



ELECTRICAL CURRENTS

Newsletter from the Office of the Chief Electrical Inspector

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● Upcoming Electrical Stakeholders Meetings

Stakeholder meetings will run from now through June 2008 at locations listed below. The *Electrical Currents* will list future meeting addresses when the facilities are booked. It is important for you to stay up to date with changes that might affect you. Attending stakeholder meetings gives you an opportunity to get your questions answered and give the Electrical Program your valued input. Please join us at 6:00 p.m., at one of the remaining stakeholder meetings near you.

Safety Tip of the Month!

Look for signs that your electrical equipment has gotten wet. Discard electrical equipment that has been wet because it poses electric shock and fire hazards.

2007-2008 Remaining Stakeholder Meetings

November 14	The Orcas Room on the 5 th floor of 950 Broadway Bldg., Tacoma	December 12	Labor and Industries Bldg. 12806 Gateway Dr., Tukwila
February 20	Location to be determined, Bremerton	February 21	Location to be determined, Port Angeles
April 9	Clark County PUD, 1200 Fort Vancouver Way, Vancouver	May 20	Location to be determined, Moses Lake
May 21	Cowlitz County PUD, 961 12 th St., Longview	May 21 (also)	Location to be determined, Walla Walla
May 22	Location to be determined, Yakima	June 11	Location to be determined, Bellingham

● COUNTERFEIT Square D Circuit Breaker – RECALL!!!

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), in cooperation with Connecticut Electric & Switch Mfg. Co (Connecticut Electric), of Puyallup, WA, has recalled counterfeit Square D Circuit Breakers due to fire hazard. There are about 64,000 circuit breakers in the recall. The breakers were made in China, are counterfeit and could fail to trip when they are required to, posing a fire hazard to consumers.

There has been no report of incidents or injuries associated with these breakers. The counterfeit breakers are black and are marked as Square D products. Connecticut Electric has identified the following breakers as possibly being counterfeit: QO115, QO120, QO140, QO2125, QO215, QO220, QO230, QO240, QO250, QO260, QO1515, QO2020, QO3100, QO320, QO330, QO340, QO360, QOB120, QOB130, QOB220, QOB230, QOB250, QOB330, and QOB360. Actual Square D circuit breakers have (a) the amp rating written on the handle in white paint on the front of the breaker; (b) the Square D insignia molded onto the breaker side, and; (c) a yellow chromate mounting clip with half of the top of the clip visible. If your Square D breaker does not match this description, it could be counterfeit.

Sold through: Electrical Distributors and hardware stores nationwide from February 2005 through August 2006 for between about \$6.50 and \$15.50. **Remedy:** Consumers should contact Connecticut Electric to determine if the breaker they have is counterfeit and if necessary, to arrange for a free inspection and replacement or refund. **Consumer Contact:** For more information, Call Connecticut Electric at (866) 264-3702 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday or visit the company's Web site at <http://www.connecticut-electric.com>. Consumers also can obtain additional information by emailing Connecticut Electric at: <mailto:bdunham@connecticut-electric.com>. To see this recall on CPSC's web site, including pictures of the recalled product, please go to: <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml08/08054.html>

● Who Must Have A Training Certificate?

Any person working in the electrical trade, including apprentices, who is trying to qualify to take an electrician exam must have a valid training certificate during their training period (see RCW 19.28.191(2)). There is no exception for this if the worker wants to gain qualifying on the job experience hours.

Homeowners and employees of a business do not need to have a training certificate if they are not trying to qualify to become an electrician.

● Entela Laboratory Listing Mark

Entela, Inc. is now owned by Intertek Testing Service NA, Inc. Entela's approval is expired and the Entela listing mark is not approved in Washington. Any products now being installed with an Entela listing mark will require field evaluation before being approved by the electrical inspector.

● Listing, Field Evaluation, Or Engineering Evaluation?

To ensure electrical safety, the legislature requires that ALL electrical equipment be built to conform to applicable standards for electrical safety.

The recent recall of toys made in China (i.e. lead poisoning) and the large number of counterfeit products imported into the country show that manufacturing standards and independent evaluation are critical in ensuring a product's safety.

Electrical product review is very technical and often requires sophisticated testing equipment to evaluate plastics, metal fatigue, flame spread characteristics, ampacity capability, etc. Owners, contractors, and inspection staff do not normally have the expertise, equipment, or information available to make this review.

For industrial utilization equipment approval, there are several options for the equipment purchaser:

- Install accredited electrical testing laboratory "listed" equipment. Many types of electrical equipment imported from outside the US are "listed." Listing is an option for any manufacturer in the world.
- Hire an accredited electrical testing laboratory to do a "field evaluation";
- Hire an accredited electrical engineer to work with the equipment manufacturer and the purchaser to review the standards that the equipment was built to. The manufacturer should be made aware of the approval requirements prior to the purchase. It is to the purchaser's advantage to ask for the required documentation from the manufacturer prior to receiving the equipment; or
- Have the inspector do a normal inspection of every component (e.g. wiring, relays, switches, etc.) if the component (equipment) is listed by an accredited electrical testing laboratory and the wiring methods are NEC compliant. This is not an option for equipment containing any unlisted components.

If industrial utilization equipment used directly in a manufacturing process was built to an appropriate standard, and the equipment manufacturer works with the purchaser and the reviewing engineer to complete the review process, approval using the engineering evaluation process may be to your advantage (i.e. lower cost and shorter timeline).

For ALL other electrical equipment, the equipment must be listed or field evaluated by an accredited electrical testing laboratory.

You can get current information about accredited product testing laboratories and engineering evaluation firms on our website at:

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/TradesLicensing/Electrical/Install/default.asp>

If you need your equipment to be in operation quickly, you should request, in writing, to have the ability to operate the equipment during the evaluation period from the Chief Electrical Inspector. To get approval, you must be in the process of evaluation or review with an accredited laboratory or engineer and have a definite deadline for the completion of the evaluation or review. The equipment must not have been modified since it was manufactured and it must be appropriate for the intended use. The Chief may grant temporary operational use until the evaluation or review can be completed.

If the equipment cannot be successfully evaluated or reviewed, it must be immediately disconnected and not used.

● Question of the Month

A trainee may receive (06) limited energy credit for time worked when employed by a (09) telecommunications contractor doing telecommunications work if the work is supervised by a (06) specialty electrician. True or False?

October's Question was: Can a 07D electrician replace a compressor in a residential HVAC heat pump? **Answer is:** No. See WAC 296-46B-920(k)(i)(C).