

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

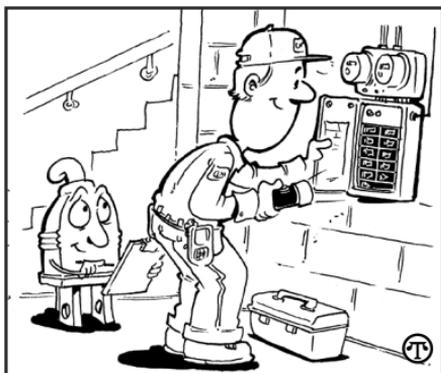
Don't Be Shocked By Your Older Home's Wiring

(NAPSA)—It pays to be more plugged into your home's wiring. Each year, more than \$1 billion in property damage is caused by home fires. In homes that are 40 years old or more, old wiring and insufficient circuits are often the source of those fires.

“Modern appliances, such as microwave ovens, restaurant-capacity refrigerators and dishwashers, each require their own circuits. Many older homes were built before some of these items were common, and may not have enough circuits to be safe,” said Brett C. Brenner, president of the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI).

Fuse boxes in older houses were designed to handle about 60 to 100 amps—well below that of newer electrical boxes' 200 amps—which isn't sufficient to support the big-screen TVs and other contemporary equipment that have become common items in many homes.

Electricity is one of the leading causes of home fires, blamed for thousands of injuries and more than 100 deaths annually. Wiring, switches, receptacles and outlets account for a large percentage of both electrocutions and electrical fires. Electrical fires that begin in walls can spread rapidly before being detected, making them devastating and deadly.



WIRED FOR SAFETY—If your home is 40 years old or older, you should have the wiring inspected.

If your home is 40 years old or older, ESFI recommends that you have an electrical inspection to diagnose potential hazards. Many older homes' wiring systems are not grounded, which can lead to electrocution or fire. If the outlets can only take plugs with two prongs, the electrical system is not grounded.

Flickering lights, tripped circuit breakers or blown fuses are indications of possible electrical problems, as are outlets, switches or cords that feel warm or hot to the touch. If you suspect a wiring problem, don't attempt to fix it yourself—shut off the circuit and have the electrical system checked by a licensed electrician.

For more information about electrical safety, visit www.electrical-safety.org.