



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Commerce**
Energy Safety

Using electricity **Safely near water**



Using electricity safely near water

Water and electricity can be a lethal mixture.

Tap water and pool water are good conductors of electricity. Electric shocks received in wet areas are more likely to be fatal. The combination of electricity, water, minimum clothing and bare feet can result in death.

RCD Regulations

To reduce the risk of electrocution, RCDs (safety switches) became mandatory protection for all power point circuits in new houses after June 1992 and for lighting circuits as well after December 2000.

From August 2009 it became mandatory for all properties being sold or leased to have at least two RCDs protecting all power points and lighting circuits.

EnergySafety recommends two RCDs be installed in all houses built before 2000.



In the bathroom

- Ensure hands are dry when touching appliances or switches.
- Never use or leave electrical appliances where they can fall into the bath or basin.
- Never leave electrical appliances unattended with children.

In the kitchen

- Ensure hands are dry when touching appliances or switches.
- If liquid spills into an appliance, unplug the appliance and have it checked and tested before using it again.
- Immerse appliances into water to clean them only if instructions clearly allow it.

In the laundry

- Ensure hands are dry when touching appliances or switches.
- Wear footwear with rubber or plastic soles when using the washing machine.
- Clean up water spills on the floor.

Outdoors

- Don't use portable appliances, power tools or extension leads in water or when it is raining.
- Ensure that party and Christmas tree lights are suitable for outdoor use.
- If your house is not fitted with RCDs, use a portable power board fitted with RCDs when using appliances and power tools outdoors.



Around the swimming pool

- Ensure hands are dry when touching appliances or switches.
- Do not use electrical appliances or power tools near the edge of the pool.
- String your party lights away from the pool.

What should I do if I receive an electric shock?

Despite all the precautions we take, faults can occur in electrical wiring, appliances and equipment that cause electric shocks or damage to property. If you receive an electric shock or property is damaged, even if it is only minor, due to an electrical incident:

- Stop using the appliance or tool, keep away from whatever gave you the electric shock; and
- report the electric shock by telephoning your network operator, such as Western Power on 13 13 51 and EnergySafety on our 24-hour Freecall number 1800 678 198.

Regulations require all cases of electric shock and damage to property from electrical incidents to be reported so that the cause can be investigated and corrected. All electric shocks are potentially fatal. Suffering a shock in wet conditions increases considerably the risk of electrocution.

Department of Commerce

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