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## Office Fire Safety

The following is a summary based on the report, *U.S. Fire Problem Overview: Leading Causes and Other Patterns and Trends*, published by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), of the causes of office property fires and suggestions to reduce these fires.

### **More than 1,000 office properties are damaged by fires in motor vehicles.**

- Locate parking structures, lots, and areas away from office exposures or separate them by fire rated walls.
- Prevent vehicles from parking in front of exits, windows, or building air intakes.

### **Electrical equipment causes more than 23 percent of office property fires.**

- Remove combustible materials, such as trash cans, paper, and cardboard boxes, from the area in front of and to the sides of outlets, panel boxes, or other heat-producing electrical equipment.
- Limit the use of extension cords to only those instances when fixed wiring is not available.
- Inspect extension cords for damage frequently. Do not use cords with damaged insulation, missing grounds, or any other visible defect.
- Check light fixtures, bulbs, and displays for visible signs for damage.

### **Intentionally set fires account for almost 16 percent of office fires.**

- Implement a security and an emergency management program, including evacuation procedures, building access control, and regular guard tours.
- Conduct periodic emergency drills.
- Provide adequate illumination in all areas of the property, including parking lots and garages.

### **Heating equipment is responsible for more than 11 percent of office fires.**

- Have heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment serviced by a qualified technician at least annually and before each seasonal start up.
- Prohibit the use of portable space heaters.
- Keep combustible materials at least 3 ft (9 m) from boilers, furnaces, and other heating units.

### **Smoking causes more than 9 percent of office fires.**

- Prohibit smoking in the building.
- Provide non-combustible containers outside each entranceway for disposal of smoking materials.
- Install smoke detection equipment in areas subject to unauthorized smoking, such as bathrooms and closets.

### **Cooking equipment causes nearly 8 percent of office fires.**

- Ensure office kitchen areas are cleaned daily.
- Prohibit the use of "hot plates".
- Have stoves, ovens, and other cooking equipment serviced at least annually by a qualified technician.