



SHARP START



August 11 — Smoke Is a Warning, Not an Inconvenience

An electrical cord was plugged in and began to smoke	Remove the hazard
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Electrical equipment usually gives us a warning...

...the question is whether we'll recognize it before something worse happens.

An employee plugged in an electrical cord, and it immediately began to smoke. Fortunately, the condition was recognized quickly, and the equipment was taken out of service before it could develop into a more serious incident such as an electrical shock, fire, or equipment failure.

Electrical problems rarely appear without warning. Smoke, unusual odors, excessive heat, sparks, or damaged insulation are all signs that something isn't right. It's easy to think a cord can "make it through one more job," but those warning signs are often the last opportunity to prevent an incident before a failure occurs.

Every employee has the authority and responsibility to stop using defective equipment. Taking a few moments to inspect cords, plugs, and electrical tools before use—and removing damaged equipment from service immediately—protects not only the person using it but everyone working nearby.

Hazards

- Electrical shock
- Fire caused by electrical failure
- Burns
- Damaged cords or plugs
- Faulty electrical equipment
- Continuing to use equipment after warning signs appear

Words of Wisdom

Electrical equipment often gives us one warning before it fails. Treat every warning sign as an opportunity to prevent the next incident.

Pause and Think

- What warning signs tell you an electrical tool or cord should be removed from service?
- When was the last time you inspected a cord before plugging it in?
- Have you ever continued using equipment even though you noticed something wasn't quite right?
- What should you do if you discover a damaged electrical cord on the jobsite?
- How can we make sure defective equipment isn't accidentally put back into service?

Closing Thought

Small warning signs often prevent big incidents—but only if we choose to act on them. If electrical equipment doesn't look, sound, smell, or operate normally, stop using it immediately and have it inspected.

See Something • Say Something • Do Something