Bureau of Development Services FROM CONCEPT TO CONSTRUCTION

BUILDING OFFICIAL DETERMINATION

23-01: Decorative Tree and Fauna Lighting

2021 OESC Article 590 Temporary Installations

QUESTION: Can electrical wiring be installed on tree and fauna for more than 90 days?

RESPONSE: To install electrical wiring on trees and plants for more than 90 days, you need a City of Portland Urban Forestry Ornamental Lights for Street Trees Permit. Since these installations are temporary and not hard-wired, you don't need an electrical trades permit from the Bureau of Development Services (BDS).

The Portland Environment Management Office (PEMO) ornamental lights for street trees program installs temporary lighting using extension cords. This falls outside the scope of the Oregon Electrical Specialty Code. To ensure safe installations, BDS has provided the following "Best Practices" for these lighting projects.

PEMO's Lighting Installations:
PEMO's lighting installations use extension cords plugged into GFCI connections on rooftop HVACs.

Safety Requirements:

- Use 12g SOOW rated (construction grade) extension cords.
- *Plug extension cords into outdoor GFCI receptacles.*
- *Do not attach extension cords to fire escapes or downspouts and do not extend them through a door or window.*
- *Provide physical protection for lighting strings and cords subject to abrasion or damage such as against a building corner (use a "bumper" or stand-off).*
- *Place cords a minimum of 8 feet from walking surfaces, and 12 feet for cords and strings passing over a sidewalk.*
- *Support cords passing over a roadway or alley with messenger wire, keeping them 18 feet above the roadway.*
- *For extension cords spanning further than 40 feet, support them with a messaging wire.*
- *Project cord connections from water entrance; use a drip loop, weather-resistant boot or weather-resistant wrap.*
- *"Splitters", plug strips and multiple receptacle devices are not allowed*
- *Inspect extension cords and lighting semi-annually or after each weather event for damage and replace them as necessary.*

- Change History:

Effective Date	Significant Changes	Employee Name
11/03/23	Implementation	Matt Rozzell