

Is Your Home Safe?

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Tamper Resistant Receptacles



Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI), <http://www.esfi.org>

Located in practically every room in every home, electrical outlets and receptacles represent a constant and real danger wherever young children are found. Tamper resistant receptacle (TRR) technology provides a simple, affordable, permanent solution to help prevent childhood shock and burn injuries caused by tampering with wall outlets.

What are tamper resistant receptacles, or TRRs? TRRs have a very similar appearance to standard wall outlets, but they are actually designed with spring-loaded receptacle cover plates that close off the receptacle openings, or slots.

Why do I need TRRs? Every year in the United States, more than 2,400 children under the age of 10 are treated in hospital emergency rooms for electrical shock or burns caused by tampering with a wall outlet around the home—that is seven children a day. Nearly one-third of these injuries occur when a small child attempts to insert household objects such as hairpins, keys, or paperclips into the receptacle.

How do TRRs work? When equal pressure is simultaneously applied to both sides, the receptacle cover plates open, allowing a standard plug to make contact with the receptacle contact points. Without this synchronized pressure, the cover plates remain closed, preventing the insertion of foreign objects.

Are TRRs effective? TRRs have proven to be so effective that the 2011 National Electrical Code (NEC) requires installation of TRRs in all new home construction. Although not widely used in homes until recently, tamper resistant receptacles have been required in hospital pediatric care facilities for more than 20 years.

How much do TRRs cost? The cost of installing a TRR in a newly constructed home is only about \$0.50 more than a traditional receptacle. Existing homes can be easily retrofitted with tamper resistant receptacles for as little as \$2 per outlet.

Can I install them myself? TRR's use the same installation guidelines that apply to standard receptacles and should only be installed by a licensed, qualified electrician.

