

Pets and Electrical Safety



Kittens and puppies are likely to chew anything they can get in their mouth. Birds, such as parrots, can use their beaks to

rip electrical wires and components and create a danger to themselves and others. Bunnies, hamsters, and other small pets enjoy chewing on things such as wires without realizing the danger.

Around the House:

- Make sure all loose electrical cords are tucked out of sight behind electronics.
- Pet-proof cords are available in some stores. Otherwise, access can be blocked by wrapping flexible safety cable (from hardware or computer stores) around them or encase them in PVC.
- Cords can be coated with a bitter substance available at pet stores to discourage chewing.
- Unplug all accessible electrical cords if you have to leave a young pet unsupervised.
- Check any wiring frequently for fraying and replace immediately.
- Plugs should be fully plugged into a socket as a partially exposed prong can be dangerous to a curious paw or nose. Pets should not be allowed to nap behind electrical appliances such as computers, dryers, etc.
- Lamps with exposed bulbs and freestanding lamps can reach very high temperatures,

especially halogens, and could easily start a fire if knocked over by a playful pet.

- Aquariums should have drip loops on all electrical cords coming from the tank. Water running down the cord will then fall to the floor instead of into the electric outlet.
- Fit correct fuses and circuit breakers and allow air space around appliances to prevent overheating.

Keep electrical cords away from puppies and kittens so they don't chew on them and receive a severe shock. What may seem like a mild shock to an adult may be enough to kill a small pet. Before you approach any animal which you know or suspect is suffering from electrical shock, take precautions to ensure that there is no danger to yourself from live wires or electric fires.

Any animal that has suffered electrical shock must be rushed to the veterinarian immediately. Treatment will be most effective if begun as soon as possible after the shock.

- Keep appliances near sinks, bathtubs, and pools, a safe distance away from the water source. Playful pets can knock radios, curling irons and other items into the water, creating a dangerous situation.
- Always keep aroma-therapy candles away from places where curious pets can reach.

Outdoors:

- If you know an electric storm is on the way, bring all pets indoors. Lightning, wind and rain can bring down power lines, which are a serious hazard, as is the risk of being struck by lightning.

- If a pet has an outdoor fenced area, be careful of any underground electrical or cable line running through the area. Make sure they are buried at appropriate depths, especially if you have a dog who likes to dig.

Holiday Lighting:

- Decorative holiday lights are another attraction for pets to chew on.
- Both indoor and outdoor lights should be carefully examined to ensure safety for your household pets.
- Electrical shock may occur from defective cords as well as from pets chewing on cords.
- Check cords for any signs of bite marks, loose or frayed wires, proximity to the tree's water supply or evidence of short circuits.
- Use grounded "3-prong" extension cords and strictly follow manufacturer's guidelines for light usage.



Puppies and kittens are naturally curious and tend to turn unexpected household items into play or chew toys. A frisky dog or curious cat can cause an electrical hazard or fire in ways you may not have thought about.

Protect Your Pets

Millions of American homes have dogs, cats or other pets. Just like children, these companion animals can be very curious and active—and at risk for getting hurt around electrical appliances. Follow these tips to pet-proof your home against electrical accidents:

- Don't let your pets chew on electrical cords. Keep your pet with you when you're at home; when you're away or busy confine your pet to a room or a kennel where it can't come in contact with electrical cords. A simple baby gate can work well in keeping a playful puppy in a safe place, and away from electrical hazards.
- When you're finished with a small appliance, unplug it and put it away. Dangling cords are an invitation to play for a frisky cat or dog. The pet could pull the appliance off the counter or bite through the insulation.
- Don't leave your pet alone and unsecured in a room with a space heater. The pet could knock the heater over, or simply get too close and singe its fur.
- Don't let your pet sleep on top of your electric blanket. Placing anything on an electric blanket, even other bedding, or tucking it in can break the insulation in the wires. You could risk shocking or burning yourself and your pet.
- Keep you dog on a leash when outside. In addition to keeping your dog safe from dashing into traffic, controlling your dog will prevent it playing near or in electrical substations and other equipment, or approaching downed wires that might be live.
- Cats live longer, healthier lives when they're kept indoors. If your cat is inside, it can't climb a power pole and risk electrocution on a transformer or power line.

As you can see, the same commonsense precautions that keep you and your family safe around electricity will also help protect those valued family members, your pets.

Source: National Electrical Safety Foundation



These safety tips are courtesy of:



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