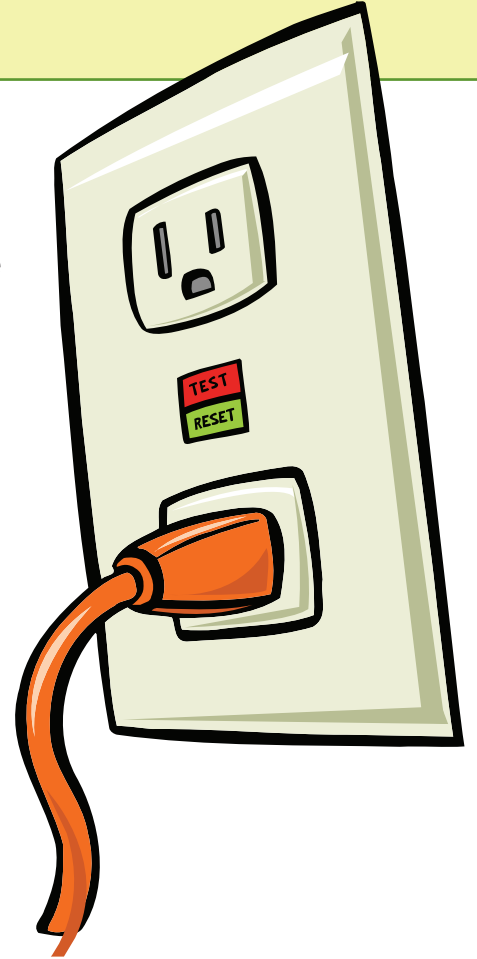




Electrical Fire Facts & Figures

- Electrical fires were involved in an estimated 46,500 reported home structure fires in 2010. These fires resulted in 420 civilian deaths and 1,520 civilian injuries, with \$1.5 billion in direct property damage. An electrical fire is a fire involving some type of electrical failure or malfunction.
- Almost half (49%) of home structure electrical fires involve some type of electrical distribution equipment (such as wiring, outlets, switches, lamps, light bulbs, cords, or plugs). The electrical distribution equipment provided the heat leading to ignition. For example, a hot light bulb might have been too close to something that can catch fire.
- Nearly one third (31%) of home electrical fires began with ignition of wire or cable insulation.
- December and January are the peak months for home electrical fires.
- The leading areas of origin for electrical fires are the bedroom (14%), attic (11%), and kitchen (11%).
- When an electrical switch is opened or closed, an arc, or discharge of electricity occurs. If connections are loose or where wires or cords have been damaged, an unintentional arc can occur leading to high temperatures and sparking, possibly igniting anything that can burn. Arcing accounts for most home electrical fires. Installing Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCIs) in the home can offer protection against electrical fires caused by arcing.



Source: Home Electrical Fires, by John R. Hall, Jr., January 2012.