

# WKU Campus Guidelines

## Electrical Service/ Extension Cord Safety/ Equipment Requirements

*Policy Owner: Environment Health & Safety*

*Effective Date: 2002 - current*

### I. REFERENCES

- A. NFPA 70 & 70 E
- B. National Electrical Code, 2014 Edition
- C. Uniform Fire Code, 2012 Edition,
- D. Kentucky Building Codes (KBC) 2012 Edition

### II. POLICY

Extension cords supply electric service on a temporary basis, when the existing electrical wall receptacles (outlets) are not available (i.e., fully utilized or not accessible). Multi outlet assemblies provide for additional convenient located fixed outlets. Circuit conditioning devices provide conditioning of power to sensitive appliances such as computers. In order to ensure personnel and structural safety associated with the use of extended electrical service devices, the following electrical safety standards apply to all departments and units of the WKU campus, including vendors, contractors, or other entities occupying University property. This policy shall not limit the use of devices in conjunction with remodel, renovation, or construction projects by construction trades, when use of such devices is in compliance with the National Electric Code and with the Kentucky Building Codes and Regulations.

#### A. Extension Cords

1. Cords shall not be used as substitute for fixed or permanent wiring of the building.
2. Extension cords are permitted only with portable appliances or fixtures, and must be in accordance with the following:
  - a. Each cord shall be constructed with no less than #14 gauge conductors, no greater than twenty five (25) feet maximum in length, be plugged directly into a wall receptacle, and shall service only one appliance or fixture. Note: When Central Stores receives a request for an extension cord longer than 25 feet, Central Stores will notify the University Fire Marshal, who will contact the person submitting the request to determine proper usage.
  - b. The cord shall be maintained in good condition without splices, deterioration or damage.
  - c. The cord shall be of the grounded variety when servicing grounded appliances or fixtures.
  - d. Cords placed where they may be damaged by foot or wheel traffic must be protected with a cord guard.
3. Extension cords shall not be affixed to building structures, nor extend through walls, ceilings, floors, under doors or under floor coverings.

4. Extension cords shall not be connected to multiple outlet strips.
5. Existing cords in service properly prior to the implementation date of this policy may remain in service until their replacement is required for cause.

B. Multi outlet Assemblies

1. Multi outlet Assemblies shall be designed and installed in accordance with NEC 70.

C. Circuit Conditioning Devices

Listed and approved circuit conditioning devices are allowed to be used when conditioning of the power is required for use with equipment such as computers, printers, telephone equipment, etc. Installation of such devices shall be in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and the following:

1. The cord shall be maintained in good condition without splices, deterioration or damage.
2. Cords placed where they may be damaged by foot or wheel traffic must be protected with a cord guard.
3. Cords shall not be affixed to building structures, nor extend through walls, ceilings, floors, under doors or under floor coverings.
4. No interconnecting of multiple devices, i.e. daisy chaining, shall be allowed.

D. Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupters

A ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) shall be installed on all electrical circuits when required by the National Electric Code, including locations within six (6) feet of any water source (sink, fountain), when installed outdoors, or when installed in any wet environment.

E. New Wall Outlet Requirements

New walls, office partitions, and modular furniture are required to be installed and supplied with active electrical outlets, spaced a minimum of one outlet every six (6) feet including corners. If personal computers are to be installed in the area, it is recommended that special isolated circuit and grounded computer power outlets be installed.

F. Equipment

1. All heating and cooking equipment must be UL listed and approved.

Cooking appliances shall be used in their designated areas not in offices or common areas.

## Fire Safety Tips for Using Microwave Ovens

Microwave ovens are used every day, both at home and in the workplace. When used properly, the microwave is safe and convenient for heating a variety of foods in a short time. When you become complacent about microwave safety, however, your appliance can cause painful burns and become a potential fire hazard.

The following tips will help make the use of your microwave oven a safe method of food preparation.

- Before using a new microwave oven, always read the manufacturers operating procedures and safety precautions first.
- To minimize risk of fire, never attempt to heat articles that are not approved for use in microwave ovens.
- Remove food from packaging before defrosting in a microwave oven. Do not use plastic storage containers, foam trays and plastic wraps in microwave ovens because they are not heat stable at high temperatures. Melting or warping can occur which may cause harmful chemicals to migrate into the food.
- Never use recycled paper products in microwave ovens unless they are specifically approved for microwave use. Some recycled products including paper towels and even waxed paper may contain minute metal flecks. When a microwave oven is operating, the interaction between microwaves and the metal can cause sparks and even flames.
- Do not leave a microwave oven unattended when microwaving popcorn, since the heat buildup can cause fires. Heat the popcorn according to the written instructions, but begin with the minimum time specified because some microwaves can scorch popcorn in as little as two minutes.
- If you have a fire in your microwave oven, turn it off immediately. This will stop the fan so it won't feed oxygen to the flames. Then simply wait until the fire suffocates. Never open the oven door until you are absolutely certain that the fire is out. If in doubt, call the fire department.
- Use only microwave-safe utensils. The instructions that come with each microwave oven specify what kinds of containers are safe to use and how to test the suitability of materials before use.
- Always use oven mitts to remove items from the microwave oven after cooking. Be careful when removing a wrapping or covering from a hot item. Hot steam escaping from the container, as the covering is lifted, can cause painful burns.
- Be careful when heating liquids in the microwave oven. Since the containers may only feel warm, rather than hot, they are sometimes handled with less caution. This can easily result in the splashing or spilling of a scalding liquid.
- Before allowing children to operate a microwave oven, make sure that they are instructed in the proper use, and that they are tall enough to reach the oven and handle foods safely. Over 500 of those burned using microwave ovens are under 5 years of age.
  - If you have any question contact the University Fire Marshal @ 270 745-2931

2. Only ceramic heaters are allowed and **must** be equipped with an automatic shut off switch, should the unit be knocked over.

3. Use of any other equipment not meeting these requirements is subject for removal from WKU properties.

