

Extension Cords and GFCI

About 10 minutes to deliver

Damaged cords, missing ground pins and why GFCI protection is not optional on a wet jobsite.

Electricity kills around a hundred construction workers a year, and the cause is usually mundane: a damaged cord, a defeated ground, or no GFCI on a wet site.

GFCI IS REQUIRED, NOT RECOMMENDED

1926.404(b)(1)(ii) requires ground-fault circuit interrupter protection on all 120-volt, single-phase 15- and 20-amp receptacles on a construction site that are not part of the permanent wiring — or an assured equipment grounding conductor program in its place.

A GFCI trips in milliseconds on a current imbalance far below what stops a heart. It is the difference between a shock you swear about and one you do not walk away from.

- Test it. Press the test button, confirm it trips, reset it. Do this at the start of the shift, not once a year.
- A GFCI that will not reset is telling you something. Find out what before you look for another outlet.

CORDS

- Look at the whole length, not just the ends. Nicks, crush marks, exposed conductor, melted insulation.
- Tape is not a repair. A damaged cord is replaced or professionally repaired.
- The ground pin stays. A missing or cut-off ground pin is an immediate out-of-service. Nobody has ever removed one for a good reason.
- Right rating — cords must be three-wire type and rated for hard or extra-hard use outdoors. Household cords are not jobsite cords.
- Not through doorways, windows, or under carpet, where they get crushed. Not stapled or nailed.
- Not carried by the cord, and never unplugged by yanking it.

AROUND WATER

Water and electricity is the combination that turns a minor fault into a fatality. Keep connections up off wet ground, use covers on outdoor receptacles, and stop work in standing water until power is dealt with.

IF SOMETHING IS WRONG

Report it and tag it. Do not "just be careful with that one" — the next person will not know.

ASK THE CREW

- When did anyone last press the test button on a GFCI here?
- Is there a cord on this site with a taped repair or a missing ground pin?
- Where do cords cross water or a walkway, and can we route them better?

29 CFR 1926.404 · 29 CFR 1926.405 · 29 CFR 1926.416

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ATTENDANCE RECORD

Extension Cords and GFCI

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Date

Job / site

Delivered by

Company

#	Print name	Signature	Date
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I delivered this talk and determined it was suitable for this crew and this work.

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