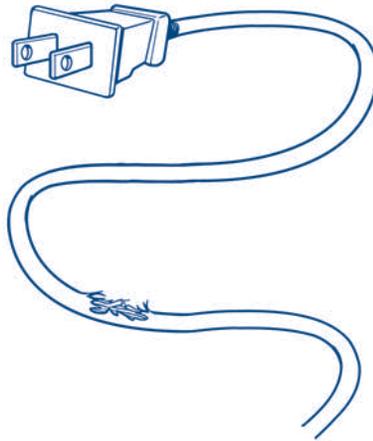
Electrical Hazards

Working with electrical equipment (such as vacuum cleaners), especially when water or moisture is present, can expose you to electrical current. Electrical currents can cause shock, injury, and sometimes death.

Look at the pictures below. Which of these activities are safe? Which are unsafe? Why?



A. Vacuuming a wet floor.



B. Using a fraying electrical cord.



C. Pulling out a plug by the cord.

Answers:

- A.** Unsafe. Water easily conducts electricity and can cause electrical shock.
- B.** Unsafe. A damaged electrical cord can cause electrical shock.
- C.** Unsafe. Disconnect an electrical plug by pulling on the plug, not the cord.

Discussion Questions for Management & Employees

1. What electrical hazards are you most concerned about? Why?
2. What can management and employees do to prevent electrical injuries?
(Flip this page over for tips on preventing electrical injuries. →)

Electrical Hazards

Management Can Make the Workplace Safer

- D Make sure the building has ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). (See box below.)
- D Inspect equipment regularly. Repair faulty equipment, plugs with bent or missing prongs, and fraying electrical cords.

Employees Can Follow Safe Work Practices

- D Try to keep electrical equipment (vacuum cleaners, etc.) away from water, including wet floors.
- D Dry your hands before touching electrical equipment.
- D Make sure equipment is in the “Power off” position before plugging it into an outlet.
- D Immediately turn off the power if you smell burning plastic or smoke, if you see sparks, or if you feel tingling or a shock. Do not use the equipment. Report the problem to your employer.
- D Disconnect an electrical plug by pulling on the plug, not the cord.

What Are GFCIs?

- Ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) are devices that prevent electric shock and fire by cutting off power.
- GFCIs are required in wet areas such as bathrooms and kitchens.
- If you think GFCIs should be installed, the building owner or manager will need to approve this. GFCIs should be installed by a qualified electrician.