



Office of **Energy**

Office of *ENERGY* WA

Electrical **FOCUS**

Temporary Electricity Supplies for Residential Construction Sites

A recent survey of temporary electricity supplies on residential construction sites found a number of safety concerns. This was especially the case where the permanent main switchboard is used for the temporary electricity supply.

The main areas of concern are:

- Live unprotected (not fused) consumers mains cables being damaged during construction.
- Damage to live final subcircuits, submains and equipment installed for the permanent installation while being used to supply electricity for construction purposes.
- Trades people and electrical workers not knowing which parts of the installation are live.
- Electrical equipment within a switchboard enclosure not adequately protected from the ingress of water. In some instances, flashing had been punctured to install the permanent wiring.
- Persons while installing gas pipes drilling or cutting into live unprotected consumers mains.
- Apprentices sent to wire houses by themselves, installing wiring in a live switchboard without appropriate supervision, contrary to the Regulations.
- Live cables being damaged during construction and this not being detected, posing a safety risk to future occupants.

The survey also found owners of installations being asked to establish electricity accounts in their names and paying for the electricity used during the construction stage (these costs are usually included in the contract price of the installation).

The Director of Energy Safety proposes issuing a set of guidelines under Section 33AA of the Electricity Act 1945 to give guidance on safe and proper practices for temporary electrical installations on residential building sites.

The Office of Energy is seeking comments to the draft guidelines prior to formalising the document and issuing it to industry. Comments should be submitted to Harry Hills, Office of Energy, by 16 January 1999.

Copies of the draft guidelines are available from the Licensing Office by telephoning 08 9422 5282.

Electrical Licensing Board - Disciplinary Actions

Since the last edition of the Energy Bulletin, the Electrical Licensing Board has carried out fourteen interviews and conducted three proceedings with licensed electrical contractors and workers, resulting in:

- Four electrical worker's licences and five electrical contractor's licences being suspended or cancelled. One contractor's licence was voluntarily surrendered.
- Twelve formal censures being issued for either substandard work, inadequate checking and testing procedures or working without the appropriate licence.

Specific outcomes of these activities included:

- S Pilkington, trading as Steve the Sparky, had his electrical contractor's and electrical worker's licences cancelled for substandard work. Note that Pilkington's electrical worker's licence has since been restored.
- I Rothnie, trading as Murray River Electrical Co, had his electrical contractor's licence cancelled.
- S McConnell, trading as Bridgewater Electrical Services, had his electrical contractor's licence cancelled for substandard work.

The main areas of concern are the failure of electricians to adequately check and test installations and apprentices who fail to apply for their A grade licence once their apprenticeship has been completed. Subsequently they are then working without the appropriate licence.

The Board has required a number of operatives to undergo an assessment of their competence or fitness with a particular emphasis on checking and testing.

- P E Baker failed to have the required assessment and his electrical worker's licence and electrical contractor's licence were cancelled.
- T Titterton failed an assessment and his electrical contractor's licence was cancelled.
- K R Turner failed to have an assessment of his competence and his electrical worker's licence was cancelled.
- One person had his electrical worker's licence suspended due to being physically unfit.

The letter from the Chairman of the Electrical Licensing Board, enclosed in this edition of the bulletin, addresses these issues.

**PROSECUTIONS FOR BREACHES OF
THE ELECTRICITY (LICENSING) REGULATIONS 1991
1 July 1998 to 31 October 1998**

<i>Breach</i>	<i>Name (and suburb of residence at time of offence)</i>	<i>Licence No.</i>	<i>Fine & Court Costs (\$)</i>
<i>Unlicensed electrical work Regulation 19</i>	<i>J Chisholm (Melville)</i>	<i>NLH</i>	<i>740.00</i>
	<i>S D Matthews (Thornlie)</i>	<i>NLH</i>	<i>450.00</i>
	<i>D Paino (Booragoon)</i>	<i>EW 135025</i>	<i>550.00</i>
<i>Carried on business as an electrical contractor without a licence Regulation 33</i>	<i>C Cayford (Duncraig)</i>	<i>EW 127000</i>	<i>740.00</i>
<i>Substandard electrical work Regulation 49</i>	<i>D Holmes (Mahogany Creek)</i>	<i>EW 119211</i>	<i>640.00</i>
	<i>G Taylor (Leederville)</i>	<i>EW 114631</i>	<i>1171.00</i>
	<i>S Pilkington (Hamilton Hill)</i>	<i>EW 107708</i>	<i>2040.00*</i>
	<i>P Joel (Greenwood)</i>	<i>EW 104220</i>	<i>445.00</i>
	<i>T Marshall (Connolly)</i>	<i>EW 107959</i>	<i>5500.00</i>
	<i>K Turner (Hovea)</i>	<i>EW 105011</i>	<i>2006.00</i>
<i>Failed to submit a Preliminary Notice Regulation 51</i>	<i>S Pilkington T/A Steve the Sparky (Hamilton Hill)</i>	<i>EC 004249</i>	<i>0.00*</i>
<i>Failed to submit a Notice of Completion Regulation 52</i>	<i>S Pilkington T/A Steve the Sparky (Hamilton Hill)</i>	<i>EC 004249</i>	<i>0.00*</i>
	<i>P Joel T/A Hi Grade Electrical Service (Greenwood)</i>	<i>EC 001202</i>	<i>250.00</i>
<i>Engaged, employed or instructed an unlicensed person to carry out electrical work Regulation 53</i>	<i>Palgarup Nominees Pty Ltd (South Perth)</i>	<i>EC 001690</i>	<i>740.00</i>

**PROSECUTIONS FOR BREACHES OF
THE ELECTRICITY ACT 1945
1 July 1998 to 31 October 1998**

<i>Breach</i>	<i>Name (and suburb of residence at time of offence)</i>	<i>Licence No.</i>	<i>Fine & Court Costs (\$)</i>
<i>Exposed for sale appliances which were not approved Section 33B</i>	<i>Beijing Trading Pty Ltd T/A Beijing Furniture Gallery (Victoria Park)</i>	<i>NLH</i>	<i>740.00* 4 Offences</i>

NLH No Licence Held * Global conviction (fine and/or costs cover multiple charges).



Electrical Licensing Board

To All Licensed Electrical Workers and Contractors

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE

The Electrical Licensing Board is very concerned that many licensed electrical workers and contractors are signing off and certifying their work without carrying out the necessary checks and tests.

It seems that "commercial pressures" are causing licensees to neglect their checking and testing obligations. There has been an alarming increase in the number of electrical installations being left in a potentially dangerous condition following the issue of the Notice of Completion.

Examples of these include:

1. Cable ends being left unterminated and exposed.
2. Inadequate earth, neutral and MEN connections.
3. Cross connections remaining undetected.

In extreme cases these have contributed to fatalities as a result of electrocution.

You are obliged by law to check and test all electrical installation work that you carry out. Failure to do so can not only lead to a prosecution or cancellation of your licence, but more importantly, you could put someone's life at risk.

Checks and tests required by the wiring rules must be carried out before signing the Notice of Completion.

The Board recommends that you develop and use a comprehensive check list to assist with checking and testing and ensure that all of the work that you have carried out is safe.

The Board urges all licensees to carry out electrical work in accordance with the "Code of Practice - *Safe electrical work on low voltage electrical installations*" which was recently issued to all Licensed Electrical Contractors and holders of In-House Electrical Installing Work licences. Copies of the Code can be obtained from the Licensing Office; please phone (08) 9422 5282 for details.

R PRITCHARD
CHAIRMAN OF THE ELECTRICAL LICENSING BOARD

29 October 1998