

## Troubleshooting Electrical Problems

Halton Electric in Burlington, Ontario knows that as a homeowner, electrical issues can be overwhelming to troubleshoot and deal with. Calling an electrician to help resolve issues isn't always necessary if it's something as simple as tripped breaker. Here are some quick tips to ensure that your home is operating safely; and what to do in case of these common problems.

### **When a breaker trips:**

Your breakers trip when the circuit finds a fault, and shuts itself off to avoid overheating. To re-set a tripped breaker find the appropriate breaker, whichever one is out of line with the rest, and flip it to the 'off' setting, then back into place to the 'on' setting. If the breaker trips again after re-setting, that indicates that there is a larger problem and that you may need to investigate further. One common cause could be an overloaded circuit, which means that there are too many items plugged into one circuit.

### **When your GFCI receptacle is not working properly:**

If your outlet is a GFCI protected outlet it should have a re-set button on it, try pushing it to re-set. Next, check your electrical panel to see if any breakers have tripped or if a fuse has blown. If neither of these are your issue, the connections to the outlet may be loose. If this is the case contacting an electrician for assistance is your best course of action.

### **Do not use extension cords as a permanent wiring solution:**

Extension cords do not have proper safety features to prevent them from overheating when they are overloaded or damaged from misuse. Many homeowners also use extension cords under furniture or rugs, which can increase the risk of fire. To avoid potential danger make sure to avoid extensive use of extension cords and limit use to short-term occasions.

### **Maintain your carbon monoxide and smoke alarms:**

These devices are essential for all homeowners and will typically be hardwired into your home. Ensure you are checking expiry dates and vacuuming out any dust on a regular basis. Also, be sure to replace any back-up batteries that your alarms may have.

### **Outdoor outlets:**

Any outdoor outlet should have proper covers to ensure protection from the elements. Plugs or outlet covers should also have watertight seals to help prevent against rain or snow damage.

**Keep all paperwork from electrical purchases:**

It is important to read and keep all of your warranties and receipts in case anything goes wrong with your electrical fixtures or devices.

While you can easily manage the minor issues mentioned above, more serious electrical issues need to be serviced by an experienced and fully licensed electrician. Indications of a serious electrical problem can include a burning plastic smell, feeling shocks, heat from a circuit and buzzing sounds from a dimmer, breaker or panel. If you experience any of these, be sure to contact a licensed electrician right away to help investigate the cause.

For more information about these tips or for assistance with any electrical issues, contact Halton Electric at 905-335-2104