

Sparking When You Plug in Appliances

In American homes, the electricity runs along available circuits and then back out to the main grid, usually, without interruption. When something is plugged in, or turned on, some of that very fast, hot electricity transfers from the outlet into the appliance, light, computer or whatever you happen to plug into the outlet. A rapid draw on available power occurs, resulting in a brief spark. This is normal and no more threatening than a mini-jolt of static electricity.

However, if the sparking happens all the time there is reason to be very concerned.



When excessive heat builds up in an outlet, it can melt insulation that covers the wires.

Electricity running through exposed wires can cause a fire, and when an electrical connection occurs, a serious spark can result. A professional electrician should address the issue immediately.

Exposure to water will also trigger a spark in a circuit and short it out. A ground fault interrupter (GFI) outlet will shut down the circuit to avoid a fire.

Age also could be an issue. Over the years, outlets gradually wear out and connections will loosen, raising the chance of a short circuit occurring and sparking a fire. Old, frayed appliance cords also can result in an outlet sparking.



Bottom Line? If your electrical outlets are sparking on a regular basis, contact Electrical Connections right away. For your own peace of mind and the safety of your family, it is better to get it checked out before a serious or fatal fire happens.