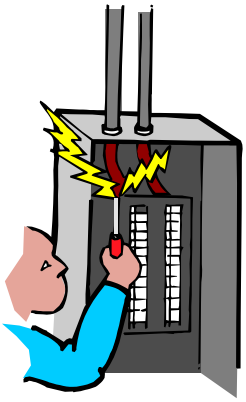
Short Safety Subject

Short Safety Subjects are provided by the Public Safety Business Center, Fort Bragg, NC. Our intent is to provide safety topics for the purpose of increasing safety awareness and improving safety performance. Additional Short Safety Subjects are available on the PSBC Business Management Web Site at:

www.bragg.army.mil/psbc-bm/PubsAndForms/ShortSafetySubjects.htm

Electrical Safety

Safe Appliance Use



Don't use any appliance while you're touching metal or anything wet. Never plug in or unplug an electric cord while your hands are wet.

Unplug appliances before cleaning them.

Don't yank the cord when unplugging appliances.

Train children not to put things into electrical outlets. Plastic outlet guards are a good idea, especially for homes with small children.

Repair any appliance that sparks, smokes, or shocks you.

Don't overload outlets and extension cords.

Keep appliances like radios, TVs, and hair dryers away from sinks and bathtubs.

Power Lines

Keep ladders, TV antennas, and tree branches away from power lines.

No one - including tree trimmers, contractors, or someone picking fruit - should come within 10 feet of an overhead power line unless they've been trained to work around power lines and have appropriate protective equipment.

If you see a downed power line, call the electric company. Don't touch the line and warn others away.

If you see someone touching a downed power line, do not try to rescue them. You could become a victim yourself. Instead, call 911 for help.

If a power line falls on your car while you are in it, remain where you are and wait for help. If you must get out of your car because of hazards, jump away so that your body clears the car before touching the ground.

Never run away from a downed power line. Keep both feet on the ground and shuffle away from the downed line to avoid getting shocked.

Protect Your Equipment

Power fluctuations resulting from a number of causes - from storms to vehicles hitting utility poles - can affect computers, fax machines, appliances, and other electronic equipment. It's your responsibility to do what you can to protect your equipment.

Here's what you can do:

- **Built-in Back-Up.** Look for appliances with built-in backup. More and more manufacturers are providing back-up power features in their products. Buy equipment already protected from potential power problems.
- **Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS).** A UPS takes care of both electrical surges and dips that may cause momentary power failures. It is relatively expensive, but can be valuable for computers with important data files.
- **Surge Suppressors.** Surge suppressors minimize the harmful effects of voltage surges. A good suppressor has the following features:
    - **UL 1449 seal.** This indicates that the product meets minimum safety and effectiveness standards.
    - **Clamping Voltage.** In most cases, the lowest clamping voltage (the voltage level when the suppressor begins working) is best.
    - **LED Indicator.** This lights up to indicate whether the protector is actively blocking a surge.
- **Specialty Suppressors.** There are suppressors for TVs and VCRs, and suppressors for telephone-connected machines like faxes, computer modems, and answering machines.
- **Warranty.** Some warranties offer replacement of the suppressors only, while others pay for repair of equipment damaged as a result of a failed surge suppressor.
- **Home Circuits.** Your computer and microwave should not be on the same 120-volt branch circuit as your refrigerator or air conditioner. When these big appliances turn on and off, they can cause voltage dips and surges. Check with a qualified electrician if in doubt.
- **Storm Protection.** During storms, unplug computers, answering machines, VCRs, and other sensitive equipment.