

ELECTRICAL SAFETY

Introduction:

There are a number of electric safety standards. Again, as in machine guarding violations, electrical safety violations may not be the most relevant or serious safety problem in your facility, or affecting your workers' compensation premiums. However, inspectors will seek them out.

Discussion:

Some typical examples of potential violations include:

- Any Use of extension cords, except "*temporary use*" i.e. seasonal holiday lights and power tools. Hardwiring or permanent electrical should be installed if necessary. This is also a DOH requirement/issue.
- Frayed wires anywhere and in all appliances
- Missing ground pins in all appliances
- Electrical boxes with exposed wires
- Electrical panels with exposed wires
- Missing outlet covers
- Missing or improper blanks or knock-outs in electrical panels

Low voltage alarm or phone wires do not fall into this category. Ground Fault Interrupters (GFI's) should also be installed in bathrooms and kitchen areas near sinks, tubs, or other water sources (within six feet).

Electrical standards, like machine guarding violations, are old faithful standards that have withstood the test of time. They are safe and familiar grounds for the inspector. Such citations are free from controversy and "*exotic*" issues, unfamiliar to the manufacturing plant minded inspectors and their supervisors.

Summary:

It would behoove facility operators to conduct a comprehensive wall to wall electrical safety survey to identify and correct any of these violations. There should be an annual appliance electrical integrity check as part of the Preventative Maintenance program. Colored tags denoting year inspected could be used. Electrical Safety Check stickers are available from safety products catalog. They tend to be outrageously expensive. They can be easily made in-house, customized no less, on colored address labels. The label should denote the name of the facility, month,

year, and a place for the checker to initial. (Very much like the fire extinguisher monitoring labels.)