

ASHLEY RIVER
W I R E D

ELECTRICAL SAFETY CHECKLIST

EDUCATIONAL HOMEOWNER GUIDE



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WHY ELECTRICAL SAFETY MATTERS

Electrical issues remain of the leading causes of home fires in the U.S.

- Electrical malfunctions cause approximately 47,000 home fires each year, resulting in more than \$1.3 billion in property damage.
- Electrical failures are linked to **over 400 deaths and 1,400 injuries annually.**

In coastal areas like Charleston, **humidity, salty air, older wiring and crawlspace moisture** increase the risk of electrical deterioration over time.



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Inspect Your Breaker Box

Your electrical panel should operate quietly and consistently.

Check for:

- Breakers that feel warm or hot.
- Buzzing or humming sounds.
- Breakers that trip frequently.

These can indicate overloaded circuits or aging electrical components



Watch for Overloaded Circuits

Modern homes use far more electricity than homes were originally designed for

Be Mindful of:

- Multiple appliances in one circuit.
- Space heaters, dehumidifiers, or HVAC systems sharing outlets.
- Power strips supporting too many devices.



Overloaded circuits are a common cause for electrical fires.

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Test GFCI Outlets Monthly

GFCI outlets protect against electrical shock, especially near water.

GFCIs should be installed in:

- Kitchens
- Bathrooms
- Garages
- Outdoor outlets

GFCIs have reduced household electrocutions by approximately 50% since becoming standard.



If a GFCI will not trip or reset, it may no longer provide protection.



Inspect Extension Cords

Extension cords should only be used temporarily.

Check for:

- Fraying or cracking
- Loose or exposed wiring
- Overloaded cords powering high-draw devices



Improper extension cord use increases the risk of overheating and fire.

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Inspect Attic and Crawlspace Wiring

In Lowcountry homes, these areas are especially vulnerable.

Look for:

- Exposed wiring
- Rodent damage
- Corrosion or rust
- Moisture intrusion

Humidity and salt air can accelerate wire degradation in coastal environments.



CHARLESTON & LOWCOUNTRY ELECTRICAL CODE AWARENESS

General Homeowner Guidance

- **GFCI protection is required in moisture-prone areas under modern electrical codes**
- **Outdoor outlets must be weather-resistant and properly covered**
- **Electrical systems in older and historic homes often predate modern safety standards**

⚠ Many Charleston homes were built before current electrical codes existed.

That does not automatically mean they are unsafe, but it does mean periodic professional inspection is especially important.

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WHEN TO CONTACT A LICENSED ELECTRICIAN

Call a professional if you experience:

- Flickering or dimming lights
- Breakers that trip repeatedly
- Burning smells or hot outlets
- Frequent power interruptions
- Visible wiring damage

Electrical issues rarely fix themselves.
Early evaluation can prevent costly and
dangerous outcomes.



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