

General Contractor and Licensed Electrical Contractor Convicted, Fined \$66,250 for Illegal Electrical Work in Schools in Eastern Ontario

Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) investigation revealed work at 13 schools was not done in compliance with electrical safety regulations; serious electrical hazards discovered at one site.

Mississauga, ON – May 6, 2014. A general contractor and a licensed electrical contractor have both been convicted and fined for illegal electrical work done in several schools in the Ottawa, Kingston and Pembroke areas. On Apr. 3, 2014 Mario Giroux, owner of Construction “G” operating in the Ottawa area, pleaded guilty to 13 counts of performing electrical work without an electrical contractor’s licence, eight counts of failing to apply for inspection and one count of leaving an unsafe condition. On April 24, Nick Medewar of NM Electric was convicted in an Ottawa court of six counts of illegally taking out electrical permits on behalf of an unlicensed contractor working for Construction “G”.

Construction “G” hired a worker who performed electrical work on its behalf but did not ensure this worker held the required electrical contractor licence. The worker subsequently arranged to have electrical permits taken out illegally by Medewar, a Licensed Electrical Contractor (LEC), for work at several schools of the Conseil Des Ecoles Catholiques du Centre-Est and at least one residential site. The worker also has been charged with doing electrical work without a licence and this case is before the courts.

“This is an issue where multiple illegal actions put public safety –specifically children – at risk,” said Normand Breton, ESA’s General Manager, Harm Mitigation, who oversees ESA’s electrical contractor licensing system. “Through the course of our investigation, we discovered significant electrical hazards at one school that could have seriously injured or killed someone, or caused a fire.”

The court imposed a fine of \$58,750 for Giroux’s violations and Medewar was fined \$7,500. Both fines include a 25 per cent victim fine surcharge as required by the Provincial Offences Act. The surcharge is credited to a special provincial government fund to assist victims of crime.

Only Licensed Electrical Contractors are permitted to contract to perform electrical work in Ontario under Ontario Regulation 570/05, *Licensing of Electrical Contractors and Master Electricians*.

ESA worked with the school board to ensure all electrical defects were corrected by a Licensed Electrical Contractor in compliance with the Ontario Electrical Safety Code.

“Anyone – homeowners, businesses or institutions – considering hiring someone to do electrical work are reminded to follow ‘the three Cs’: **check** to ensure the contractor holds a valid electrical contractor licence (there is a searchable database at www.esasafe.com); **confirm** that they are arranging the appropriate permits and inspections from ESA; and **call** ESA at 1-877-ESA-SAFE (1-877-372-7233) if you suspect someone is misrepresenting themselves,” added Breton.

Hiring a contractor with a valid ECRA/ESA Electrical Contractor Licence ensures that the company you have hired:

- is fully insured
- uses qualified electricians to perform the electrical work you require
- will arrange for permits with the ESA
- can deliver an ESA Certificate of Inspection
- can provide references

- will prepare a written cost estimate of the work

About the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA)

The Electrical Safety Authority's (ESA) 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 Twitter @HomeandSafety and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ElectricalSafetyAuthority

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