

Safety switches save lives

A safety switch can help guard against an electrical tragedy in your home. Safety switches are designed to cut the supply of electricity in a fraction of a second when a harmful level of electricity is detected leaking to earth.

Safety switches are available as permanently installed or portable units, which provide protection where permanent safety switch protection is not available.

A portable safety switch is ideal for use with portable electrical equipment such as power tools, and should be plugged into a power point ahead of the electrical equipment to be protected (including any extension leads).

Safety switches can be easily identified—they are the ones with a 'test' or 'T' button.

Although safety switches are proven to prevent many serious electric shocks, they are not a substitute for proper electrical maintenance and safe practices.

Making sure it works

To make sure you are getting maximum protection from your safety switch, you should regularly test the switch according to the manufacture's directions. A good rule of thumb is to test safety switches every three months. To do this you only need to press the 'test' or 'T' button. If the switch turns off the power, then it is working correctly.

Warnings!

- **Look up and live.** Keep yourself, decorative lighting and other equipment well clear of overhead power lines.
- Never attempt to do your own electrical work – it's dangerous, illegal and can be fatal. Always get a licensed electrician to do any electrical work.

General safety advice

An effective electrical safety option to help guard against an electrical tragedy in your home is to have a safety switch or switches permanently installed into your home.

Consider having a licensed electrical contractor carry out a full maintenance check regularly on appliances, electrical wiring, extension leads and electrical equipment.

If you have any doubts about the electrical safety of any decorative lighting, other electrical equipment or your electrical installation, contact a licensed electrical contractor.

Contact details for electricians can be found in the Yellow Pages, White Pages, your local newspaper or by contacting an electrical industry association.

When choosing a licensed electrical contractor, always look for their electrical contractor licence number in any advertisement, and confirm that they have a current licence before agreeing to any work. You can do this by checking their electrical contractor licence, or via the online licensing database at www.electricalsafety.qld.gov.au.

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Visit www.electricalsafety.qld.gov.au
or telephone 1300 650 662.



Electrical Safety Office

Decorative lighting safety hints

Electrical safety when using decorative lighting

Tomorrow's Queensland: strong, green, smart, healthy and fair

Decorative lighting safety hints

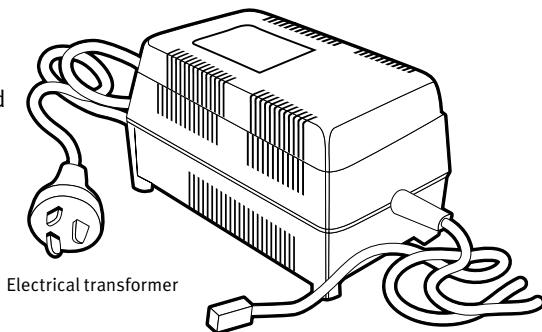
If you are planning to decorate your home and garden with decorative lighting there are a few things worth bearing in mind:

- When buying new decorative lighting kits, look for an approval number (e.g. Q12345; V12345; N12345; NSW12345;) or the regulatory compliance mark logo, which indicates compliance with Australian Standards. These are normally found on the decorative lighting and may also be printed on the packaging.

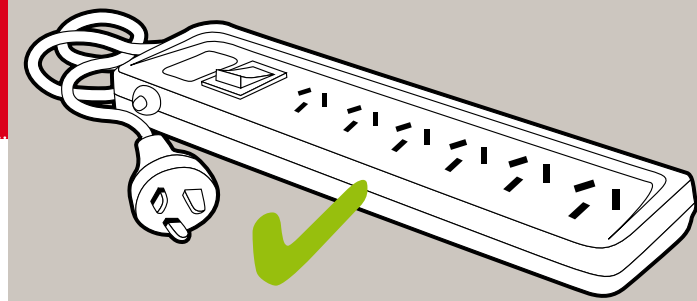
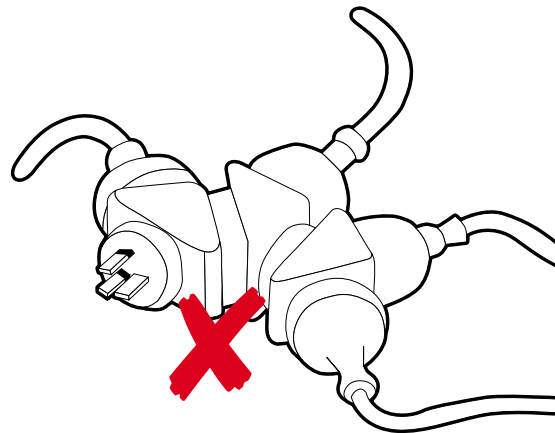


regulatory compliance mark

- Use extra-low-voltage (12V or 24V) decorative lights, especially outdoors, on fences, metal work, roofs or downpipes. These should be supplied with an approved power supply unit (transformer).
- Do not alter or modify any lighting equipment.
- Lights used outdoors should be specifically designed for this purpose.
- Ensure all lights, extension leads and power boards are suitable for the intended use.
- Ensure your safety switch is working.
- Ensure the pins of the supply plug are insulated for electrical equipment purchased after 2006.



- When installing decorative lighting and replacing lamps, ensure the power is turned off and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Avoid placing temporary decorative lighting above or around your pool.
- Protect the decorative lighting and any electrical leads from damage.
- Avoid passing electrical leads through doorways and windows.
- Keep electrical leads clear of walkways and driveways.
- Keep decorative lighting out of the reach of young children (e.g. Christmas tree lights).
- Secure outdoor lights to avoid breakage in wind or storms.
- Always turn off outdoor decorative lighting in rainy or stormy weather.
- Always turn off decorative lighting before going to bed (e.g. Christmas tree lights).
- Flood lights, halogen lights and other high powered lights can become very hot. Keep them out of reach and away from anything that might catch fire.



Safe methods for connecting decorative lighting

- If your power points are not protected by a built-in safety switch, have a licensed electrical contractor install one, or connect decorative lighting through a portable safety switch.
- If you are using multiple sets of decorative lighting or high-powered lights (e.g. para-floods, flood lights or spotlights), plug them into a power board fitted with over-load protection. The use of double adaptors or piggy back plugs is not recommended.
- Be aware that using multiple high-powered lamps may overload your electric circuits.
- Use only factory-made extension leads or those made by a licensed electrical contractor.
- Before use, check decorative lighting and all leads for damage. Never use a damaged lead.
- Always fully unwind extension leads to avoid overheating.
- All outdoor electrical connections must be weatherproof. You can buy weatherproofing accessories to do the job.

