Attachment D. Electrical Equipment

GAM 13.04

SPECIAL SSA STANDARD

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

A. General Provisions
1. The term electrical equipment, as used in this Attachment, includes appliances, devices, wiring, fixtures, fittings, tools, material, etc., used as a part of, or in connection with, an electrical installation, or any piece of equipment used by employees.
2. Electrical equipment shall bear approval of the Underwriter's Laboratories, Inc. (UL) or other recognized testing agencies, unless otherwise specified in this Attachment.
3. Authorized and trained personnel are the only staff allowed to perform repairs or alterations to electrical equipment.
4. The agency provides First Aid Training to authorized personnel, with emphasis placed on instructions for resuscitation of persons suffering from electrical shock. When an electrical worker performs electrical work, another person who has already received this training must be on the premises.

B. Grounding
1. When required, grounding of electrical equipment must conform to the requirements of Article 250, National Electric Code and National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 70.
2. Under any of the following conditions, the agency requires grounding of exposed, non-current carrying metal parts of cord and plug connected equipment through which an electrical current could unexpectedly energize:
   - Hazardous locations, such as flammable liquid areas, woodworking shops, machine shops, etc.
   - Refrigerators, water coolers, hand-held motor operated tools and appliances, and appliances such as coffee pots and ovens used in damp or wet locations.
3. As an exception to the above, portable tools protected by an
3. As an exception to the above, portable, ungrounded, UL approved system of double insulation, or its equivalent, need not be grounded. The manufacturer must distinctively mark any such system.

C. Appliances

1. General Requirement
   a. The agency strictly controls the use of employee-owned appliances to avoid unauthorized use and ensure the safety of all building occupants. We must comply with all Federal Management Regulations applicable to appliance use.

   - To install or use any appliance, all components must obtain prior approval from OFSM for headquarters locations or the SSA facility manager (or his or her designee) for locations outside headquarters. Employee-owned electrical appliances include, but are not limited to: 1) food and beverage storage or preparation devices such as coffee pots and other hot water beverage heaters, refrigerators, and microwave ovens; and 2) other appliances such as fans and radios.

   - The agency strictly prohibits the use of employee-owned appliances that have any on/off timers. The timers pose a potential fire hazard because they may activate appliances during weekends, holidays, or other times when the work area is unattended.

   - OFSM or the SSA facility manager (or his or her designee) can only consider appliances that bear the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) label or some other recognized testing agency. If OFSM or the SSA facility manager (or his or her designee) authorize the appliance, employees may only use the appliance for purposes and in the manner approved by UL or the recognized testing agency.

   - To request approval and installation for any appliance, components must follow the procedures outlined in Sections C.3 or C.4 of this Instruction. To request use of appliances for special events or functions, components must submit Form SSA-3453, Application/Permit For Use of Space Within SSA Buildings and/or Grounds, to apply for a permit to use the space for the event and include information to request approval to use any appliances during the event.

   - OFSM makes any interpretations and decisions related to appliance situations or concerns that may
arise that this Instruction does not cover.

b. Appliances with Heating Elements, Including Space Heaters

- The agency strictly prohibits the use of personal space heaters or appliances with heating elements in employee work spaces.
- Per the agreement reached in the February 29, 2016 memorandum of understanding between the agency and the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), the agency will enforce the prohibition on space heaters and other appliances with heating elements by removing these appliances from SSA workspace.
- When the agency orders the removal of a space heater, it will notify the employee and the employee’s local AFGE representative.
- The agency will explore heating/cooling/airflow adjustments with the employee and local AFGE representative when an employee or the union raises a heating/cooling issue with management and when the agency plans to remove a space heater.
- When considering adjustments, the agency and employee should follow the guidance in the document Addressing Thermal Comfort Concerns.
- If the parties are unable to agree on heating/cooling adjustments within 30 days, management may implement its preferred adjustment(s). The employee may grieve the adjustment(s).
- During the 30-day period when the employee, union, and management are addressing thermal comfort adjustments, management will remove the space heater from SSA work space.
- Employees may request use of a space heater via the reasonable accommodation process for a limitation due to a disability by following the agency’s Procedures for Providing Reasonable Accommodation for Persons with Disabilities.
- NOTE: Even with an approved RA, there may be other factors preventing the use of a space heater.
- When evaluating an RA request for a space heater, managers should review agency guidance, Processing RA Requests for a Space Heater.
- Managers must comply with the formal RA
procedures and do not have authority to simply apply informal “management discretion” principles.

