



Important notice to owners of dwellings and buildings constructed during the 1970s and early 80s

Unenclosed joints in electrical cables in ceiling spaces – Rectification requirements

The Problem

During the 1970s and early 80s, joints in electrical cables in ceiling spaces of dwellings and buildings were often only wrapped in insulating tape. It has since been found that the insulating tape may come off over time and this can result in the risk of serious electric shock to persons who enter the ceiling space.

Rectification Requirements

As a consequence of this risk, EnergySafety, Western Australia's electrical industry technical and safety regulator, has introduced a policy for dealing with this risk, allowing ample time for affected owners to take remedial action. The policy requires that, where a dwelling/building is identified as containing accessible unenclosed joints, the onus is on the owner to have remedial work carried out, using a licensed electrical contractor. The remedial action can be either:

- a) Fitting appropriate joint enclosures where joints are exposed (ie. likely to be disturbed); or
- b) Installing total safety switch (residual current device, or RCD) protection – protecting both power and lighting circuits (preferably through 2 or more safety switches).

Until 31 December 2007 - an owner of the premise who has been advised of the need for remedial work is required to arrange for the work to be carried out within 3 years.

From 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2009 - an owner of the premise who has been advised of the need for remedial work will be required to have the work carried out within 12 months.

From 1 January 2010 - an owner of the premise who has been advised of the need for remedial work will be required to have the work carried out within 28 days.

If you are an owner/occupier, it is likely that an electrical contractor carrying out some work at the premise may have noticed this type of problem. Please note that EnergySafety has requested the electrical contractor, in the interest of public safety, to point out where unenclosed joints (ie. the safety problem) exist and to hand this uniquely numbered explanatory leaflet to the owner/occupier. The electrical contractor is to also advise the electricity supplier of having taken this action.

A copy of this leaflet, the advice to the electrical industry and other safety information is available on EnergySafety's website at www.energysafety.wa.gov.au.

Thank you for your cooperation in making your electrical installation safe.

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