

**Office Kitchen Appliance Safety**

**Introduction:**

Common kitchen appliances such as microwave ovens, coffee makers and toasters can be found in many offices and other work areas. Although routinely used, these devices could cause an injury or fire to occur if not properly maintained and used.

**Safety Tips for Kitchen Appliances:**

When using appliances, there are several precautions that can be taken to reduce the chances of an injury or fire.

* Appliances should be listed by an approval agency such as Underwriters Laboratory.
* Always read the warning labels and operating instructions to insure you have placed the appliance in a suitable location and can use it safely.
* Remain with your food while you are using a microwave oven or toaster. If your food overheats and begins to smoke, you should immediately turn the appliance off. This will help prevent a fire and reduce the chance of fire alarm activation.
* Always make sure that the vents on your microwave oven are not blocked or located next to combustible materials.
* To help prevent a fire, never place paper plates, napkins, dish towels or other materials that can burn on top of or close to a cooking or heating type appliance.
* To reduce the risks of an electrical shock, always make sure that the area around your appliance is kept dry. Remember that electricity and water do not mix.
* If an electric appliance gets wet, unplug it before you attempt to dry it, even if it is in the "off" position.
* Always use the manual “On” switch for your coffee maker instead of the automatic start feature. This will help insure that someone in the area can turn it off if a problem develops.
* Make sure appliance cords do not come in contact with hot surfaces.
* Periodically check appliance cords for frays, broken plugs or damaged wires. If you discover any damage, unplug the appliance and have the damaged cord repaired.
* Do not continue to use an appliance that is damaged or malfunctioning. If an appliance feels too hot, smokes or gives off a strange odor, unplug it immediately and have it serviced or replaced.
* Always pull by the plug from the socket when disconnecting an appliance. Do not pull on the appliance cord.
* At the end of the work day, always check your appliances to ensure they are turned off.
* Unplug any appliances that will not be used for an extended period of time, such as during extended holiday breaks.

**Summary:**

Having coffee makers, microwave ovens and toasters in the work place is a convenience many enjoy. Following the previous suggestions will help to not only keep you safe, but also help to prevent a fire from occurring.

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