

ELECTRICAL CURRENTS



Question of the Month –

Under Washington’s electrical rules, which of the following can qualify someone to be the designated administrator or master electrician for an electrical/telecommunications contractor if they are not a full-time supervisory employee?

- A) Being a part-time consultant
- B) Be a member of the firm as defined in WAC [296-46B-100](#)
- C) Working as an unpaid volunteer
- D) Holding an out-of-state certification only

Rulemaking Updates

Proposed Fee Increases for Electrical and Related Programs

L&I is proposing a 6.51% fee increase across several programs, including the Electrical Program. The adjustment reflects the state’s adopted fiscal growth factor for 2027, based on average personal income growth over the past decade, and is intended to cover rising program operating costs.

A [CR-101 Preproposal Statement of Inquiry](#) was filed on December 2, beginning the rulemaking process. If adopted, the increase would affect a wide range of fees, including electrical inspection fees, contractor and electrician licensing and examination fees and testing laboratory accreditation fees.

Key upcoming dates include:

- February 3, 2026, filing of proposed rules (CR-102)
- March 12, 2026, public hearing
- May 5, 2026, final rule to be adopted

New fees are expected to take effect July 1, 2026. Learn more on our [rule making page](#).

Accepting 2026 National Electric Code Amendments and WAC Rule Proposals Until February 15, 2026.

L&I is updating electrical rules in WAC [296-46B](#) as part of the adoption process for the 2026 edition of NFPA 70, the National Electrical Code (NEC). This update occurs every three years to keep Washington’s electrical standards aligned with national safety requirements and industry practices. The 2026 NEC is scheduled to replace the 2023 edition on Dec. 31, 2026. Find out how to participate in the [January 2026 Special Edition](#) of this newsletter.

A formal [Preproposal Statement of Inquiry \(CR-101\)](#) was filed on December 16, officially launching the rulemaking process. Stakeholders can participate by submitting rule-change proposals by February 13, 2026, or by applying to join the Technical Advisory Committee, which evaluates suggested updates. Additional opportunities for written comments and public testimony will be available once a hearing is scheduled.

Next Steps:

- July 2026 — Proposed rules (CR-102) expected to be filed
- August 2026 — Public hearing tentatively scheduled
- November 2026 — Final rules (CR-103) expected to be filed
- December 31, 2026 — Updated rules and the 2026 NEC take effect

Learn more on our [rule making page](#).

Safety Tip of the Month

Cold weather brings unique hazards for electricians. Ice, snow, and moisture increase the risk of slips, shocks, and equipment failure. Inspect cords and tools for damage, keep work areas dry, wear proper insulated gear, and stay alert for hidden ice. Prioritizing caution keeps every job safer through the winter season.

Flood-Damaged Electrical Equipment and Wiring

Recent flooding in parts of Washington has caused significant damage, and the mix of water and electricity creates serious hazards. Before anyone approaches a submerged or recently submerged electrical system, make sure a qualified professional disconnects the power.

Under [WAC 296-46B-110\(2\)](#), any electrical components that were submerged or exposed to water—such as breakers, fuses, controllers, receptacles, switches, dimmers, electric heaters, and sealed devices like relays or contactors—must be replaced.

Other types of electrical equipment, including wiring, panelboards, disconnect switches, switchgear, motor control centers, boiler controls, HVAC/R systems, motors, transformers, appliances, and water heaters, must either be replaced or reconditioned by the original manufacturer or an authorized representative.

For additional guidance on safe recovery after flooding and other natural disasters, visit our [After Floods & Other Natural Disasters](#) webpage

Become an Electrical Construction Inspector

Explore current openings for Electrical Construction Inspector 1 positions at [careers.wa.gov](#). After successfully completing a two-year training period, you'll be promoted to Inspector 2.

How to Qualify:

- Meet the minimum requirements listed in the job posting.
- Score at least 70% on an open-book assessment within two weeks of the posting's close.
- The assessment covers the 2020 NEC, electrical theory, wiring diagrams, and Washington laws and rules.

No computers or cell phones are allowed during the test. Bring in any copyrighted reference material of your choosing.

For questions or to schedule your assessment: Email: electricalassessment@lni.wa.gov

Assessment Locations & Schedule:

- 1st Tuesday of each month: 7273 Linderson Way SW, Tumwater
- 2nd Tuesday of each month: 12806 Gateway Drive S, Tukwila
- 3rd Tuesday of each month: 901 N Monroe Street, Suite 100, Spokane

Picture of the Month –

This temporary service was called in for an electrical service approval. When the inspector removed the dead front, he found this cord hanging out of the dead front. When he removed the cover, the cord was still terminated on the circuit breaker inside the equipment. There is a lot wrong here. How many violations can you find?

Answer to the Question of the Month –

B — Being a member of the firm as defined in WAC [296-46B-100](#).

If not a full-time supervisory employee, a designated administrator or master electrician must be a qualifying *member of the firm*.

Learn more about assignment of administrators and master electricians in WAC [296-46B-930](#)



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