

Temporary Power: GFCIs, Cords, and Tools

COMPANY

PROJECT

DATE

PRESENTED BY

Temporary power keeps construction moving, but damaged cords and missing protection can expose anyone on the crew to electrical shock. Crews sharing outlets, extension cords, and portable tools need to check both the equipment and its protection before starting work.

Know the protection plan

- The employer must use GFCIs or an assured equipment grounding conductor program. That program uses inspections, electrical tests, and records to verify the grounding path. Ask the foreman which protection method applies before connecting tools.
- A GFCI is a ground-fault circuit interrupter. It cuts power when it detects current escaping its intended path. Under the GFCI method, approved protection is required for temporary 120-volt, single-phase outlets rated 15 or 20 amperes that workers use.
- Do not assume a generator makes protection unnecessary. The rule has a limited exception for some generators that meet specific electrical conditions. Have the responsible person confirm those conditions rather than guessing from the generator's size or appearance.

Check before connecting

- Look for cut insulation, crushed cords, loose parts, and bent or missing plug pins. Under the grounding program, visual inspection is required before each day's use. Damaged or defective equipment must stay out of use until repaired.
- Use three-wire extension cords designed for hard or extra-hard use with portable tools. Choose cords suitable for the location and conditions. A cord that fits the outlet is not automatically suitable for construction work.
- Check that electrical equipment is approved and has readable identification and needed electrical ratings. If markings are missing or equipment appears unsafe, stop and report it. Do not pass questionable equipment to another worker.

Protect the setup

- Route cords away from sharp corners and projections. At doorways and other pinch points, provide protection against damage. Check the route again when materials, equipment, or work areas change.
- Protect cords with bushings or fittings where they pass through holes in electrical covers or boxes. Do not hang temporary lights by their cords unless the lights and cords are designed for that support.
- Keep temporary electrical equipment firmly secured where mounted. Report loose equipment instead of improvising a mounting fix. Temporary wiring must be removed immediately when construction or its intended purpose is complete.

Stop after damage

- If equipment runs over a cord, stop using it and report what happened. Under the grounding program, required electrical tests must happen before reuse after an incident that could have caused damage.
- The grounding program also requires testing before first use and at intervals no longer than three months. Fixed cords and receptacles not exposed to damage may have intervals no longer than six months.

- Ask how passing tests are recorded and how to recognize equipment cleared for use. Records may use logs, color coding, or another effective method. Never treat an old marking as proof that newly damaged equipment is safe.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

A cart rolls over an extension cord feeding a saw. The saw still runs, but the cord looks flattened. What would you do before anyone uses it again?

Questions for the crew

1. How do you confirm which electrical protection method applies?
2. Which cord defects mean stop and report?
3. How will you protect cords at pinch points?

| Confirm the protection, protect the cords, and keep damaged equipment out of use.

Sources: 29 CFR 1926.404, Wiring design and protection; 29 CFR 1926.405, Wiring methods, components, and equipment for general use; 29 CFR 1926.403, General requirements

Drafted with AI for review by a competent person. Clever Rook writes from the official regulation text it cites, but it doesn't know your site. Check it against your conditions and your company's safety program before use. Not legal advice.

Temporary Power: GFCIs, Cords, and Tools

COMPANY

PROJECT

DATE

REVIEWED BY (COMPETENT PERSON)

REVIEW DATE

#	NAME (PRINT)	SIGNATURE	COMPANY
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			