

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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I am pleased to present the final report, *Review of Federal Programs for Wire System Safety*. Though we might not see it or even think about it, wiring is everywhere around us. Miles of electrical wiring are present in the buildings where we live and work. Wiring allows us to operate a range of equipment, from simple toasters to the most highly automated systems that run nuclear power plants and fighter aircraft. Deterioration of wire systems can result in loss of critical functions in equipment powered by the wire system, or loss of information regarding equipment operation. This can result in loss of control, smoke, and fire. Consequently, the safety of the nation's wire systems is an important issue to all of us.

Aging of wire systems was first identified as an issue of national concern as a result of the White House Commission on Aviation Safety and Security. Efforts to address wiring issues in aviation revealed that aging wiring affects all electrical and information systems. Therefore, I asked the National Science and Technology Council Committee on Transportation to create a Wire System Safety Interagency Working Group (WSSIWG) to examine policy, programs, investment priorities, and direction across the Executive Branch. Seventeen agencies have joined together to form the WSSIWG.

This report identifies nine findings concerning wire system safety that are common to federal programs and documents forty two federal and eighteen industry science and technology projects that are currently underway. The report concludes that wire system safety is a national issue that transcends government agencies and is important to public health and safety. It recommends four basic strategies to improve wire system safety: altering the perception of wire systems; increasing collaboration between industry, academia, and the government; improving the management and functionality of wire systems; and developing advanced wire system technology.

*Review of Federal Programs for Wire System Safety* will serve as a benchmark for interagency efforts to optimize government research into technology to prevent accidents. It will also facilitate the formulation of a national strategy for wire system safety that includes collaboration among industry, academia, and the government for rapid implementation of advanced technology.



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