2. Supervisory Responsibilities Agency-wide

- Supervisors in areas where employees use any employee-owned appliance must agree to the use of the appliance in writing; e.g., in an email. Supervisors must provide a copy of the written approval to the appropriate OFSM building manager for headquarters locations or the SSA facility manager (or his or her designee) for locations outside of headquarters.

- Supervisors must coordinate with the Office of Buildings Management (in headquarters) or the Center for Materiel Resources for the installation of a dedicated 20-amp circuit for any workstation with an approved employee-owned appliance. OFSM provides funds necessary for the installation of the circuit.

- Supervisors of each work area where appliances are located are responsible for ensuring employees under their supervision conform to all of the requirements established in this Section.

- Supervisors are also responsible for ensuring their employees remove any appliances from the building that do not meet these requirements, including any nonconforming appliances found during safety inspections.

- To ensure the safety of all, employees must turn off all appliances at the end of each workday.

- Managers must assume responsibility for ensuring the appliances are unplugged at the end of each workday.

- To ensure the safety of all office personnel and property, managers must develop an office protocol to support the daily requirement of unplugging approved employee-owned appliances; e.g., sign a log at the end of each workday. The protocol developed should serve as a reminder for ensuring the daily turn off activity occurs.

3. Headquarters

- Where feasible, the agency has installed appliance centers in many areas for employee use for food and beverage storage and preparation (see section 6 below). The availability of appliance centers should eliminate the need for most employee-owned appliances, significantly increasing the health and safety of all.

- The appliance must be free of defects when inspected by OFSM, and all appliances must be carefully labeled.
OFSM authorized or trained personnel. Employees may only use food and beverage storage or preparation appliances in the specific appliance center approved by OFSM.

- If approved for use, the OFSM authorized or trained personnel places a standardized approval sticker, which includes the date of approval and their initials, in a clearly visible area on the appliance.
- OFSM visually examines each appliance during regularly scheduled health and safety inspections (see AIMS, GAM 13.04.08). OFSM building managers also periodically inspect appliances during routine building inspections. Employees must remove any appliances from the building that: 1) do not have an inspection sticker; or 2) are determined noncompliant in OFSM’s Health and Safety Inspection Report.

4. Outside of Headquarters
   - To ensure the safety of all building occupants, the building manager, or designee must inspect and approve all appliances prior to use.
   - Field office space allocation standards provide space for a multi-purpose room that serves as a training or break room. All food and beverage storage or preparation appliances should be located in this room.
   - All appliances must bear a UL approval or some other recognized testing agency approval.
   - Only authorized and trained personnel can make repairs or alterations to appliances.
   - Inspectors re-inspect appliances as part of regularly scheduled safety inspections (see AIMS, GAM 13.04.08). Employees must remove any appliances from the building that inspectors cite as noncompliant during the health and safety inspection.

5. Program Service Centers (PSC) and Data Operations Center (DOC)
   PSCs and DOCs must follow the appliance approval procedures set forth in section 4 above.

6. Appliance Centers
   - An appliance center is a location designed specifically for housing food and beverage storage and preparation appliances for employee use.
   - The agency permits food and beverage storage and preparation appliances in the appliance center(s) only. Employees may not position them in their personal...
workspace.

- Appliance centers must meet all requirements of 29 CFR 1910 and the National Electrical Code (NFPA 70).

- To prevent possible overloaded circuits or fires, or both, the agency will control the number and types of appliances allowed in the appliance center.

- Employees must plug the appliance power cord directly into the electrical outlet. To prevent circuit overloads or fires, or both, the agency does not permit use of extension cords or surge suppressor cords in any appliance center.

- Appliances used for hot food and beverage preparation must possess a pilot light so that it is readily apparent that employees have turned the appliance on or off. In addition, these appliances must sit on a non-combustible surface, such as a metal plate, that the agency provides. Employees may not use combustible items such as paper, cloth, linoleum, or plastic trays as a base or in conjunction with a base for these appliances.

- Any appliance used to heat food or beverages must be placed at least 6 inches from combustibles (such as paper and plastic supplies) on the appliance's vertical sides and at least 36 inches below overhead combustibles. If clearances of these distances are not possible, sheet metal of not less than 24 U.S. gauge must protect the combustible material.

