SHARP START

March 10 — Taped Is Not Repaired

While walking through the area, the retractable extension cord reel was observed with tape wrapped around the cable. Upon inspection, the tape was removed and damage to the outer jacket of the cord was found. This condition exposes the cable to continued wear and possible conductor damage, creating a risk of electrical shock, short circuit, fire, or equipment failure that could result in injury to personnel.

Coordinated with customer to have a work order created to repair or replace the damaged cord as soon as possible. If repair is not feasible, new cord reels will be ordered and installed.

A retractable extension cord reel had electrical tape wrapped around a section of the cable. At first glance, it looked like someone had "fixed" it. But when the tape was removed, damage to the outer jacket was visible.

Tape does not restore insulation integrity.

> Tape is not a repair.
> If insulation is compromised, the cord is compromised.
> Hidden risk is still risk.

Extension cords are designed with protective outer jackets to shield internal conductors from abrasion, moisture, and mechanical damage. When that jacket is compromised, the conductors inside are vulnerable. Continued use increases the likelihood of shock, short circuit, or fire especially in industrial environments where cords are exposed to foot traffic, equipment movement, and moisture.

This wasn't about not knowing the cord was damaged. Someone saw the damage and covered it. That's the problem. Covering a hazard does not remove it. It hides it.

Hazards

- Electrical shock
- Arc or short circuit
- Fire hazard
- Equipment damage
- Trip hazard from damaged cord
- Progressive conductor failure

Stats

- Electrical hazards remain a leading cause of workplace fatalities and serious injuries.
- Damaged flexible cords are a common OSHA citation in industrial settings.
- Temporary repairs using tape do not meet electrical safety standards.
- Electrical shock incidents often result from damaged insulation or exposed conductors.

Humans at Work

The cord still worked. That's usually where "good enough" starts. If it powers up, the brain checks the box and moves on. A little tape makes it look handled. Covered. Fixed. But tape doesn't restore insulation. Instead, it just hides the damage. When something looks repaired, it feels repaired, even when it's not.

That's the trap. We convince ourselves the risk is gone because we can't see it anymore. But electricity doesn't care what it looks like on the outside. If the jacket is compromised, the hazard is still there, and it is just waiting for the wrong bend, the wrong pull, or the wrong wet hand.

Pause and Think

Electrical systems rely on insulation to control energy. When that insulation is damaged, the hazard isn't visible, it's contained just beneath the surface. Continued use increases risk with every bend, pull, and movement.

- Is the outer jacket intact along its entire length?
- Has damage been properly repaired or replaced not just covered?
- Would you plug it in if your own hands were wet?