

June 15, 2005

Page 1 of 2

# OFFICIAL CODE INTERPRETATION

This interpretation supercedes all previous interpretations on this subject and will remain in place until rescinded or the next revision of Comm 14, Fire Prevention Code.

## CURRENT CODE SECTION IN QUESTION:

### Comm 14.06 BUILDING SERVICES,

(1) EXTENSION CORDS AND RELOCATABLE POWER TAPS. Substitute the following wording for the requirements in NFPA 1 section 6-1:

(e) Use of extension cords and relocatable power taps.

4. *Relocatable power taps are permitted only with portable electronic equipment such as audio-visual equipment, computers and peripheral equipment.*

## QUESTION:

Is this section of Comm 14 to be interpreted and applied in the same manner as the UL 1363 standard for relocatable power taps information guidance sheet which permits relocatable power taps to supply laboratory equipment, home workshops, home movie lighting controls, musical instrumentation, computers, audio and video equipment "and other equipment" but specifically excludes their use with general patient care areas or critical patient care areas of health care facilities as defined in Article 517 of NFPA 70, National Electrical Code (NEC).

## ANSWER:

Yes. The current UL 1363 Guidance is consistent with Comm 16, state Electrical Code and further defines acceptable uses of such devices. The intent of the Comm 14.06(1) section is to prevent fire and shock hazards, which are mitigated by the UL 1363 standard. However, caution should be exercised to ensure that the relocatable power tap is properly installed and being used in a safe manner in accordance with the terms of its listing and the manufacturers recommendations.

Additional information including the guide information from UL is included as page two of this document.

By:

Ronald Lewis Buchholz, Architect, WSCPM  
Acting Administrator  
Division of Safety and Buildings

## Relocatable Power Taps Commerce Commentary

The scope of UL 1363, Standard for Relocatable Power Taps indicates *that, "These requirements cover cord-connected, relocatable power taps rated 250V AC or less and 20 A AC or less. A relocatable power tap is intended only for indoor use as a temporary extension of a grounding alternating-current branch circuit for general use."* While relocatable power taps are limited to temporary extensions, there is no time limit on their use. Relocatable power taps are not intended to be used in place of receptacle installations required by the NEC as adopted by Comm 16. The use of the term temporary should not be confused with the restrictions on temporary wiring for electrical power and lighting. The term temporary is used to differentiate the installation of the relocatable power tap from the installation of permanently installed (fixed) electrical wiring. Comm 16, State Electrical Code adopts The National Electrical Code, which has an Article that applies to Temporary Installations and covers temporary power and lighting installations. Relocatable power taps do not fall under the scope of this Article.

**The following is a reprint of the UL guide information on Relocatable Power Taps**

### **Relocatable Power Taps (XBYS)**

#### **Use and Installation**

This category covers relocatable power taps rated 250 V ac or less, 20 A or less. They are intended for indoor use as relocatable multiple outlet extensions of a single branch circuit to supply laboratory equipment, home workshops, home movie lighting controls, musical instrumentation, and to provide outlet receptacles for computers, audio and video equipment, and other equipment. They consist of one attachment plug and a single length of flexible cord terminated in a single enclosure in which one or more receptacles are mounted. They may, in addition, be provided with fuses or other supplementary overcurrent protection, switches, suppression components and/or indicator lights in any combination, or connections for cable, communications, telephone and/or antenna.

Relocatable power taps are intended to be directly connected to a permanently installed branch circuit receptacle. Relocatable power taps are not intended to be series connected (daisy chained) to other relocatable power taps or to extension cords.

Relocatable power taps are not intended for use at construction sites and similar locations.

Relocatable power taps are not intended to be permanently secured to building structures, tables, work benches or similar structures, nor are they intended to be used as a substitute for fixed wiring. The cords of relocatable power taps are not intended to be routed through walls, windows, ceilings, floors or similar openings.

Relocatable power taps have not been investigated and are not intended for use with general patient care areas or critical patient care areas of health care facilities as defined in Article 517 of ANSI/NFPA 70, "National Electrical Code" (NEC).

Component power taps may be factory installed on relocatable equipment intended for use in general patient care areas or critical patient care areas as defined in the NEC. They are intended to comply with 60601-1, "Medical Electrical Equipment, Part 1: General Requirements," and 60601-1-1, "Safety Requirements for Medical Electrical Systems." Refer to Medical Equipment -

---