

# 14/94 Tampering with electrical equipment/accessories

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## Incident

Numerous incidents have been identified where unqualified persons in the building industry including tilers, painters and cabinet makers have disconnected switches, power points and electrical appliances such as ovens, and not reconnected them correctly or left wires exposed.

This practice is dangerous as it can create electrical hazards from either incorrectly installed and/or terminated electrical equipment and accessories or situations where there may be unprotected bare cable ends. This situation can expose other people to an electric shock or electrocution.

## Factors

The following is a list of the most common occurrences:

- **Tilers**

Tilers either remove or disconnect/reconnect power points, light switches and other styles of electrical accessories;

- **Builders/carpenters/cabinet makers**

These tradespersons either disconnect/reconnect, remove or cut off electrical accessories and/or equipment such as stoves, ovens and hotplates, power points and switches when installing fittings such as wardrobes, cupboards, bench tops and recesses around stoves and ovens.

- **Painters**

Painters remove light fittings, or insert paper within the fitting to stop ingress of paint when painting ceilings. Additionally, light switches and power points are either disconnected/reconnected or removed from walls.

- **Builders and landscapers**

External lighting and power supplies are occasionally damaged, altered or removed during the clearing and landscaping of the site.

*The practice of unqualified persons interfering with electrical equipment is viewed seriously and will attract vigorous intervention by WorkSafe Western Australia and may result in prosecution action being initiated.*



*SECWA also advises that this practice is a breach of the Electricity [Licensing] Regulations and they may prosecute offenders.*

## Recommendations

Builders or Principal Contractors should plan their projects to avoid these problems and ensure, in consultation with health and safety representatives, health and safety committees and employees, that electrical work is well planned and carried out by electrical tradespersons. The Hon Graham Kierath Minister for Labour Relations has committed WorkSafe Western Australia and industry to achieving a 50% reduction in electrocutions within WA by June 1997.

## Further Information

Further information can be obtained from the WorkSafe internet site [www.worksafe.wa.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au), or by contacting customer service on 1300 307 877 or email: [safety@docep.wa.gov.au](mailto:safety@docep.wa.gov.au).

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