

Electrical information for remote communities

February 2004

Western Australian legislation has specific requirements for licensed electrical workers and the general public, to provide for a safe environment. Much of this information should be familiar to licensed electrical workers but is lesser known to the general public.

This fact sheet outlines some of the regulatory requirements that people living and working within remote communities need to be aware of. This information should be made known throughout communities to promote compliance and thus provide for a safe environment.

Reporting electrical incidents

Electrical safety incidents must be reported **immediately** to relevant authorities. In the case of remote communities, the reports should be made **immediately** to the community coordinator who, in turn, must report incidents **immediately** to Energy Safety.

Electrical incidents include:

- all fatalities and accidents suspected of being caused by electricity
- electric shocks
- damage to property suspected of being caused by electricity (eg. fires, explosions).

Reporting the incidents allows the circumstances to be investigated so that action can be taken to rectify the problem and to prevent a recurrence.

Reporting substandard electrical installing work

Electricians are required to report substandard or dangerous electrical work. Other people who notice substandard or dangerous electrical work should report the matter to their community coordinator. The community coordinator should then arrange to have the work made safe and corrected. The corrective work needs to be carried out by a licensed electrician.

Carrying out electrical work

Electrical work (as defined in legislation) must only be carried by a person with the appropriate electrical worker's licence. This will be carried out under the authority of an electrical contractor.

Community coordinators who employ an electrical contractor should sight the electrical contractor's licence to confirm the contractor is currently licensed. Community coordinators should also sight the electrical worker's licences of the electricians employed by the electrical contractor.

Responsibilities of electrical contractors

When an electrical contractor carries out any electrical work, he or she is required to submit "Notices" to the relevant authority.

Submission of a Notice certifies that the electrical installing work has been tested and is safe to be connected to electricity supply.

In the case of remote communities, Notices are submitted to Energy Safety. Energy Safety monitors the standard of the electrical contractor's work by auditing a sample of the work that has been notified.

Safety Switches

Homes built since around 1991 should have safety switches to protect the electrical installation.

If safety switches are not permanently installed, electrical equipment should be plugged into portable safety switches so that the same levels of electrical safety are achieved.

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