

Heavy Rains Across Ontario Increase Risk of Flooding: Water and Electricity Are a Lethal Mix

Electrical Safety Authority offers important information for flood-affected areas

Mississauga, ON – Feb. 21, 2018. With flooding expected or already occurring in some regions of the province, and more rain in the forecast, the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) warns Ontarians of a heightened risk of electric shock caused when water comes into contact with electricity. Following these important steps could save your life, or the lives of first responders and utility personnel working in the area.

If you have to evacuate your property in advance of a flood, switch the main breaker on your electrical panel to the “OFF” position to ensure the power is off when you return home to potentially flood-damaged electrical equipment.

Follow these four steps if you experience flooding on your property:

1. Never assume the area affected by the flood is safe.
2. Stay out of your basement or property if you know or suspect water has risen above electrical outlets, baseboard heaters, furnace or near your electrical panel. Electricity can move through water or wet flooring and cause electric shock.
3. If flood water has risen above outlets, baseboard heaters, furnace, covered power cords, or near the electrical panel, contact your local electric utility immediately and arrange for them to disconnect power to your home. Your electrical system should be assessed and repaired by a Licensed Electrical Contractor.
4. **Do not** plug in or attempt to use electrical appliances contacted by flood waters until they have been checked or serviced by a Licensed Electrical Contractor or appliance service provider. Call a Licensed Electrical Contractor, or contact the manufacturer or dealer for the nearest service location.

Assessing the safety of your electrical system after a flood:

ESA strongly recommends you hire a Licensed Electrical Contractor to evaluate your home’s electrical system to determine if it is safe.

- The contractor is required to take out an electrical permit with ESA so there is a record of the work;
- When the contractor completes the work, ESA will confirm work has been done safely and power can be reconnected;
- ESA will inform the utility that it is safe to reconnect; the utility will reconnect when it is able to do so.
- After the work is done, ask the contractor for a copy of the ESA Certificate of Inspection for your records and insurance.



ESA reminds all homeowners and businesses to ensure power has been disconnected to the entire property before entering to avoid shock and electrocution. This includes flooded basements and outbuildings that contain electrical equipment or are connected to the electrical system.

For more information or to find a Licensed Electrical Contractor in your area visit www.esasafe.com and use the [Contractor Look Up](#) tool directly from the homepage.

About the Electrical Safety Authority

The Electrical Safety Authority's (ESA's) role is to enhance public electrical safety in Ontario. As an administrative authority acting on behalf of the Government of Ontario, ESA is responsible for administering specific regulations related to the Ontario Electrical Safety Code, the licensing of Electrical Contractors and Master Electricians, electricity distribution system safety, and electrical product safety. ESA works extensively with stakeholders throughout the province on education, training and promotion to foster electrical safety across the province.

More information on the Electrical Safety Authority can be found at www.esasafe.com, through <https://twitter.com/homeandsafety> and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ElectricalSafetyAuthority.

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