

# ELECTRICAL CURRENTS

A Newsletter from the Office of L&I Chief Electrical Inspector Wayne Molesworth

April 2023

## L&I considers changes to electrical rules

L&I is considering adoption of the 2023 National Electrical Code (NEC) and other rule changes. L&I filed a formal [Preproposal Statement of Inquiry \(CR-101\)](#) on April 4.

The changes under consideration would affect WAC [296-46B](#), Electrical Safety Standards, Administration, and Installation, excluding WAC [296-46B-945](#), Qualifying for master, journey level, specialty electrician examinations.

### Why this is happening now

L&I reviews the state electrical rules every three years, to ensure consistency with national electrical safety standards and industry practice. The NEC is recognized and adopted in nearly all 50 states.

### How you can participate

L&I's Electrical Program, like many jurisdictions, doesn't adopt the NEC in its entirety. We're seeking input from interested parties in making code amendments and other changes to the rules. Interested parties may submit rule proposals through **May 20**.

L&I is also seeking experts and interested group representatives to participate on a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) during the same period.

See the [April 2023 Special Edition Electrical Currents Newsletter](#) for more details and a link to the rule proposal form.

### Learn more about this rulemaking

- <https://www.lni.wa.gov/rulemaking-activity/?query=electrical&ruleTopic=All&ruleStatus=Open>,
- <https://www.lni.wa.gov/licensing-permits/electrical/laws-rules-policies#rule-development>.

## Last Call—Apprenticeship Information Session on April 6 at 5 pm

In case you have not heard, registered apprenticeships are hosting an informational night for electrical contractors and trainees to learn more about their programs.

The session will include presentations from union, non-union and individual employer programs. There will be time for questions.

The session will take place at 5 p.m. over Zoom.

To participate [click on this link](#), and use passcode: Electric1!

By phone: 386-347-5053      ID: 890 4649 8070      Passcode: 8705338300

Learn more: [www.lni.wa.gov/ElectricalApprenticeship](http://www.lni.wa.gov/ElectricalApprenticeship). Questions? Email: [SSBImplementation@lni.wa.gov](mailto:SSBImplementation@lni.wa.gov).

**Question of the Month:** Is electrical metallic tubing (EMT) an approved wiring method for installation of conductors for a supply-side interconnection of a solar photovoltaic system within a building between the point of interconnection and the overcurrent device protecting the electric power production source conductors? *See page 2*

## Safety Tip of the Month

When installing or using listed electrical equipment, always read and follow the manufacturer's installation instructions. Also, leave a copy of the instructions for the inspector and the owner.

This document may contain hyperlinks to internet web pages.

Access this PDF document online at:

<https://lni.wa.gov/licensing-permits/electrical/electrical-currents-newsletter/>

Electrical Section Internet Address: <https://www.lni.wa.gov/> -

Select Licensing & Permits, then Electrical



## When are Fan Rated Boxes Required?

The 2020 NEC change to 314.27(C) required fan rated boxes be installed, “in a location acceptable for the installation of a ceiling-suspended (paddle) fan” in dwellings. This means a fan rated ceiling box everywhere a fan could be installed with a couple exceptions.

Fan boxes are not required in areas within four feet of walls, soffits, or door swing radiuses, and areas directly above permanently installed island or peninsular countertop surfaces.

The 2023 NEC adds additional detail about the type of box installed. The box needs to be:

- A listed for the sole support of a ceiling-suspended (paddle) fan or
- Be a capable of supporting a ceiling-suspended (paddle) fan and provide direct access through the box to the structural framing without removing the box.

It is not enough that there is just access to the framing, a fan rated box needs to be installed regardless. Permits and inspections are required to install new ceiling suspended (paddle) fans.

## Get Your Inspection Sooner by Providing Better Work Descriptions

Trying to inspect with little or no information can make for slow going. Inspectors rely on descriptions of work to get the job done. It slows everything down when they do not have good information.

**Descriptions** – A few details are all it takes. The following are actual job descriptions from permits:

Good	Not Good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Circuit to new hot tub in the back yard</li><li>• Add GFCI outlet to garage for EV charger</li><li>• 100 amp underground feeder from panel in the garage to new barn</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Extend Circuit</li><li>• Lights</li><li>• R&amp;R</li><li>• Homeowner request</li></ul>

The good ones are clear and make it easier for the inspector to find the work you need inspected. The not good descriptions are virtually useless. Do not be shy! Permit job description fields take up to 255 characters.

More information for your inspector will reduce the number of phone calls and delays in completing your inspection. Inspectors roam all over the state and you never know who will be coming to your job site. Give them a break with a good description!

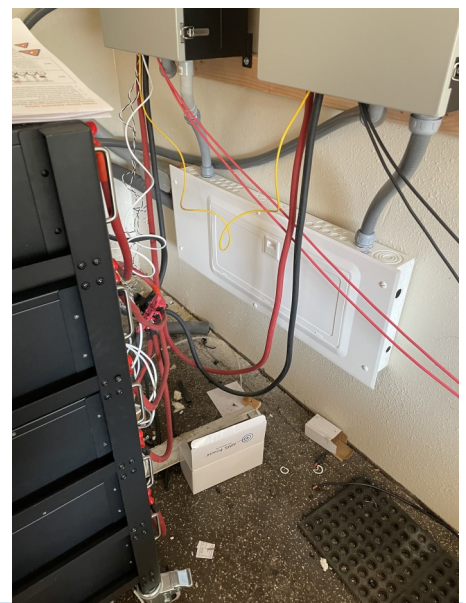
## Answer to the Question of the Month:

No. WAC [296-46B-705\(2\)](#) states: *In addition to the requirements of NEC 705.31, electric power production source conductors connected to the supply side of the service disconnecting means must be installed using wiring methods specified for service conductors in WAC [296-46B-230\(7\)](#).* This section gives a list of approved wiring methods for installation of service conductors within a building or structure.

## Picture of the Month:

This property owner is installing a photovoltaic system. It includes open wiring, a panel with out any working clearance and open splices. Do you see anything else to add to the list?

*Click on the picture for a larger image.*



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