Electric Service

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Two Facilities & Operations groups are responsible for electrical distribution on campus.

Utilities is responsible for providing electricity to university buildings. A portion of the electricity used on campus is generated at the Central Power F&O and the balance is purchased electricity from outside vendors. Utilities continually monitors the electrical conditions on campus and is immediately alerted to building or area outages.

Inside General Fund buildings, Maintenance Services is responsible for the distribution of electricity providing power to outlets and to permanently wired fixtures and devices, such as light fixtures.

Electric circuits are sometimes overloaded, causing the circuit breaker (an overcurrent device) to trip and shut off electricity to an outlet or several outlets. Most electric circuits on campus are rated for a maximum load of 20 amps. All electric appliances and devices should have a label providing the rated amperage of the device used while in operation. Users may simply total the amperage from all non-continuous running equipment plugged in to the circuit feeding them and if that number exceeds 20 amps, the breaker will likely trip.

Note: If you have equipment that runs continuously (3 hours or more), the total amperage cannot exceed 16 amps per 20-amp circuit breaker. In other words, your amperage can be between 16-20 amps but not more than 16 amps for more than 3 hours at any time.

When a circuit breaker trips, Maintenance Services staff must disconnect some devices from the circuit prior to resetting the breaker, to ensure the safety of the worker and those working in the area.

Prior to reporting a loss of power to an outlet, users should first verify the problem is not with the device plugged into the outlet. Simply plug in a known working device to the outlet. If that device fails to operate, please report the outage to Facilities & Operations.

Facilities & Operations electricians are available to install additional circuits in problem areas, but only if spare capacity exists in branch circuit panels. This work is performed at customer expense.

To request service, call the Facilities Service Center at 734-647-2059 or visit requests.fo.umich.edu.

Damage that occurs to departmental equipment as the result of an electrical outage should be reported directly to Risk Management at 764-2200.