- Employees are responsible for keeping the appliances clean and in proper working condition.

- Employees are responsible for storing food in appropriate storage containers. They should pay particular attention to ensure sanitary food storage. Employees must regularly examine food stored in the appliance center and dispose of any spoiled food.

- Management retains the right to discontinue any appliance center that develops rodent or insect infestations. After the infestation problem is under control, the building manager notifies the supervisor that he or she may return the appliances to service.

- Employees must dispose of coffee grounds and all other food waste in torpedo (garbage) cans. This type of can should be the disposal container closest to the appliance center so that employees do not inadvertently use inappropriate waste cans (such as open trashcans) which could cause sanitary or rodent problems. To avoid clogging the plumbing, employees must not dispose of
D. Electrical Cords and Plugs
1. Employees may not use extension cords and surge suppressor cords as a substitute for fixed wiring (such as wiring for permanent building fixtures and equipment). The agency must supply all extension cords and surge suppressor cords, and employees may only use them for portable, work-related equipment (such as personal computers, printers, and task lights).

2. Extension cords may not exceed 8 feet in length. Employees may not connect extension cords to other extension cords or surge suppressor cords. The diameter of the extension cord must equal or exceed that of the equipment cord.

3. Employees may not connect surge suppressor cords to other surge suppressor cords or extension cords.

4. Employees must not use worn or frayed cords, cords with breaks in the insulation, or cords that crack if bent.

5. Cords must not interfere with foot or vehicular traffic or cause a tripping hazard. They must not run under chairs or across aisles.

6. Electrical power cords must not run through holes in walls, ceilings, floors, or partitions. They must not run through doorways, windows or similar openings, or be concealed behind walls, ceilings, or floors.

7. Electrical plugs must not have cracked housings, loose wiring connections, or loose, broken, missing, or defective prongs.

8. Plugs must have an insulation disc covering the wiring connections to the prongs. (Not applicable on molded type.)

9. Except for surge suppressors used in conjunction with sensitive electronic equipment, the agency prohibits the use of multiple outlet or "octopus" type connections.

**NOTE:** SSA prohibits the removal of the third prong on a three-prong plug to facilitate its use in a two-insert receptacle. Employees must only connect a three-prong plug to a grounded three-hole outlet.

E. Portable Tools
1. All electric portable tools must bear the approval of UL or another recognized testing agency.

2. Electrical tools must meet grounding requirements as specified in Paragraph B.2 of this Attachment.

3. Employees must visually inspect each portable electric tool before each use.

4. The responsible supervisor ensures that employees assign each portable electric tool a number, and inspect and test it at least
every 3 years. Employees record the results of each inspection and test and keep the records within their component.

5. SSA provides suitable eye protection devices to operators who use revolving tools such as drills, saws, and grinders, and operators must wear them.

6. Operators using revolving tools should not wear gloves, ties, loose fitting clothing, or jewelry.

7. All hand-held portable electric tools must be equipped with switches of a type that employees must manually hold in the "on" position in order for the tool to operate.

F. Lockout or Tagout

1. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has issued standards 29 CFR 1910.133 and 29 CFR 1910.147 requiring lockout or tagout of equipment from hazardous energy sources. The agency has developed and implemented specific procedures in order to conform to the OSHA standards. These procedures are necessary in order to disable equipment and to prevent the release of potentially hazardous energy while employees perform maintenance and servicing activities. The primary groups affected by lockout or tagout procedures are building maintenance employees, both Government and contract, who operate and maintain buildings where GSA has granted building management authority to SSA.

2. Lockout or tagout standards are the result of a high incidence of fatalities and injuries to employees in various industries who experienced the unexpected energizing or startup of equipment or release of stored energy during servicing or maintenance activities. For example, an electrician working on any electrical circuit should lock out the circuit to prevent another electrician from accidentally energizing that circuit.

3. Facilities that have operations where lockout or tagout standards apply, must take measures to ensure compliance as specified in the Lockout/Tagout Procedures Handbook (SSA Publication 28-003). Individuals involved or interested in lockout or tagout procedures should have a copy of this publication. If not, they may obtain a copy from OFSM, OEHOS by calling 410-966-7026.