Flipping a light switch. Plugging in a coffeemaker. Charging a laptop computer. These are second nature for most of us. Electricity makes our lives easier. However, we need to be cautious and keep safety in mind.

SAFETY TIPS

›› Have all electrical work done by a qualified electrician.
›› When you are buying or remodeling a home, have it inspected by a qualified electrician.
›› Only plug one heat-producing appliance (such as a coffee maker, toaster, space heater, etc.) into a receptacle outlet at a time.
›› Major appliances (refrigerators, dryers, washers, stoves, air conditioners, etc.) should be plugged directly into a wall receptacle outlet. Extension cords and plug strips should not be used.
›› Arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) are a kind of circuit breaker that shuts off electricity when a dangerous condition occurs. Consider having them installed in your home. Use a qualified electrician.
›› Use ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) to reduce the risk of shock. GFCIs shut off an electrical circuit when it becomes a shock hazard. They should be installed inside the home in bathrooms, kitchens, garages and basements. All outdoor receptacles should be GFCI protected.
›› Test AFCIs and GFCIs once a month to make sure they are working properly.
›› Check electrical cords to make sure they are not running across doorways or under carpets. Extension cords are intended for temporary use. Have a qualified electrician add more receptacle outlets so you don’t have to use extension cords.
›› Use light bulbs that match the recommended wattage on the lamp or fixture. There should be a sticker that indicates the maximum wattage light bulb to use.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

Call a qualified electrician or your landlord if you have:
• Frequent problems with blowing fuses or tripping circuit breakers
• A tingling feeling when you touch an electrical appliance
• Discolored or warm wall outlets
• A burning or rubbery smell coming from an appliance
• Flickering or dimming lights
• Sparks from an outlet

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