

ELECTRICAL CURRENTS



Question of the Month – How much stray voltage in freshwater can lead to electric shock drowning (ESD), and what GFCI protection does the NEC require to prevent dangerous current from reaching swimmers?

Electrical Program Fee Increase

A 6.51% fee increase took effect on July 1, 2026. It applies to all fees received on or after that date. Fees for online services are always current. When using electrical forms that require fees, check the bottom of the page for the date of 7-2026 to ensure the fees are current. Learn more on our [rule development](#) page.

Rule Making Update

L&I is proposing changes to the state's electrical rules. The changes would affect the requirements for installing electrical vehicle supply equipment and electrician and administrator competency examinations. The changes are needed because of passed legislation and to streamline the rules for examinations.

We filed a Proposed Rulemaking ([CR-102](#)) on July 14, 2026 and if adopted, take effect on November 20, 2026.

You can find more information about this rulemaking [here](#).

A public hearing on the proposed rules will take place **Aug. 26 at 9 a.m.** at [L&I headquarters, 7273 Linderson Way S.W., Tumwater, WA](#). The hearing will continue until all comments are received. You can also join by:

Zoom meeting: Click [here](#) to join the meeting Passcode: Electric@1

Or calling: 253-215-8782 Meeting ID: 893 1328 7537 Passcode: 7592631469

- You can provide testimony and written comments during the hearing, or send written comments by **5 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 26, 2026**, to:

Meagan Edwards Email: CSCPRules@Lni.wa.gov Fax: 360-704-1980

- Mail: Department of Labor & Industries
Customer Service, Compliance, & Public Safety Division
P.O. Box 44400
Olympia, WA 98504-4400

If you require communication or accommodation arrangements, please contact Meagan Edwards at 360-522-0125, by Aug. 12, 2026.

SSB 5528 is now in effect and electricians working on electric vehicle supply equipment for public works projects must have EVITP certification. This rule applies to installation and maintenance. Additionally, L&I is streamlining competency exam requirements

Safety Tip of the Month

Electric shock drowning (ESD) occurs when electrical current leaks into freshwater, paralyzing swimmers near docks, marinas, or boats connected to shore power. Avoid swimming around energized docks, ensure regular electrical inspections, and use ground-fault protection. Education and awareness are essential for prevention. Learn more at the Electric Shock Drowning Prevention Association: www.electricschockdrowning.org.

REMINDER: Metering Center Requirements Now Enforced

The temporary exception for metering center requirements has officially ended. Effective July 1, 2026, all installations must fully comply with the 2023 NEC 230.71(B)(4). The previous allowance for metering centers with 2 to 6 service disconnects without separate compartments is no longer active.

All new equipment installations must meet the following criteria:

- **Separate Compartments:** Required for all service disconnects.
- **Line-Side Protection:** Full compliance with 2023 NEC 230.62(C) to eliminate live part hazards. Barriers and insulation must be factory-installed, field-installed per manufacturer instructions, or field-evaluated by an accredited laboratory

Grace Period for Trainees has Ended

The law that allowed trainees to work and gain experience without being in a registered apprenticeship ended July 1, 2026. Because this deadline has passed, L&I cannot approve any general journey-level (01) exam applications that are received after that date. Applications that have been received before the deadline are still being processed and applications will be approved as quickly as possible.

Moving forward, the following requirements are in effect:

- Only registered apprentices can perform general journey-level (01) electrical work and gain hours of experience in the 01 category.
- Trainees do not need to be a registered apprentice to perform specialty electrical work.

If a trainee did not submit their hours of experience and application before the deadline, they must now complete work experience and education requirements of a registered apprenticeship program to qualify for the (01) exam.

Find out more about more about apprenticeships by contacting the [apprenticeship section](#) of L&I at apprentice@lni.wa.gov.

Accurate Directions Promote Faster Inspections

Locating your job site with hardly any information causes delays. Inspectors rely on your directions, and accurate ones help them get more inspections done. Because inspectors bounce around, they do not always know the areas well.

Please keep directions simple. Avoid using overcomplicated mapping website routes. Instead, provide directions from the nearest main street, highway, or intersection. A few simple details save everybody time. The sooner we find your job site, the sooner we can be on to the next inspection.

If your job site is really difficult to find, try using [Virtual Electrical Inspections](#) before you even leave the job.

Answer to the Question of the month: 15–30 volts AC in freshwater can paralyze a swimmer and lead to electric shock drowning. Because the body becomes a better conductor, even small leakage currents are dangerous. The NEC 555 requires GFCI protection on dock and marina receptacles, with devices tripping at 4–6 milliamps to stop current before it reaches the water. Proper testing and maintenance are essential.

Picture of the Month: An electrical inspector conducted a service inspection on an existing building. When he checked the service disconnect, he discovered that someone had added a toilet and vanity to the room containing the service equipment. The owner and electrician are now working together to remove the toilet and correct the issue.



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