

## **TOOLBOX TALK #19**

### **REPAIRING EXTENSION CORDS**

**Question:** *Where an extension cord being used in construction has been damaged near the plug end, is it permissible to replace the plug with an approved cord cap made for that type of cord, provided the repair is done by a qualified electrician?*

**Answer:** *Extension cords used in construction may be repaired, so long as the repair returns the cord to the “approved” state required by OSHA standard 1926.403(a).*

This section of the OSHA standard states, “All electrical conductors and equipment shall be approved.”

The repair of cords and cord sets is permitted under 1926.404(b)(1)(iii)(C).

Each cord set, attachment cap, plug and receptacle of cord sets, and any equipment connected by cord or plug, except cord sets and receptacles that are fixed and not exposed to damage, shall be visually inspected before each day’s use for external defects, such as deformed or missing pins or insulation damage, and for indications for possible internal damage. Equipment found to be damaged or defective shall not be used until repaired.

Repairs of extension cords therefore are permitted under 1926.404(b)(1)(iii)(C). However, to remain compliant with 1926.403(a), the repairs must return the equipment to the state in which it was initially approved.

To satisfy the requirement of the OSHA standards, a repair would have to restore the tool to its “approved” condition in accordance with 1926.403(a). Tools are approved complete as factory-produced entities. The approval is for the tool as a whole – its design, capacity, materials and construction. This provision precludes the use of an approved tool if its characteristics are materially altered.

