



# Electrical Safety

## **Balfour Beatty** Communities

As you go about arranging your belongings in your home, please take the time to inspect your electrical cords before plugging in the item. While a seemingly trivial problem, frayed and damaged power cords or cords that have had their ground prong removed pose a significant risk to residents and can pose a threat of electrical shock and present a fire hazard. Power cords can become frayed or damaged from heavy use and age and should be inspected regularly.

Frequently, mishandling (such as pulling a plug from a socket by jerking the cord) causes the most significant damage to a cord over time, tearing the external protective sheathing or detaching it from the plug head and exposing energized wires.

Less obvious than damaged and frayed cords is the threat posed by missing ground prongs, the rounded third prong on electrical plugs. These ground prongs often break off from mishandling or are removed intentionally to fit a plug into two-prong outlets. Underground plugs can expose a significant electrocution risk.

### **Quick Tips to Prevent Electrical Accidents at Home**

- Replace worn or frayed cords and bent plugs
- Never overload an outlet
- Replace any item that overheats or gives off smoke or sparks
- When buying electrical appliances, look for the Underwriters Laboratory (UL) seal
- Keep curtains, clothes, and all other fabrics away from space heaters and other appliances that generate heat
- Never place furniture in front of an outlet that causes the cord to bend. A bent cord can cause arcing and start a fire.