

Cell Phone Charger Safety



One frightening fire hazard that many people don't consider is the cellphone charger. After-market phone chargers, some which are poorly made, can cause electrocution or overheat and cause a fire. Like most accidents, all it takes is a split second. Phone is charging on a desk or in a hallway and a spark from the cable which can result in a small flame (or worse).

It's not unusual to have charging cords or charging 'bricks' fail to live up to the expected safety. Cheap cell accessories are quite abundant and the lure of price over quality is made without much thought.



The following is MSBA Risk Management tips for Cell Phone Charger Safety:

- Many after-market chargers don't carry safety approvals. These are important worldwide certifications that ensure the products are made safely. Devices that carry such approval usually mean that the products have clever circuitry that allows the devices to work well. Ensure that all electronic accessories have a certification mark, including one of these common symbols:



- USB charger takes much longer to charge your device compared to a wall charger and the reason for it is a combination of the quality and thickness of the USB cable, the cable's specification, and the source of the charging. There are 3 types of USB specs (1.0, 2.0 and 3.0) and each one carries its own power specification.
- Older phones/electronics don't have Over-Charge/Discharge protection. This technology will allow the device to recognize that the battery is full and automatically stops outputting power to the device.
- Phones have different charging requirements and the chargers they come with are designed to specifically work within those requirements.
- Stick to only using the charger and the USB cable that came with your phone.
- If you don't have your charger with you, look carefully at the available charger you are about to use and make sure the power matches what your phone needs (see above)
- Carry your own USB cord that came with your phone. Its designed and built specifically to deal with your phone.
- It is tempting to buy the cheap-no-name-brand-aftermarket-chargers you are literally risking the life of your phone and your battery. There is a reason that an official-charger costs more than a cheap import.
- If you buy a non-official charger, look on the packaging to make sure it is certified for the phones you want to charge.
- Damaged or frayed cords should never be used.

Refer to this site for product recalls of USB/Wall chargers:
<https://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/recall-alert-rappel-avis/hc-sc/2020/72291a-eng.php>

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