

## Save me ... energy

### **Extension cord safety.**

Reduce the risk of fire, electrical shock or injury with these tips for properly using extension cords from Christina Hansen with cableorganizer.com, an online source for cable, wire and equipment management solutions.

**Extension cords** are classified for either indoor or outdoor use. You can use an outdoor power cord indoors, but never use an indoor-rated cord for an outside job. The insulation or jacket of outdoor-rated cords is made to withstand temperature changes, moisture, UV rays and some chemicals.

**Before plugging** an appliance or power tool into an extension cord, be sure the power demand or pull of that device doesn't exceed the cord's wattage rating.

**If plugging more than one** device into an extension cord, to avoid overheating and fire, calculate their combined energy requirements. Make sure that total isn't higher than the wattage rating for the cord.

**If power requirements** are listed in amps and volts instead of watts, use this formula: multiply the number of amps by the number of volts to get that appliance's wattage. Here's an example: if a device uses 5 amps at 110 volts, that translates into 550W ( $5 \times 110 = 550$ ).

**Don't use extension cords** with cut or damaged insulation. Never cut, file or alter a cord's grounding pin or plug blades to make it fit into an outlet. If an outlet is older, have an electrician replace the receptacle.

**Unplug extension cords** when not in use. Otherwise they still conduct electricity and pose a safety hazard.

